

ICOM

**THE DIALOGIC MUSEUM
AND THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE**

**LE MUSÉE DIALOGIQUE
ET L'EXPERIENCE DU VISITEUR**

**EL MUSEO DIALÓGICO
Y LA EXPERIENCIA DEL VISITANTE**

可對話的博物館與觀眾經驗

**Taipei and Kaoshiung
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INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MUSEUMS
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Contents – Sommaire – Indice – 目錄*

Preface – Préface – Prefacio – 序文

André Desvallées 3

I Discussion of dialogism – Débat sur le dialogisme – Debate sobre Dialogismo 對話理論的討論

Jennifer Harris

Dialogism and the visitor experience..... 9

Le Dialogisme et l'expérience du visiteur 11

Dialogismo y la experiencia del visitante..... 13

對話理論與觀眾經驗 15

Daniel Jacobi

Dialogism in museums 17

A propos du dialogisme dans les musées 19

A propósito del dialogismo en los museos 21

博物館之對話理論..... 23

II Working Papers – Documents de Travail – Documentos de Trabajos 論文

The dialogic museum and the visitor experience

Le musée dialogique et l'expérience du visiteur

El museo dialógico y la experiencia del visitante

可對話的博物館與觀眾經驗

Vitaly **Ananiev** – St. Petersburg, Russia

The dialogic museum, dice and neurons: a few personal notes on the topic..... 27

Le musée dialogique, les dés et les neurones : quelques remarques personnelles sur le thème proposé

El museo dialógico, dados y neuronas_ : algunas observaciones personales sobre el tema propuesto

對話型博物館、骰子與神經元：個人對此主題的觀點

Bruno **Brulon Soares** – Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Experiencing dialogue_ : behind the curtains of museum performance 33

L'expérimentation du dialogue : derrière les rideaux de la performance muséale

Experimentando el diálogo, descorriendo el velo de la performance en los museos

體驗對話：拉開博物館表演的序幕

Lucia **Cataldo** – Macerata, Italy

Performance workshop, dialogic tour and multimedia storytelling_ : new

relationships in the dialogic art museum 43

Atelier de performance, visite dialogique et narration multimédia_ : nouvelles relations dans le musée d'art dialogique

Talleres de Performance, recorridos dialógicos y narrativas multimediales_ : nuevas relaciones en los museos dialógicos de arte

表演工作坊、對話之旅與多媒體說故事：對話型藝術博物館的新關係

*titles of abstracts are given in italics.

| | |
|--|-----|
| Pang-Yen Cheng – Shoufeng, Hualien, Taiwan | |
| From dialogue to understanding: a case study of the Taiwanese gay and lesbian exhibition curating | 51 |
| <i>Du dialogue à la compréhension : un cas d'étude concernant l'organisation de l'exposition taïwanaise sur les gays et les lesbiennes</i> | |
| <i>Del diálogo a la comprensión: un caso de estudio sobre la curaduría de una exposición sobre gays y lesbianas taiwaneses</i> | |
| 從對話到理解： | |
| 以臺灣同志策展為例 | |
| Marília Xavier Cury – São Paulo, Brazil | |
| The dialogic museum and the visitor experience | 63 |
| <i>Le musée dialogique et l'expérience du visiteur</i> | |
| <i>El museo dialógico y la experiencia del visitante</i> | |
| 對話型博物館與訪客經驗 | |
| Célia Fleury – Lille, France | |
| L'expérience du visiteur dans les musées de la grande guerre : quelques pistes pour le dialogisme | 75 |
| <i>Visitor experience in World War I museums: new paths for dialogism</i> | |
| <i>La experiencia de los visitantes y los museos de la primera guerra mundial.</i> | |
| <i>Algunas pistas para el dialogismo</i> | |
| 一次大戰博物館之訪客經驗： | |
| 對話理論之新路徑 | |
| Jennifer Harris – Perth, Australia | |
| Dialogism_: the ideal and reality for museum visitors | 87 |
| <i>Le Dialogisme : l'idéal opposé à la réalité pour les visiteurs de musées</i> | |
| <i>El Dialogismo : El ideal como opuesto a la realidad por los visitantes de museos</i> | |
| 對話理論：博物館訪客的理想與現實 | |
| Francesca Hernández Hernández – Madrid, Spain | |
| Museo dialógico y comunicación social | 97 |
| Dialogic museum and social communication | 107 |
| <i>Musée dialogique et communication sociale</i> | |
| 對話博物館與社會溝通 | |
| Lynn Maranda – Vancouver, Canada | |
| The dialogic museum and the visitor experience | 117 |
| <i>Le musée dialogique et l'expérience du visiteur</i> | |
| <i>El museo dialógico y la experiencia del visitante</i> | |
| 對話博物館與訪客經驗 | |
| Hildegard Vieregg – Munich, Germany | |
| Museum dialogue based on the philosophy of language | 125 |
| <i>Le dialogue du musée sur la base de la philosophie du langage</i> | |
| <i>Diálogo Museal basado en la filosofía del lenguaje</i> | |
| 以語言哲學為基礎之博物館對話 | |
| III Concluding statement on Deaccession and Restitution (November 2010) | |
| Pour conclure sur l'aliénation et la restitution (novembre 2010) | |
| Conclusión final sobre alienación y restitución (noviembre 2010) | |
| 藏品註銷與歸還的總結性說明 | |
| Martin Schärer – Blonay, Switzerland | |
| To whom belongs the object? | 137 |
| A qui appartient l'objet? | 142 |
| ¿A quién pertenece el objeto?..... | 147 |
| 文物的所有權屬於誰? | 152 |

PREFACE

André Desvallées

Permanent Advisor to ICOFOM

Every year during its annual meeting ICOFOM holds a symposium on a given museological topic. After a call for papers, the articles contributed for discussion are published in ICOFOM Study Series following selection by the review committee, which I have the honour of chairing.

Museology is a young discipline: sometimes it borrows the tools in its lexicon from other disciplines, and sometimes it creates new ones¹. This year, in preparing our symposium in Taiwan from 23 to 26 October 2011, we had a paradox in the theme we proposed for thought: The Dialogic Museum and the Visitor Experience contained a term that was not unequivocal. Invented by the Russian semiologist Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975) in his book *Questions of Literature and Aesthetics*², the terms *dialogism* and *dialogical* which form the linchpin of his theses, were quickly applied to another usage by ethno-museologists, such as John Juo Wei Chen's article in 1992 "Creating a Dialogic Museum: The Chinatown History Museum Experiment"³. For Chen the dialogic process guides our exhibitions, and museum practice too, by operating in a participatory manner similar to the way community museums work, whereas for Bakhtin dialogism gave birth to educational methods and contributed to the development of the constructive theory of training. This is what led Daniel Jacobi to write a second statement, following that of Jennifer Harris, both of which you will find in the following pages. The aim was to turn a term that was only semiological or social into a museological one.

Because of this we received three categories of papers: a first one which developed the Bakhtin concepts, a second one which was closer to the interpretation of ethno-museologists, and a third category that tried to reconcile both versions. Those who tried to develop the third approach focussed principally on the visitor and often limited their reflections to visitor studies, which may possibly be the subject of a future symposium. This drift away from the topic, when it was the only approach, led the review committee to put aside some very good papers that had been presented. Following this difficult process we compiled a selection of papers which we hope will bring you interesting thoughts about dialogism, dialogue, and visitors.

Most importantly we would like to thank our hosts in Taiwan, the Chinese Association of Museums for organizing this conference under the aegis of the Council for Cultural Affairs, with the support of the National Palace Museum, the National Taiwan Museum, the National Science and Technology Museum, the Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts, the National Museum of Natural Science, the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, and the Chang Foundation. My special acknowledgement to all the members of the Editorial Committee, to Monica Risnikoff de Gorgas for her translations into Spanish and to Suzanne Nash for the careful editing of this volume.

¹ See the 500 terms in French, English and Spanish in the *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de muséologie*. Paris, Armand Colin, 2011 – a major work by ICOFOM.

² Mikhail Bakhtin (1973) *Questions of Literature and Aesthetics*, (Russian) Progress Moscow, 1979. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, Austin, University of Texas, 1981.

³ Ivan Karp et al., *Museum and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*, Smithsonian Institution, 1992.

PRÉFACE

André Desvallées

Conseiller permanent de l'ICOFOM

Dans le cadre de sa réunion annuelle, ICOFOM tient chaque année un symposium sur un thème muséologique. Après un appel à communication, les articles présentés à la discussion sont publiés dans les ICOFOM Study Series (ISS) après évaluation par le comité de lecture que j'ai l'honneur de présider.

La muséologie est une discipline jeune : tantôt elle emprunte ses outils lexicaux à d'autres disciplines, et tantôt elle s'en forge de nouveaux¹. Cette année, en vue de notre symposium de Taiwan, du 23 au 26 octobre 2011, nous avons joué du paradoxe, en proposant comme thème de réflexion un terme dont le sens n'était pas univoque : inventés par le sémiologue russe Mikhail Bakhtine (1895-1975), dans son livre *Esthétique et théorie du roman*², les termes de « dialogisme » ou de « dialogique », qui en sont le pivot, ont été assez vite appliqués à un autre usage par des ethno-muséologues, comme John Kuo Wei Tchen's, en 1992, dans son article "Creating a Dialogic Museum : The Chinatown History Museum Experiment"³. Pour ce dernier, le procédé dialogique conduit nos expositions, ainsi que la pratique du musée, dans une attitude participative, conforme à la pratique des musées communautaires, alors que, partant de Bakhtine, le dialogisme a donné naissance à des méthodes éducatives actives et a participé au développement de la théorie constructive en matière d'apprentissage. C'est ce qui a conduit Daniel Jacobi à écrire un second texte provocateur, en complément de celui de Jennifer Harris. L'objectif était de rendre muséologique une terminologie qui n'était que sémiologique ou social.

De ce fait, nous avons reçu trois catégories de communications : une première qui développait le concept de Bakhtine, une seconde qui adoptait plutôt l'interprétation des ethno-muséologues, et une troisième qui essayait de concilier les deux interprétations. Ceux qui se sont essayés à développer la troisième interprétation se sont parfois limités à l'étude des visiteurs, qui fera sans doute l'objet d'un de nos prochains symposiums. Cette dérive, lorsqu'elle était exclusive, a souvent conduit le comité de lecture à ne pas accepter ces communications pour la présente publication. A la suite de ce délicat processus, nous avons retenu une sélection d'articles qui, nous l'espérons, apporteront d'intéressantes réflexions sur le dialogisme, le dialogue et les visiteurs.

Nous ne saurions ne pas insister sur les remerciements que nous devons à nos hôtes taiwanais, l'Association chinoise des Musées, qui, sous l'égide du Conseil des Affaires culturelles, ont l'organisé de cette réunion avec le soutien du musée national du Palais, du musée national de Taiwan, du musée national des Sciences et des techniques, du musée national des Beaux-arts Kaohsiung, du musée national des Sciences Naturelles, du musée national des Beaux-arts de Taiwan et de la fondation Chang. Ma reconnaissance particulière va à tous les membres du comité de lecture, à Monica Risnikoff de Gorgas for ses traductions en espagnol et à Suzanne Nash pour le soin qu'elle a mis à l'édition de ce volume.

¹ Parcourir, pour en juger, les 500 termes du *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de muséologie*. Paris, Armand Colin, 2011 – œuvre de notre comité.

² Traduit en français chez Gallimard en 1978, et en anglais : *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, Austin, University of Texas, 1981

³ Karp et al., *Museum and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*, Smithsonian Institution, 1992.

PREFACIO

André Desvallées

Consejero Permanente del ICOFOM

Cada año durante su encuentro anual el ICOFOM desarrolla un simposio sobre un tema museológico dado. Después de una convocatoria a la presentación de documentos de trabajo, los artículos presentados para la discusión, son publicados en las Series de Estudio del ICOFOM después de una selección realizada por un comité científico que tengo el honor de presidir.

La Museología es una disciplina joven: algunas veces toma las herramientas y el léxico de otras disciplinas y otras crea algunas nuevas.¹ Este año, al preparar nuestro simposio en Taipei del 23 al 26 de Octubre de 2011, nos enfrentamos con una paradoja al proponer como tema de discusión un término cuyo sentido no es unívoco: Inventado por el semiólogo ruso Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975) en su libro *Problemas literarios y estéticos*², los términos *dialogismo* y *dialógico*, elementos cruciales de su tesis, fueron rápidamente aplicados a otros usos por etno-museólogos como John Jwo Wei TChen en su artículo de 1992 “Creando un museo dialógico: El experimento del Museo de Chinatown”³. Para este último, el proceso dialógico guía nuestras exhibiciones y también la práctica de los museos al operar de una manera participativa similar a la forma en que trabajan los museos comunitarios, en tanto que a partir de Bakhtin el dialogismo ha dado origen a métodos educativos y contribuye al desarrollo de la teoría constructiva de aprendizaje. Esto es lo que llevó a Daniel Jacobi a escribir un segundo documento provocativo, complementando el de Jennifer Harris, ambos en las páginas que siguen. El objetivo era transferir un término que era originalmente sólo social o semiológico al campo museológico.

Por esa causa hemos recibido tres categorías de documentos: unos desarrollados a partir de los conceptos de Bakhtin, otros más cercanos a la interpretación de los etno-museólogos, y una tercera categoría en la que se trató de conciliar las dos interpretaciones. Aquellos que trataron de desarrollar la tercera aproximación al tema se focalizaron principalmente en el visitante y en algunos casos limitaron sus reflexiones a estudios de público, tema que podría ser motivo de un futuro simposio. Al alejarse del tópico propuesto, algunos excelentes trabajos presentados para su publicación, tuvieron que ser dejados de lado por el comité de revisión. A partir de este complicado proceso hemos compilado una selección de documentos, que esperamos provoquen interesantes reflexiones sobre dialogismo, el diálogo y los visitantes.

Pero ante todo consideramos de primera importancia agradecer a nuestros anfitriones en Taiwan por la organización de esta reunión. En primer lugar al Consejo de Asuntos Culturales encargado de la supervisión, a la Asociación China de Museos que tuvieron a su cargo los preparativos con el apoyo del Museo del Palacio Nacional, el Museo Nacional de Taiwan, el Museo Nacional de Ciencia y Técnica, al Museo Kaohsiung de

¹ Ver los 500 términos in francés, inglés y español en el *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de muséologie*.

Paris, Armand Colin, 2011 – un relevante trabajo del ICOFOM.

² Mikhail Bakhtin (1973) *Questions of Literature and Aesthetics*, (Russian) Progress Moscow, 1979. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, Austin, University of Texas, 1981.

³ Ivan Karp et al., *Museum and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*, Smithsonian Institution, 1992.

Bellas Artes, al Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales, al Museo Nacional de Taiwan de Bellas Artes, y a la Fundación Chang.

Mi particular reconocimiento a todos los miembros del comité de lectura, a Mónica Risnicoff de Gorgas por sus traducciones al español y a Suzanne Nash por el esmero con que ha trabajado en la edición de este volumen.

序文

André Desvallées
Permanent Advisor to ICOFOM

每一年，國際博物館學專業委員會(ICOFOM)都會在舉辦年會時，針對一個博物館學主題舉行研討會。在公開徵稿後由審查委員會評選投稿的文章。審查通過的論文會集結出版於ICOFOM研究專題系列叢書。本人很榮幸能擔任此次評審委員會的主席。

博物館學是很新的一門學科：有時必須借用其他學科的詞彙，有時則必須自創新詞。今年，為了籌備2011年10月23日至26日於台灣舉行的研討會，我們選擇了一個似是而非但引人深省的主題：「可對話的博物館與觀眾經驗」。這個主題包含了一個不甚明確的詞彙。俄羅斯記號學家巴赫汀(Mikhail Bakhtin, 1895-1975)於《文學與審美大問哉》一書中發明了兩個詞彙：對話主義與對話型。這兩個詞彙是巴赫汀書中命題的關鍵，也很快地為民俗博物館學家所用。陳國威(音譯名)便在其1992年發表的論文「創立對話型博物館：中國城歷史博物館之經驗」中應用了這些詞彙。對陳國威來說，對話的過程不僅可以引導展覽的設計，也能影響博物館的管理方式，讓博物館的運作能像社區博物館一樣更鼓勵民眾參與。巴赫汀則認為對話主義可以帶來新的教育方式，促進建構式培訓理論的發展。這個論點也影響了Jennifer Harris與Daniel Jacobi相繼提出的論述(這兩位學者的論點皆刊載於本論文集。)。目的在於將一個記號學或社會學的詞彙轉變為博物館學的詞彙。

基於這樣的目的，我們將論文分為三大類：第一類進一步發展巴赫汀的概念，第二類以民俗博物館學詮釋巴赫汀，第三類則試圖在兩大類間找到平衡。第三類的論文大多著眼於訪客經驗並且多以訪客研究為主。或許未來也可以訪客研究為題舉辦研討會，但本次研討會的主題並非訪客研究，訪客經驗只是研究的一個角度，也因此審查委員會最後必須捨棄一些已經發表且品質良好的論文。評選過程相當困難，但我們期盼最後選出來的論文能針對對話主義、對話與訪客為讀者帶來有趣的觀點。

最後我們要感謝台灣的主辦單位中華民國博物館學會，在行政院文化建設委員會指導下，籌備這一次的會議。也要感謝共同協辦的國立故宮博物院、國立台灣博物館、國立科學工藝博物館、高雄市立美術館、國立自然科學博物館、國立台灣美術館與財團法人鴻禧藝術文教基金會。我個人也要特別感謝編輯委員會的所有成員、負責將論文翻成西班牙文的Monica Risnikoff de Gorgas女士與負責編輯本論文集的Suzanna Nash女士。

I Discussion of dialogism – Débat sur le dialogisme – Debate sobre Dialogismo – 對話理論的討論

Dialogism and the Visitor Experience

Jennifer Harris

Curtin University, Australia

Prior to the development of the great museums in Europe and North America in the nineteenth century, access to museums and cabinets of curiosity were limited to visitors with property qualifications and elite access to those in power. During the nineteenth century, the role of the museum in relation to the visitor was reconceptualised and it was in this period that the museum emerged as an institution that, in addition to scholarship, collection and exhibition, worked on the formation of a national citizenry. Visiting museums was regarded as a vital part of the creation of the individual. Focusing on education, the moulding of bourgeois taste and the display of colonial spoils, museums were sites of the expression of power to which it was assumed visitors acquiesced.

During the twentieth century, the authority of museums was steadily dismantled along with the authority once enjoyed by churches, governments and the wealthy. Political and social movements such as decolonisation, feminism, promotion of universal education and the spread of civil rights are clear historical explanations for the erosion of museum authority. One of the most powerful textual inroads on museum authority, however, has been dialogism which does not possess the status of a political or social movement.

Dialogism is a term emerging from the work of the Russian philosopher, Mikhail Bakhtin whose work on understanding the self led him to conceptualise the self in an endless dialogue with otherness. The other and self is not characterised as creating a binary by Bakhtin, but a multiplying process suggesting a vigorous network of meaning as the self is created in relation to others. To understand the self, therefore, multiples of others must also be considered.

Under the impact of vast social change, dialogism has appeared a most useful approach for museums as they have sought to reinvent themselves in a world where cultural authority is regarded with suspicion. In the rush to modernise museums, dialogism has sometimes been understood as relating to the promotion of one-to-one dialogue, as if between two speakers, with the museum being in conversation with visitors. This is clearly a very limited understanding of dialogism, suggesting the existence of the forlorn hope that museum cultural privilege can be maintained despite the broader impulse to reduce its authority. A key question for museology today, therefore, is whether a dyadic practice of “museum dialogism” is appropriate or, indeed, limiting of the meanings that a museum might generate and enable for its visitors.

Turning to a more informed understanding of dialogism, that is, as a process of multiple meaning interactions and generations - we need to ask how does the museum institution imagine itself in relation to it, given that Bakhtin theorises that dialogism is

not a stance that one chooses to adopt, but the reality of human interaction. In Bakhtinian analysis, the museum can be seen to have always been dialogic. Looking at the responses of museums to the idea of dialogism, one can see that museologically, there must be a widely held assumption that a museum can choose to be dialogic or not. This is a fundamental error in relation to Bakhtinian theory. An urgent task for museums, therefore, is either to foster the open-ended, incomplete multiplicity of engaging with others as described by Bakhtin or create their own limited view of dialogism as binary. The binary form of dialogism is often found in apparently progressive museums today. This limited expression of dialogism can have the effect of subtly permitting a museum to maintain elements of its old authority and power under the guise of altering itself in response to contemporary textual theory.

In practical curatorial terms, the museum visitor experience in the last two decades has been characterised by a turning away from the relatively simple construction of conditions for the visitor's aloof gaze on artefacts. In the place of the promotion of the individual, private gaze, the museum institution has extended the visitor experience to one of often intense interaction, notably via banks of computers. Museums are asking visitors to leave permanent responses to exhibitions so that the visit is expanded from a private experience to one of public interaction; some museums are incorporating visitors' bodies into the exhibition field, sometimes in Disneyland style rides, and exhibition budgets have necessarily grown to enable more visitor experiences.

Complex questions emerge from an assumption that many museums would like to explore the multiple possibilities that an understanding of dialogism enables. Would polyphony lead to museum anarchy? What is the role of the curator in relation to visitors in a dialogic museum? What should or could museums do with multiple visitor responses? Are there some visitor responses that museums should disallow, for example, extreme political positions? What roles remain for museums in the promotion of nationalism? Many museums have huge numbers of tourist visitors - how might the promotion of a dialogic environment make sense to disparate audiences?

The emergence of dialogism as a key marker of progressive museums has unfortunately been at the expense of engagement with the central Bakhtinian concept. Tackling dialogism in relation to the visitor experience is a necessary first step to understanding many of the recent changes in museums.

Le dialogisme et l'expérience du visiteur

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Avant l'avènement des grands musées d'Europe et d'Amérique du Nord au XIX^e siècle, l'accès aux musées et aux cabinets de curiosités se restreignait aux visiteurs dotés de qualités propriétaires et à l'élite des gens de pouvoir. C'est au XIX^e siècle que le rôle du musée par rapport à celui du visiteur a été reconceptualisé, tout comme c'est à cette époque que le musée est devenu institution, une institution qui, en plus d'être caractérisée par la mission professorale, la collection et l'exposition, contribuait à la formation d'un ensemble national de citoyens. La visite des musées était considérée comme une partie vitale de la création de l'individu. Les initiatives des musées étaient axées sur l'aspect éducatif et façonnaient le goût des bourgeois de même que l'étalage des maculatures coloniales. Par surcroît, les musées étaient les lieux d'expression du pouvoir auxquels on présumait que les visiteurs devaient acquiescer.

Au cours du XX^e siècle, l'autorité des musées a fait l'objet d'un démantèlement constant, à l'instar de l'autorité dont jouissaient jadis les églises, les gouvernements et les riches. Les mouvements d'ordre politique et social, comme ceux de la décolonisation, du féminisme, de la promotion de l'éducation universelle et de la propagation des droits civils, constituent des explications historiques claires à la source de l'érosion de l'autorité des musées. Toutefois, l'une des incursions textuelles les plus puissantes en matière d'autorité muséale prend la forme du dialogisme, celui-ci ne possédant pas la nature d'un mouvement politique ou social.

La notion du dialogisme prend sa source dans l'œuvre du philosophe russe Mikhaïl Bakhtine qui, en tentant de comprendre le « soi », s'est mis à reconceptualiser le soi à la lumière d'un dialogue sans fin avec l'altérité. Selon Bakhtine, l'autre et le soi ne sont pas caractérisés par la création d'une forme binaire, mais plutôt par un processus de multiplication laissant entendre la création d'un réseau vigoureux de sens du soi par rapport à autrui. Par conséquent, la compréhension du soi doit se faire à la lumière de multiples autrui.

Sous l'incidence du vaste changement social, le dialogisme a fait figure d'approche des plus utiles pour les musées à un moment où ils cherchaient à se réinventer dans un monde où l'autorité culturelle est considérée comme suspecte. Dans la lancée de modernisation des musées, le dialogisme est parfois vu comme se rapportant à la promotion d'un dialogue de personne à personne, comme s'il y avait deux interlocuteurs, le musée étant en conversation avec ses visiteurs. Il s'agit là clairement d'une compréhension très restreinte du dialogisme, qui laisse entendre l'existence d'un vain espoir selon lequel le privilège culturel des musées peut être entretenu malgré la plus grande impulsion qui vise à atténuer son autorité. Par conséquent, une importante question en matière de muséologie de nos jours consiste à se demander si la pratique dyadique du « dialogisme muséal » est adéquate ou si elle limite plutôt les significations que le musée peut engendrer et permettre auprès de ses visiteurs.

En adoptant une compréhension plus avertie du dialogisme, soit en tant que processus d'interactions et de générations de sens multiples, on doit alors se demander comment l'institution muséale s'imagine par rapport à ce processus, étant donné que Bakhtine soutient que le dialogisme n'est pas une position qu'une personne choisit d'adopter, mais plutôt la réalité de l'interaction humaine. Selon l'analyse bakhtinienne, le musée peut être vu comme ayant toujours été de nature dialogique. Compte tenu de la

réaction des musées à l'idée du dialogisme, l'on peut voir que du point de vue muséologique, on peut largement présumer qu'un musée peut choisir d'être dialogique ou de ne pas l'être. Il s'agit là d'une erreur fondamentale par rapport à la théorie bakhtinienne. Par conséquent, il est urgent que les musées déterminent s'ils doivent favoriser la multiplicité ouverte et incomplète de s'engager avec autrui, telle que décrite par Bakhtine, ou créer leur propre vue restreinte du dialogisme en tant que vue binaire. La forme binaire du dialogisme se trouve souvent dans les musées apparemment progressifs de nos jours. Cette expression limitée du dialogisme peut avoir l'effet de permettre, subtilement, à un musée de conserver des éléments propres à son ancienne autorité et à son ancien pouvoir sous prétexte de s'altérer en réaction à la théorie textuelle contemporaine.

En termes pratiques de conservation, l'expérience des visiteurs de musées a été caractérisée, ces deux dernières décennies, par le délaissement d'une construction relativement simple de conditions en faveur du regard distant du visiteur sur les artefacts. Au lieu de promouvoir le regard individuel et privé, l'institution muséale a étendu l'expérience des visiteurs pour aboutir à une interaction souvent intense, notamment par l'intermédiaire d'une panoplie d'ordinateurs. Les musées demandent aux visiteurs de laisser des réactions permanentes à l'égard des expositions, de sorte que la visite passe d'une expérience privée à une interaction publique; certains musées intègrent le corps du visiteur au domaine de l'exposition, parfois à l'instar des manèges de Disneyland, de sorte que les budgets des expositions ont été gonflés, par nécessité, pour intensifier l'expérience des visiteurs.

Des questions complexes émergent d'une hypothèse selon laquelle de nombreux musées aimeraient explorer les possibilités multiples déclenchées par l'entendement du dialogisme. Est-ce que la polyphonie mènerait à l'anarchie des musées? Dans un musée dialogique, quel est le rôle du conservateur par rapport aux visiteurs? Que devraient ou que pourraient faire les musées vis-à-vis de réactions multiples de la part des visiteurs? Est-ce que certaines réactions de la part des visiteurs devraient être interdites par les musées, comme par exemple, des points de vue politiques extrêmes? Quels rôles reste-t-il aux musées à jouer en matière de promotion du nationalisme? Beaucoup de musées ont un très grand nombre de visiteurs-touristes. À cet égard, comment la promotion d'un milieu dialogique pourrait-elle avoir du sens aux yeux d'auditoires disparates?

L'émergence du dialogisme en tant que balise importante des musées progressifs s'est malheureusement faite aux dépens de l'engagement avec le concept bakhtinien central. Analyser le dialogisme à la lumière de l'expérience du visiteur constitue une première étape nécessaire pour mener à la compréhension de grand nombre des changements récents s'étant manifestés au sein des musées.

Dialogismo y la Experiencia del Visitante

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Previo al desarrollo de los Grandes Museos en Europa y Norteamérica durante el siglo 19, el acceso a los museos y gabinetes de curiosidades estaba restringido a visitantes calificados o pertenecientes a las elites que ostentaban el poder. Durante el siglo 19 el rol de los museos en relación a los visitantes fue reconceptualizado y fue en ese periodo que los museos emergen como instituciones que tienen como misión además de investigar, coleccionar y exhibir, la formación de ciudadanía nacional. Visitar museos fue considerado como una parte vital de la *creación* del individuo. Enfocándose en la educación, moldeando el gusto burgués y en la exhibición de los expolios coloniales, los museos llegaron a ser sitios de la expresión del poder al que se suponía adherían los visitantes.

Durante el siglo veinte la autoridad de los museos fue puesta en cuestión, como también la que alguna vez disfrutaron las iglesias, los gobiernos y los poderosos. Esa erosión de la autoridad de los museos se explica claramente por los movimientos sociales y políticos como la decolonización, el feminismo, la promoción de la educación universal y la difusión de los derechos civiles.

Dialogismo es un término que emerge del trabajo del filósofo ruso Mikhail Bakhtin, cuyas teorías acerca de la comprensión del “yo”, lo llevaron a la conceptualización del “yo” en un diálogo sin fin con el “otro”.

Bajo el impacto de un vasto cambio social, el dialogismo se nos presenta como la aproximación más útil para los museos que han pretendido reinventarse en un mundo donde la autoridad cultural es puesta bajo sospecha. En la vorágine por modernizar a los museos, el dialogismo ha sido a veces comprendido como la promoción del diálogo “cara a cara”, entre dos hablantes, el museo en conversación con sus visitantes. Esta es claramente una visión muy limitada del dialogismo, que sugiere la existencia de la desechada esperanza de que el privilegio cultural de los museos puede ser mantenido a pesar del amplio impulso a reducir su autoridad. Una cuestión clave para la museología actual, por lo tanto, es plantearse si la práctica diádica del “dialogismo en los museos” es apropiada o, verdaderamente una limitación a los significados que el museo puede generar y hacer posible para sus visitantes.

Desde una mejor comprensión de lo que es el dialogismo, o sea un proceso que genera interacciones de múltiple significado – necesitamos interrogarnos sobre como la institución museo se imagina a sí misma en este contexto, dado que para las teorías de Bakhtin el dialogismo no es una postura que uno elige adoptar, si no la realidad de la interacción humana. Bajo el análisis Bakhtiniano, el museo puede ser visto como si siempre hubiera sido dialógico. Observando las respuestas de los museos a la idea de dialogismo, podemos observar que, museológicamente, existe un consenso general de que el museo puede ser dialógico o no. Ese es un error fundamental en la interpretación de las teorías de Bakhtin. Una meta urgente para los museos es, por lo tanto, saber si adoptamos un final abierto, multiplicidad incompleta de compromiso con el otro, como lo describe Bakhtin o por el contrario creamos una propia visión limitada de dialogismo como binario. La forma binaria de dialogismo es a menudo encontrada en museos que aparecen como progresistas. Esa visión limitada de dialogismo puede tener como consecuencia que sutilmente los museos se permitan mantener

elementos de su viejo poder y autoridad, bajo la falsa apariencia de efectuar cambios en respuesta a la teoría textual contemporánea.

En términos curatoriales prácticos, en las dos últimas décadas la experiencia del visitante de museo se ha caracterizado por alejarse de construcciones relativamente simples para mantenerse apartado de una mirada penetrante de los artefactos. En lugar de la promoción de una mirada individual y privada, la institución museo ha extendido la experiencia del visitante a una de mayor e intensa interacción, notablemente a través de las computadoras. Los museos le están pidiendo permanentemente a los visitantes que dejen respuestas a las exhibiciones, para que la visita se expanda de una experiencia privada a una interacción pública; algunos museos están incorporando el cuerpo de los visitantes al campo de la exhibición, a veces con el estilo de las cabalgatas de disneylandia.

Cuestiones complejas emergen de la suposición de que a muchos museos les gustaría explorar las múltiples posibilidades que la comprensión del dialogismo les abre. Esa polifonía nos conducirá a la anarquía de los museos? Cuál es el rol del curador en relación a los visitantes en los museos dialógicos? Qué es lo que los museos deben o pueden hacer con la multiplicidad de respuesta de los visitantes? Hay algunas respuestas de los visitantes que el museo debe rechazar, por ejemplo las posiciones políticas extremas? Qué roles permanecen en relación a la promoción de nacionalismos? Muchos museos tienen gran cantidad de turistas como visitantes, cómo un ambiente dialógico puede promover la promoción de sentido en audiencias dispares?

La emergencia del dialogismo como la clave de museos progresistas ha sido infortunadamente a expensas del compromiso con los conceptos bakhtinianos centrales. Tener en cuenta el dialogismo en relación a la experiencia del visitante es un primer paso necesario para entender los recientes cambios en los museos.

對話理論與觀眾經驗

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在十九世紀之前，當歐洲和北美洲尚未發展出重要的博物館，進入博物館與珍藏室僅限於擁有財力與權力的人士。到了十九世紀，博物館與其參觀者的關係被重新定義，因此，博物館在這個時期逐漸成為一個在學術、蒐藏與展示的功能之外，致力形塑國家公民的機構。參觀博物館被認為是創造個人非常重要的一部分。在以教育為前提下，博物館融合了布爾喬亞品味與殖民戰利品的展示，在當時將參觀者視同默認了博物館是展現權力的場所。

二十世紀期間，博物館的權威不斷隨著教會、政府和富人逐漸逝去的權勢而瓦解。去殖民化、女性主義、推廣教育普及以及擴張公民權益等的一些政治與社會運動確實是博物館權威崩解的歷史解釋。然而，對博物館權威最有影響力的論述抨擊之一，卻是不帶任何政治或社會運動色彩的對話理論。

對話理論一詞是出自俄國哲學家米哈依爾·巴赫汀的著作，他的著作指出理解自我可以透過與他者的不斷對話而通往自我的認定。巴赫汀並不是把他者與自我描述成一種二元性產生，而是自我的產生來自與他者互動以展現強烈意義連結的一個加乘過程。因此，要理解自我，也就必須考量他者的加乘性。

在劇烈社會變遷的衝擊之下，對話理論顯然是博物館試圖要在這個對文化權威存疑的世界中重新定位自己時應採取的最有利作法。在這波博物館現代化的激流中，對話理論經常會被理解成與提倡一對一的對話有關，就像兩個人進行對話，而博物館正是與參觀者進行對話。這顯然是對對話理論的一種非常狹隘的理解，顯示出在面對削減博物館權威的廣大聲浪下仍希望能保有其僅存的文化特權。因此，今天博物館學的關鍵問題就是「博物館對話理論」的二元作為比較恰當？或者反而是限制博物館可能帶給或賦予其參觀者的意涵。

至於對話理論的更深入理解，其實可以說是一個多重意涵的互動與產生的過程-果真巴赫汀主張對話理論並不是某個人所選擇採取的立場，而是人類互動的現實，我們就應該要探討博物館機構本身是如何看待對話理論的。在巴赫汀的分析中，博物館可以被看成是隨時處於對話過程中。反觀博物館對於對話理論概念的反應，從博物館學的角度，卻有太多假設認為博物館可以自由選擇對話與否。這是關於巴赫汀理論的一個基本謬誤。因此，博物館的當務之急，就是要如同巴赫汀所形容的一樣以培養無限制的、不完全的多樣性來面對他人，或者建構他們自己以二元性來看待對話理論的狹隘觀點。今天對話理論的二元形式經常會出現在較為進步的一些博物館中。這種對於對話理論的局部呈現所產生的效果是微妙地容許博物館在呼應當代文本理論的偽裝下，保有其舊時的權威與權力元素。

在實際的經營層面上，過去二十年來的博物館參觀者經驗已經演變成不再只是單純地去建構一些條件來讓參觀者疏離地盯著文物而已。在提倡個人化、專有性的觀賞方面，博物館已經大量運用數位典藏資料庫，將參觀者經驗延伸成為一種經常性的高度互動。博物館希望參觀者能對展覽留下永久的迴響，使參觀從一種個人經驗延伸成公眾互動；有些博物館也將參觀者的身體連結到展

覽場域，有時是以一種迪士尼式的體驗，當然為了要提升深入的參觀者經驗，展覽預算就難免要增加了。

錯綜複雜的問題從許多博物館想探尋理解對話理論所賦予的多重可能性的假設中產生。這種紛雜是否會導致博物館的失序呢？可對話博物館的經營者之於參觀者的角色為何呢？博物館對於參觀者多元性的回應應該或可以採取什麼樣的作為呢？有哪些參觀者回應，例如極端的政治立場，是博物館應該置之不理的嗎？博物館在宣揚民族主義方面又有怎樣的角​​色呢？許多博物館都有大量的觀光參觀者-提倡對話環境又會對各類型的觀眾產生什麼樣的意義呢？

讓對話理論成為先進博物館的一個重要指標，很可惜的在與巴赫汀的核心思想相牴觸下而犧牲了。針對參觀者經驗而將對話理論改弦易轍必然是了解博物館許多新改變的首要步驟。

Dialogism in museums

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In the recent history of museums and since the turn towards new museology, we see that museum priorities have somewhat shifted: we have moved from being exclusively focussed on collections, their preservation and production of knowledge about heritage to disseminating knowledge and appreciation of collections aimed at a broader public. Policies regarding the public and the development of a wide spectrum of communication tools and means have helped to put the visitor at the centre of museum work and of museum policies regarding temporary exhibitions, while not overlooking that for major museums organising ephemeral cultural events more and more often had rejuvenated their style and functioning.

This change of focus led to restructuring museum management which, from now on, in addition to services aimed at preservation, made new services available that are above all concerned with the users. We have seen a rapid transformation of the practice of dissemination and interpretation, which formerly was a routine of guided visits and talks given by specialists standing in front of works on display, even if, we must say, this practice is still widespread and reigns supreme in fine arts museums. In fact, influenced by science centres, which chose “hands on” devices that were created with the intention of using museography to foster abstract knowledge, or social museums, which have tried to approach sensitive issues while questioning visitors, little by little museums deliberately sought more and more to specifically solicit their visitors’ active participation.

Previously visitors could be happy to taste and enjoy intellectually what was given them to see with the support of only a very modest offering: the short and condensed text of a label placed under of the work. From now on visitors are solicited, questioned, they are asked to act or to interact when, for projects that are more innovative, they have been associated with the conception or even the story line of the exhibition.

Communication technology, more and more put to work in museums and exhibitions, seems to have led to a new type of dissemination of cultural content which appears today to have become the leading model: offering exhibitions that are called (at least for some of them) “playful and interactive”. The epithet “playful” refers to leisure and pleasure. It wants to show that one should no longer talk about boring scholarly knowledge or slow academic teaching, much too heavy and demanding. One can learn and become cultivated while enjoying oneself, thus without difficulty. The epithet “interactive” refers to modernity and the image of rapid training, effective without effort and imposing neither dogma nor professional erudition, nor the yoke of a didactic approach to a long and numbing apprenticeship.

Seducing visitors while amusing them and making them act, who would not be convinced with such a promise? We can easily understand that a consensus was quickly reached around what is nevertheless a slogan. To grasp this fully we must try to understand the origins of the playful-interactive credo. In our view it corresponds to a double orthodoxy: the influence of active educational methods and the rise to power of the constructivist theory in training.

The active methods that evolved from the works of Decroly, Montessori or Dewey, proved the interest of using approaches where children act to learn rather than learning by heart and doing a series of exercises. Regarding the constructivist theory, it

stipulates that one only retains the knowledge that one has built oneself from matter that is suggested by the master in educational situations that are original and motivating for the student.

We will be forgiven for having recalled so briefly the context of the underlying educational theories even if these are more a caricature and ultra-simplified than a definition that can be understood and used for their specific interest, but this one that can be understood when evoking the word “dialogism”. The modern museum and its exhibitions would be “dialogic” in so far as, from now on, they take into consideration not only a dialogue with the public, but also that the public would be invited to join in and to act or to interact with the content or the devices which are offered and which have been conceived to this end.

The problem that preoccupies us now is not to contest the idea of a dialogue, nor that of public participation or the interest of development and interaction: if museum professionals now want to choose forms which seem to them preferable or better, we can only rally to the leading ideology. To state that a new museum or a new exhibition offers “playful and interactive content” no longer surprises anybody. More likely the opposite that would surprise...

Using the word dialogism in order to explain overall this trend, and referring explicitly to its inventor, the great Russian linguist Mikhail Bakhtin, seems to us totally inadequate. What, in which context and to what ends does the Marxist (?) linguist use the concept of dialogism and the epithet *dialogic*? It is say right away that he uses *dialogism* and *dialogic* to differentiate them from dialogue and dialogal. For Bakhtin dialogue is the natural form of exchange. Even better, he asserts that dialogism can only be expressed in a monologue because it is inherent in the very act of the speaker producing a discourse. In his works he tries to demonstrate that all discourse is a sort of interior dialogue. Dialogic can be found when a speaker or writer produces a statement: on the one hand he is referring explicitly or implicitly to everything that has already been said or written by others on the theme he is talking about, and on the other hand he anticipates a counter argument to the critical replies that some listeners or readers will possibly make to him later when assimilating what he has said or written. In his theory of dialogism Bakhtin anticipates the invention of one of the major themes of modern linguistics: that of intertextuality.

If we hold strictly to the work of Bakhtin we will find dialogism and dialogic in most of the writings of museum professionals and curators when they address the public under the eye of and monitored by their peers. Announcements and all the texts posted in museums and exhibitions and articles in exhibition catalogues that they sign or do not sign and which are in principle addressed to the public are by nature purely dialogic (which, as we know, contributes to making them difficult and sometimes even incomprehensible to non-specialists). Dialogue, and dialogal, supposes that there is effectively a dialogue, not only present in the communication tools or the educational documents that are most often conceived for and reserved to school groups (captive public).

Additionally it would be necessary to be assured of the content and how the dialogue is set up. Returning to the primacy of playful-interactive, how much can such a dialogue offer active or constructivist approaches to adults, youth and children?

À propos du dialogisme dans les musées

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Dans l'histoire récente des musées et depuis le tournant de la nouvelle muséologie, on sait que leurs priorités se sont quelque peu décalées : on est passé d'un centrage exclusif sur les collections, leur conservation et la production de connaissances sur le patrimoine, à une ouverture sur leur diffusion et leur valorisation en direction d'un public élargi. Les politiques de publics et le développement d'une panoplie diversifiée d'outils et de moyens de médiation ont contribué à replacer les visiteurs au centre des musées et des politiques de création d'expositions temporaires, sans oublier pour les institutions majeures, l'organisation de plus en plus fréquente d'événements culturels éphémères qui ont considérablement renouvelé le style des musées et leur fonctionnement.

Cette réorientation s'est traduite dans la structuration administrative des musées qui dorénavant disposent, en plus de leur service de conservation qui continue le plus souvent d'assurer la direction du musée, d'un service des publics qui, quant à lui, se soucie avant tout des utilisateurs. On a assisté à une transformation rapide des pratiques de diffusion et de médiation autrefois résumées en une pratique routinière de visites guidées et de conférences assurées par des spécialistes devant les œuvres exposées même si, il faut le noter, elle continue d'être répandue et dominante partout dans les musées des beaux-arts. En effet, sous l'influence des centres de science, qui ont opté pour des dispositifs hands on, construits dans une perspective de transposition muséographique de connaissances abstraites, ou des musées de société, qui ont cherché à aborder des thèmes sensibles en interpellant les visiteurs, petit à petit, de plus en plus d'expositions ont délibérément cherché à solliciter explicitement la participation active du public.

Précédemment, le visiteur devait se contenter de goûter et d'apprécier intellectuellement ce qui lui était donné à voir en ne disposant pour tout soutien que d'un modeste viatique : le texte bref et condensé d'une étiquette disposée sous l'œuvre. Dorénavant, on le sollicite, on l'interpelle, on lui propose d'agir ou d'interagir quand, pour les projets les plus novateurs, on ne décide pas de l'associer à la conception même du discours de l'exposition. Les technologies de la communication, de plus en plus mobilisées dans les musées et les expositions, semblent avoir induit une nouvelle modalité de diffusion des contenus culturels qui paraît aujourd'hui être devenue un modèle dominant : proposer des expositions dites, au moins pour partie, ludiques et interactives. L'épithète ludique fait référence au loisir et au plaisir. Il veut signifier qu'il ne faut plus faire référence au savoir savant ennuyeux ou à l'enseignement académique lent, pesant et bien trop contraignant. Ou encore que l'on peut apprendre et se cultiver en s'amusant, donc sans difficulté. L'épithète interactif renvoie à la modernité et à l'image d'un apprentissage rapide, opéré sans effort et sans imposer, ni le dogme du savoir professoral, ni le carcan d'une démarche didactique ou d'un long apprentissage robotique.

Séduire le visiteur en l'amusant et en le faisant agir, qui pourrait ne pas être convaincu par une telle promesse ? On comprend sans difficulté pourquoi le consensus s'est établi aussi rapidement autour de ce qui n'est pourtant qu'un slogan. Pour être complet, il faut essayer de comprendre dans quoi s'origine le credo du ludique-interactif. Selon nous, il correspond à une double vulgate : l'influence des méthodes actives en éducation et la montée en puissance de la théorie constructive en matière d'apprentissage. Les méthodes actives à la suite des travaux de Decroly, Montessori

ou Dewey ont révélé tout l'intérêt d'utiliser des démarches où l'enfant agit pour apprendre au lieu de se contenter d'apprendre par cœur et faire des gammes d'exercices. La théorie constructiviste stipule, quant à elle, que l'on ne retient vraiment que les connaissances que l'on construit soi-même à partir de matériaux proposés par le maître dans des situations éducatives originales et motivantes pour l'élève. On nous pardonnera d'avoir rappelé aussi sommairement le contexte et les théories éducatives sous-jacentes même si bien sûr elles ont été davantage caricaturées et ultra simplifiées que comprises et utilisées pour leur singularité, mais c'est bien celui dans lequel il faut entendre la convocation du mot dialogisme. Le musée moderne et ses expositions seraient dialogiques dans la mesure où dorénavant ils se soucieraient, non seulement de dialoguer avec le public, mais aussi qu'ils l'inviteraient à s'associer et à le faire agir sur ou à interagir avec les contenus ou les dispositifs qui lui sont proposés et ont été conçus à cet effet.

La question qui nous préoccupe n'est pas de contester l'idée de dialogue, ni celle de participation du public ou de l'intérêt du développement de l'interaction : que des professionnels veuillent dorénavant opter pour des formes qui leur semblent préférables et supérieures, ce n'est en quelque sorte que se rallier à une forme d'idéologie dominante. Déclarer d'un nouveau musée ou d'une nouvelle exposition qu'il (elle) proposera des contenus ludiques et interactifs n'étonne absolument plus personne. C'est plutôt l'inverse qui surprendrait... L'emploi du mot dialogisme en le référant très explicitement à son inventeur, le très grand linguiste russe Mikhaïl Bakhtine, pour désigner globalement ce courant nous paraît cependant totalement inadéquat. Pourquoi, dans quel contexte et à quelles fins le linguiste marxiste (?) emploie-t-il le concept de dialogisme et l'épithète dialogique ? Précisons d'emblée qu'il utilise dialogisme et dialogique pour les distinguer de dialogue et de dialogal. Le dialogue est pour lui la forme naturelle de l'échange. Mieux même, il prétend que le dialogisme peut se manifester dans le monologue car il s'inscrit dans l'acte même de production du discours par son auteur. Par ses travaux, il s'efforce de démontrer que tout discours est une sorte de dialogue intérieur. Est dialogique, dans un énoncé produit par un locuteur ou un scripteur, le fait que, d'une part, il se réfère explicitement ou implicitement à tout ce qui a déjà été dit et écrit par d'autres auteurs sur le thème dont il parle, et que d'autre part, il anticipe et contre-argumente par anticipation sur les critiques que certains de ses interlocuteurs ou de ses lecteurs seront susceptibles de lui adresser ultérieurement en prenant connaissance de ce qu'il a dit ou écrit. Par sa théorie du dialogisme, Bakhtine invente par anticipation un des thèmes majeurs de la linguistique moderne celui de l'intertextualité.

Si l'on s'en tient aux travaux de Bakhtine, on trouvera donc du dialogisme et du dialogique dans la plupart des écrits des professionnels et des conservateurs dès lors qu'ils s'adressent au public sous le regard et le contrôle de leurs pairs. Les notices et tous les textes affichés dans les musées et les expositions et les articles des catalogues qu'ils signent ou ne signent pas et qui sont en principe adressés au public sont par nature dialogiques (ce qui, on le sait, contribue à les rendre difficiles et parfois même peu compréhensibles par des non spécialistes). Le dialogue et le dialogal, à supposer qu'il le soit effectivement, sera seulement présent dans les outils de médiation ou les documents pédagogiques le plus souvent réservés et conçus pour des groupes scolaires (publics captifs). Encore faudrait-il s'assurer de la teneur et du mode d'instauration d'un tel dialogue. Et pour revenir au primat du ludique-interactif comment un tel dialogue est-il en mesure d'offrir des démarches actives ou constructivistes à des adultes, des jeunes ou des enfants ?

A propósito del dialogismo en los museos

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En la historia reciente de los museos y sobre todo a partir del viraje decisivo dado por la nueva museología, se sabe que sus prioridades se encuentran un tanto desplazadas. Se ha pasado de una centralización exclusiva de las colecciones, de su conservación y de la producción de conocimientos sobre el patrimonio, a una apertura acerca de su difusión y su valorización dirigida a un público cada vez más amplio. Las políticas de públicos y el desarrollo de una panoplia diversificada de instrumentos y recursos de mediación han contribuido a ubicar al visitante en el centro del museo y de las políticas de implementación de exposiciones temporarias sin olvidar -en el caso de las grandes instituciones- la organización cada vez más frecuente de eventos culturales efímeros que han renovado considerablemente su estilo y su funcionamiento.

Esta reorientación se ve reflejada en la estructura administrativa de los museos pues disponen ahora -además de su servicio de conservación que continúa estando garantizado por la dirección del museo- de un servicio destinado al público y preocupado ante todo por los usuarios. Se ha asistido a una transformación rápida de las actividades de difusión y de mediación, antes resumidas en una práctica rutinaria de visitas guiadas y de conferencias avaladas por especialistas frente a las propias obras expuestas. (Cabe destacar que esta práctica continúa aún en los museos de Bellas Artes). Bajo la influencia de los centros de ciencias que han optado por dispositivos *hands on* contruidos con una perspectiva de transposición museográfica de los conocimientos abstractos o bien de los museos de sociedad que han buscado abordar temas sensibles interpelando a sus visitantes, poco a poco y cada vez más, las exposiciones bucan deliberada y explícitamente, contar con la participación activa del público.

Anteriormente, el visitante debía contentarse con gustar y apreciar intelectualmente lo que le era dado ver, disponiendo por todo sostén de un breve texto condensado en una etiqueta colocada bajo la obra. Hoy, se le solicita, se lo interpela y se le propone actuar o interactuar en los proyectos más innovadores, siempre y cuando no se decida asociarlo a la concepción misma del discurso de la exposición. Las tecnologías de la comunicación -cada día más movilizadas en los museos y las exposiciones- parecen incitar a una nueva modalidad de difusión de los contenidos culturales que hoy se ha convertido en un modelo dominante: proponer exposiciones llamadas, por lo menos en parte, *lúdicas e interactivas*. El epíteto *lúdico* está relacionado con el tiempo libre y el placer. Esto significa que no hay que referirse más al aburrido saber erudito ni a la enseñanza académica lenta, pesada y demasiado apremiante. O aún más: que se puede estudiar y aprender divirtiéndose así sin dificultad. El epíteto *interactivo* remite a la modernidad y a la imagen de un aprendizaje rápido, operado sin esfuerzo y sin imponer el dogma del saber profesoral ni la sujeción de una gestión didáctica o de un largo aprendizaje.

Seducir al visitante divirtiéndolo y haciéndolo actuar es la consigna, ¿quién podría no estar convencido ante tal promesa...? Se comprende sin dificultad por qué el consenso se ha establecido tan rápidamente alrededor de algo que no es más que un *slogan*. Para estar completo, hay que tratar de comprender en qué se origina el credo de lo *lúdico-interactivo*. Para nosotros corresponde a una doble Vulgata: la influencia

de los métodos activos en la educación y el ascenso al poder de la teoría constructivista en materia de aprendizaje. Los métodos activos que siguieron a los trabajos de Decroly, Montessori o Dewey han revelado el interés de utilizar determinados pasos donde el niño actúe para aprender en lugar de contentarse con aprender de memoria y hacer series interminables de ejercicios. La teoría constructivista estipula que sólo se retienen verdaderamente los conocimientos que uno mismo construye a partir de los materiales propuestos por el maestro en situaciones educativas originales y motivadoras para el alumno.

Nos perdonarán por haber recordado tan sumariamente el contexto y las teorías educativas subyacentes, aún cuando hayan sido más caricaturizadas y ultra simplificadas que comprendidas y utilizadas por su singularidad, pero es aquí donde se debe escuchar la convocatoria de la palabra *dialogismo*. El museo moderno y sus exposiciones serían *dialógicos* en la medida en que en lo sucesivo se preocupasen no sólo de dialogar con el público, sino también de invitarlo a asociarse y a hacerlo actuar o interactuar con los contenidos o los dispositivos que le son propuestos y que fueron concebidos a tal efecto. El problema que nos preocupa no es verificar la idea de diálogo ni la participación del público; tampoco el interés por el desarrollo de la interacción. El hecho de que los profesionales deseen optar por formas que les parezcan preferibles y superiores, no es otra cosa que incorporarse a una forma de ideología dominante. Declarar que un nuevo museo o una nueva exposición propondrán *contenidos lúdicos e interactivos* ya no asombra a nadie. Sería más bien lo contrario que sorprendería...

El empleo de la palabra *dialogismo* - refiriéndolo muy explícitamente a su inventor, el gran lingüista ruso Mikhaïl Bakhtine, a efectos de designar globalmente esta corriente, nos parece totalmente inadecuado. ¿Por qué, en qué contexto y para qué fines el lingüista marxista (?) emplea el concepto de *dialogismo* y el epíteto *dialógico*? Precisemos de entrada que él utiliza *dialogismo* y *dialógico* para distinguirlos de *diálogo* y de *dialogal*. El diálogo es para él la forma natural del intercambio. Mejor aún, pretende que el *dialogismo* pueda manifestarse en el monólogo, ya que se inscribe en el acto mismo en que el autor produce su discurso. A través de sus trabajos se esfuerza en demostrar que todo discurso es una suerte de diálogo interior. En el enunciado de un locutor o de un guionista es *dialógico*, por una parte, que se refieren explícita o implícitamente a todo aquello que ha sido ya dicho y escrito por otros autores sobre el tema del que se habla, y que -por otra parte- anticipen y contraargumenten para adelantarse a las críticas que ciertos interlocutores y lectores le dirigirán ulteriormente, al tomar conocimiento de lo que ha dicho o escrito. Para su teoría del dialogismo, Bakhtine inventa con anticipación uno de los más grandes temas de la lingüística moderna: *la intertextualidad*.

Quienes se interesen en los trabajos de Bakhtine encontrarán *dialogismo* y *lo dialógico* en la mayoría de los escritos de los profesionales y conservadores, dado que los mismos se dirigen al público bajo la mirada y el control de sus pares. Las novedades y todos los textos anunciados en los museos y en las exposiciones, y los artículos de los catálogos (los firmen o no) que en principio están dirigidos al público, son *dialógicos* por naturaleza (sabemos que esto contribuye a volverlos difíciles e incluso poco comprensibles para los que no son especialistas). El diálogo y lo dialogal, si efectivamente lo son, estarán presentes sólo en los instrumentos de mediación o en los documentos pedagógicos, generalmente reservados y concebidos para grupos escolares (públicos cautivos). Sería todavía necesario asegurarse acerca del tenor y la forma de instauración de un diálogo semejante. Y para volver a la primacía de lo *lúdico-interactivo*, ¿es ese diálogo capaz de ofrecer gestiones activas o constructivistas a los adultos, a los jóvenes y a los niños?

博物館之對話理論

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博物館近來的發展，特別是新博物館學(museology)崛起後，我們發現博物館的重心改變了：我們不再將所有的焦點放在館藏品、藏品的保存與對文化遺產知識的累積，而開始重視傳播知識，並努力讓普羅大眾更能欣賞這些館藏品。以公眾為主的政策，加上各種溝通工具的發展，都使訪客成為博物館實務的重心，也影響博物館之特展政策。但同時，我們也不能忽略，對大型博物館來說，籌辦短期文化活動往往能讓他們在風格與功能上獲得更多能量。

重心改變也使博物館管理方式有所變動。從現在開始，除了文物保存相關服務外，博物館也提供與訪客相關之服務。知識傳播與文物解讀的方式快速轉型，不再只是過往的固定導覽加上專家在展示品前的專題演講。當然，我們不能忘記，很多美術館目前仍維持原來的作法。事實上，受到科學中心利用各種「自己動手體驗」設備的影響，博物館現在也應用博物館展示幫助人們了解抽象的知識。此外，社會博物館也試圖以詢問訪客的角度來處理較敏感的議題。博物館特意一步步讓訪客積極參與。

過去訪客不用費太多心力，只需隨意看看放置於展品下精簡的說明文字，便可以品味享受博物館為他們提供的智識饗宴。但從現在開始，博物館開始徵詢訪客、質詢訪客，有些較創新的專案會要求訪客採取行動或與展品互動，把訪客融入展覽，甚至訪客也成為展示的一部分。

博物館與展覽應用通訊科技現在愈來愈廣泛。通訊科技已成為另一種傳播文化的方式，而且這種方式在今日似乎已成為主流。透過通訊科技，(有些)展覽便可以變得「又好玩又可互動」。「好玩」指的是休閒娛樂。這樣的概念在在顯示，我們無法再以嚴肅的方式來討論枯燥無趣的學識或以緩慢的步調教導學識。人可以一邊享受樂趣，一邊學習，同時涵養自身的學識。學習不再是一件困難的事。互動的概念則意味著展覽方式要現代化、可以快速上手、無需大費周章便可以達到效果，此外，沒有教條而使用者也不需博學多聞，學習者不再受限於過去冗長無趣的教學方式。

吸引訪客的同時，也娛樂他們，並讓他們主動採取行動。這樣的保證自然可以吸引大家的注意。我們可以輕易了解大家為什麼很快地就針對這樣一個口號式的概念達成共識。但要完全理解這個概念，我們必須試圖理解「又好玩又可互動」這個想法的起源。在我們看來，這個想法與兩個正統概念不謀而合：主動式教學的影響和建構理論的崛起。

主動式教學方式起源於教育心理學家迪可羅利(Decroly)、蒙特梭利(Montessori)或杜威(Dewey)的著作。這種教學方式證明我們可以運用不同的教學方式讓孩子主動學習，而不是一味要小孩死背或不斷練習。建構理論則主張，與其由老師選擇學習內容，並努力激起學生的興趣，如果學習者是自己建構這些知識，他們就更不容易忘記自己已習得的東西。

在此我們必須向各位抱歉，我們只能針對這個主題，用過於簡化但可以幫助大家理解的方式，簡短地介紹主動式教學法背後的教育理論。但這個定義可以幫助大家了解對話主義一詞。現代博物館與博物館的展覽會以「對話」為主，不只要與公眾對話，也要確保公眾可以受邀參與，來與展覽內容或特別針對這些目的而設計的設備互動。

我們現在關注的問題不是爭辯對話、公眾參與、發展與互動的益處等等的概念為何。我們關注的是，如果博物館的專業人士現在要選擇他們偏好或認為適合的形式，我們只能選擇符合主流意識的形式。當我們說某個新博物館或某個新展覽提供「又好玩又可以互動」的展覽內容，沒有人會覺得新奇。反而是沒有提供這類內容的展覽才會讓人覺得驚訝。

用對話主義來解釋這整個趨勢，並且明白指出這個概念是由偉大的俄羅斯語言學家巴赫汀(Mikhail Bakhtin)所發明，在我們看來是不夠的。我們要了解一個信奉馬克斯主義(?)的語言學家到底是在怎樣的一個環境中選擇採用對話主義的概念，並且衍生出對話一詞？我們可以說巴赫汀選擇對話主義與對話，是為了要與一般的對話有所區別。巴赫汀認為對話是一種自然的交流方式。他也主張對話主義可以用獨白方式呈現，因為每個人在製造語篇的過程都隱含對話主義。在他的著作中，巴赫汀試圖證明所有的語篇都是一種內在對話。當講者或作者提出論述，我們就可以找到對話。一方面，巴赫汀明示或暗示的是所有其他針對這個主題已發表過的文章或演講，另一方面，他也預期有些聽眾或讀者會在聽到或讀過這些論述會針對他的論點提出批判的反駁或同意他的論點。在其對話主義中，巴赫汀預料現代語言學的其中一個主要研究課題——亦即跨文本——會崛起。

如果我們完全按照巴赫汀的論點，我們會發現大部分的博物館專業人員與策展人在同儕的觀察與監督下與公眾談話時都會談到對話主義與對話。博物館張貼的公告與所有公開文本，以及博物館的展覽和展覽目錄中的文章，不管是否由博物館自己籌辦，只要是以公眾為對象，其本質就是對話(也因此，這些內容對非專業人士來說，往往艱深難懂)。對話，如果對話真的存在，不只是應用溝通工具或教育文章而已，因為這些東西往往都是以學校團體(受限民眾)為主要對象。

此外，我們也要確保對話的內容與形式。再回到「又好玩又可以互動」這個主題，有多少對話能為成人、青少年與孩童提供主動或建構式對話？



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**The dialogic museum
and the visitor experience**

**Le musée dialogique
et l'expérience du visiteur**

**El museo dialógico
y la experiencia del visitante**

可對話的博物館與觀眾經驗

THE DIALOGIC MUSEUM, DICE AND NEURONS: A FEW PERSONAL NOTES ON THE TOPIC

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ABSTRACT

The article attempts to analyze the proposed theme in the context of the development of the natural sciences, and particularly the achievements of the cognitive sciences. The term dialogic museum seems itself not clear as the term in this connection relates to Mikhail Bakhtin. Bakhtin's own ideas of a dialogue and dialogism can hardly be used in relation to "dialogic museum" as they show steps in the development of culture. The most popular part of Bakhtin's conception is the development of the ideas of philosophers of previous generations, especially the German philosophers who were influenced by the Judeo-Christian understanding of The Other and the Fellow Creature, G. Cohen, M. Buber and partly L. Feuerbach, who can be called the predecessors of Bakhtin. The discovery of mirror neurons showed that the statement which was encountered in the philosophy of the 19th century (Fichte) "... there is no subject without object, and there is no object without subject" has a foundation in biology, and that the human mind by its own nature is doomed to dialogue. Consequently any museum being simultaneously the object and the subject of the conscience is a dialogic museum. The task of museologists is to provoke the reflection required by this dialogue. One of the methods of such a reflection is the study of museum visitors. The development of that branch also finds a parallel in natural sciences, where with the development of quantum mechanics, the role of "observer" is seriously revised. Two possible ways to further develop the issue: the interpretation of the development of museums and museology in the context of the development of all of science and culture of the 20th century, and the involvement in museology of experts in the field of cognitive sciences.

RÉSUMÉ

Le Musée Dialogique, les dés et les neurones : quelques remarques personnelles sur le thème proposé

Cet article essaie d'analyser le thème proposé dans le contexte du développement des sciences naturelles, et, notamment, des succès actuels des sciences cognitives. Le terme « musée de dialogue » ne semble pas tout à fait clair, en référence avec la personne de M. Bakhtine. Les idées bakhtiniennes proprement dites du dialogue et du dialogisme ne conviennent pas bien à ce problème, car, en réalité, elles décrivent n'importe quel développement culturel. Dans sa partie la plus populaire les idées de Bakhtine proviennent de la tradition philosophique antérieure, particulièrement allemande, qui avait subi l'influence de la conception judéo-chrétienne de l'Autre (G. Cohen, M. Buber et partiellement L. Feuerbach, etc.). La découverte de neurones-miroirs a montré que l'assertion (déjà rencontrée chez des philosophes du XIX^ès., comme J. Fichte) selon laquelle « sans le sujet il n'y a pas d'objet, comme sans l'objet il n'y a pas de sujet », a une base biologique, et que même le cerveau humain est « condamné » au dialogue par sa nature propre. En conséquence, tout musée, étant en même temps objet et sujet de la conscience, est un musée dialogique. La mission des muséologues est de prêter leur concours à la

réflexion sur ce dialogue. L'un des moyens d'une telle réflexion est l'étude des visiteurs du musée. Le développement de cette tendance trouve aussi son parallèle dans les sciences naturelles où le développement de la physique des *quanta* a modifié sérieusement le rôle de l'observateur. L'étude du problème peut connaître deux directions : d'une part, l'étude du développement des musées et de la muséologie dans le contexte du développement de la totalité des sciences et de la culture au XX^e s., et d'autre part un usage plus prudent des termes muséologiques et l'implication des spécialistes dans le domaine des sciences cognitives.

RESUMEN

El Museo Dialógico, dados y neuronas : algunas observaciones personales sobre el tema propuesto

Este artículo trata de analizar el tema propuesto en el contexto del desarrollo de las ciencias naturales y particularmente en el éxito actual de las ciencias cognitivas. El término museo dialógico no parece del todo claro en referencia a M. Bakhtine. Las ideas de Bakhtine propiamente dichas sobre el diálogo y el dialogismo difícilmente puedan ser usadas en relación a este problema, porque ellas, en realidad, describen cualquier desarrollo cultural. La más popular de las ideas de Bakhtine proviene de los filósofos de la generación previa, particularmente de la escuela alemana, que está bajo la influencia de la concepción judeo cristiana del Otro. G. Cohen, M. Buber y parcialmente L. Feuerbach pueden ser considerados los predecesores de M. Bakhtin. El descubrimiento de la « neuronas espejo » mostró que la aserción (que encontramos en la filosofía del siglo diecinueve, Fichte,) según la cual «... no hay sujeto sin objeto, y no hay objeto sin sujeto» tiene un fundamento biológico, y que la mente humana está, por su propia naturaleza « condenada » al diálogo. En consecuencia, todo museo, siendo al mismo tiempo objeto y sujeto de la conciencia, es un museo dialógico. La meta de los museólogos es provocar la reflexión sobre ese diálogo. Uno de los métodos para lograr esa reflexión, es el estudio de los visitantes de museos. El desarrollo de esa tendencia encuentra también su paralelo en las ciencias naturales donde el desarrollo de la mecánica cuántica ha modificado seriamente el rol del observador. El estudio del problema puede desarrollarse en dos direcciones, por una parte el estudio del desarrollo de los museos y de la museología en el contexto del desarrollo de la totalidad de las ciencias y de la cultura del siglo XX, y por otra parte un uso más prudente de los términos museológicos con la implicación de los especialistas en el campo de las ciencias cognitivas.

摘要

對話型博物館、骰子與神經元：個人對此主題的觀點

本文試圖從自然科學發展的角度，特別是以認知學的發展成果來分析大會主題。「對話型博物館」一詞與巴赫汀(Mikhail Bakhtin)的關聯很清楚，但這個詞彙的定義並不明確。巴赫汀自己對對話與對話主義的想法是從文化發展的角度出發，與「對話型博物館」並沒有太大關聯。巴赫汀的概念最受歡迎的部分其實集結了過去數個世代的哲學家發所提出的想法，特別是受到猶太基督教之他者與同類思想影響的德國哲學家，包括科恩(G. Cohen)、布柏(M. Buber)。費爾巴哈(L. Feuerbach)也有受到影響。這些哲學家可說是巴赫汀的先輩。鏡像神經元的發現顯示十九世紀哲學(費希特 Fichte)的論點：「無客體便無主體，

無主體便無客體」也可應用在生物學，同時人類心理的本質也受到對話的影響。因此，博物館可同時扮演對話型博物館意識上的主體與客體。博物館可透過訪客研究取得這一類的映射。自然科學也有類似的發展，量子力學正重新審視並修正「觀者」的角色。若要進一步發展此主題，有兩種方式：一是從 20 世紀科學與文化發展的角度來詮釋博物館與博物館學之發展，二是讓博物館專家參與認知科學之研究。

* * *

Introduction and fulfilled expectations

In one of his letters addressed to Niels Bohr, Albert Einstein wrote, protesting against the famous Copenhagen scientist's interpretation: "... *He* (i.e. God) does not throw dice". The same words came to mind when I found that ICOFOM suggested as a theme for the meeting in 2011: "The Dialogic museum". ICOFOM wasn't going to throw dice, I thought, so such a thing as "The Dialogic museum" had to exist in reality, it possesses its own distinctive features and it differs from the ordinary museum. A note on this topic, written by Dr. Jennifer Harris, didn't take away all my doubts, but now I could feel myself a little more clever, as there I met the name that I expected to see, that of Mikhail Bakhtin. Since the prominent Franco-Bulgarian philosophers Julia Kristeva and Tzvetan Todorov made great efforts to popularize his works he has become in our time in Europe almost a synonym to a concept of dialogue. I can note in parenthesis that in Russia only today the first academic edition of M. Bakhtin's works has been published, so the final (if we can use such a definition) analysis of his ideas will be possible only afterwards. Anyway...

Concerning Mikhail Bakhtin and Co.

As Jennifer Harris justly noted:

The other and self is not characterized as creating a binary by Bakhtin, but a multiplying process suggesting a vigorous network of meaning as the self is created in relation to others. To understand the self, therefore, multiples of others must also be considered¹.

At the same time this part of Bakhtin's conception is a development of the ideas of philosophers of previous generations, especially the German philosophers who were influenced by Judeo-Christian understanding of The Other and the Fellow Creature, G. Cohen, M. Buber and partly L. Feuerbach, who can be called the predecessors of Bakhtin². In this context Bakhtin's philosophy was included in the discussion by default and not because of the real substance of his work. The original development of the idea of dialogue that can be found in his work won't be useful for understanding of the topic's problems, as Daniel Jacobi noted:

If we hold strictly to the work of Bakhtin we will find dialogism and dialogic in most of the writings of museum professionals and curators when they address the public under the eye of and monitored by their peers³.

¹ Jennifer Harris, "Dialogism and Visitor Experience". Note on the topic. URL: <http://network.icom.museum/icofom/meetings/next-conference.html>

² Vyacheslav V. Ivanov, "The Dominant of Bakhtin's Philosophy: Dialog and Carnival", *Critical Studies*, no. 3(2), 4(1/2), 1993, p. 3-12.

³ Daniel Jacobi, "Dialogism in museums". Provocative paper. URL: <http://network.icom.museum/icofom/meetings/next-conference.html>

So, every museum can turn out to be dialogic, and our meeting will be a game of dice.

It is very easy to avoid such a situation. It will be enough to reject Bakhtin's ideas as the subjective product of the mind of a concrete philosopher, whose conclusions we cannot verify. I will try to show you that this is not so, and we have some cogent arguments that in some ways a man "is sentenced to dialogue", and every museum, regardless of the techniques used there, is a dialogic museum.

Neurons, monkeys and other dark things

Bakhtin took much from the store of the natural sciences. His crucial concepts of "dominant" and "chronotope" are particularly good examples⁴. It is a well known fact that he took the term "chronotope" from the famous Russian physiologist A. A. Ukhtomsky. The ambition of the humanities to prove and support their own conjectures and insights by referring to the natural sciences is a characteristic feature of the development of the sciences during the second half of the 20th century. Semiology and structuralism are the most impressive (but not the only) examples of it. Speaking about dialogue nowadays we also need to respond to this field and to remember the discovery of a group of Italian researchers headed by Giacomo Rizzolatti of mirror neurons.

They found that some of the neurons they recorded would respond when the monkey saw a person pick up a piece of food as well as when the monkey picked up the food:

Presenting widely different visual stimuli, but which all represent the same action, is equally effective. For example, the same grasping mirror neuron that responds to a human hand grasping an object responds also when the grasping hand is that of a monkey. Similarly, the response is typically not affected if the action is done near or far from the monkey, in spite of the fact that the size of the observed hand is obviously different in the two conditions. It is also of little importance for neuron activation if the observed action is eventually rewarded⁵.

More recently Christian Keysers and his colleagues have shown that the mirror system also responds to the sound of actions too⁶. There are two main hypotheses on the role of these neurons. The first is that mirror-neuron activity mediates imitation; the second is that mirror neurons are at the basis of the action of understanding. The presence of mirror neurons in the human brain cannot be taken as a proven fact, but we see a lot of indirect evidence of it. In addition, the role of these neurons in the process of cognition is considered by many researchers to be their main role:

Each time an individual sees an action done by another individual, neurons that represent that action are activated in the observer's premotor cortex. This automatically induced, motor representation of the observed action corresponds to that which is spontaneously generated during active action and whose outcome is known to the acting individual. Thus, the mirror system transforms visual information into knowledge⁷.

⁴ Vyacheslav V. Ivanov, "Towards a Theory of the Speech of the Other Person", *Elementa. Journal of Slavic Studies and of Comparative Cultural Semiotics*, vol. 4, no.1, 1998, p.71-96.

⁵ Giacomo Rizzolatti, Laila Craighero, "The Mirror-Neuron System", *Annual Review of Neuroscience*, 2004, no. 27, p.170.

⁶ Christian Keysers et al, "Audiovisual mirror neurons and action recognition", *Experimental Brain Research*, 2003, no. 153, p. 628-636.

⁷ Giacomo Rizzolatti, Laila Craighero, "The Mirror-Neuron System", *Annual Review of Neuroscience*, 2004, no. 27, p.172.

Maybe it is premature, but the mirror neurons are examined by numerous researchers as one of the most important factors in the evolution of mankind⁸. In some respect we can say that mirror neurons are the foundation for communication, the neural basis of a mechanism that creates a direct link between the sender of a message and its receiver. Thanks to this mechanism, actions done by other individuals become messages that are understood by an observer without any cognitive mediation⁹.

Without that the famous model of Duncan Cameron simply could not operate¹⁰.

Thereby for our mind it is not so important whether we are operating ourselves, or whether the action is produced by somebody to whom we are listening or at whom we are looking. At the beginning of the 19th century Johann Gottlieb Fichte wrote: "... there is no subject without object, and there is no object without subject". In the 20th century this idea was repeated by the above-mentioned A. A. Ukhtomsky. These words seemed to be an illustration of the latest discovery: communication with the Other, dialogue with a Different, seem to be the biological characteristics of our mind. The same experiments showed that the brain responds equally to actions performed by the representative of the same kind as to actions performed by the representative of a different kind. The museum as the place of the representation of the Other inevitably appears as a place of dialogue. The aim of museologists is not to stimulate this dialogue, but to provoke reflection about this dialogue. When thinking it over, it acquires the meaning of the *human* dialogue.

Who will observe observers?

One of the main forms of that reflection is museum visitor studies. And we proceed to the second part of the theme proposed by ICOFOM – "the visitor experience". As Eilean Hooper-Greenhill wrote:

It is only very recently that the different kinds of evaluation and research, carried out by different agents and agencies for different purposes, have been conceptualized in a collective way under the banner of "visitor studies"¹¹.

At the same time we can find separate case studies at the beginning of 20th century. For example, in the middle of 1920s. this trend was actively developed in Soviet Russia, in such museums as Tretyakov Gallery or the State Historical Museum. It seems that in this case the development of one of the branches of museology followed the general path of the development of science at the second half of the 20th century. It was in the first third of the 20th century that one of the principles of quantum mechanics – the principle of the observer – was formulated. The Observer was not the neutral participant in the experiment; he himself, by his presence, defined that experiment. As noticed later by John Archibald Wheeler, the act of observation was the act of creation.

⁸ Vilayanur S. Ramachandran, "Mirror neurons and imitation learning as the driving force behind "the great leap forward" in human evolution". URL: <http://williamlspencer.com/mirrorneurons.pdf>

⁹ Giacomo Rizzolatti, Laila Craighero, "The Mirror-Neuron System", *Annual Review of Neuroscience*, 2004, no. 27, p.183.

¹⁰ Duncan F. Cameron, "A viewpoint: The Museum as a Communications System and Implications for Museum", *Curator: The Museum journal*, March 1968, Vol. 11, no. 1. p. 33-40. This general linear model of museum communication (or transmission model) is based on the information theory of Claude E. Shannon. The three main parts of this scheme of communication are: transmitter (museum people) – channel (exhibits) – receiver (museum audience). Hooper-Greenhill made a few critical remarks on this theory, but even in this simple scheme the basic presupposition for communication is the capacity of our brain to receive/mirror given information.

¹¹ Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, "Studying Visitors", in: Macdonald, Sharon (ed), *Companion to Museum Studies*, Chichester, England: Wiley, 2008, p. 363.

Little by little the literal arts, starting with anthropology, began to acknowledge that this postulate was correct. The turn to orienting museum activity towards visitors in the 1960s and 1970s was the beginning of this recognition. One consequence was the development of the concepts of museum communication and of including them in museum management.

Conclusion and new expectations

What are the conclusions from all that is said above? We recall the quotation that was mentioned at the beginning: “ ... He does not throw dice”. Niels Bohr answered his colleague: “Einstein, don't tell God what to do”. In a sense, these words can be taken as advice to all of us: don't tell the visitors what they have to do. Their minds will do it by themselves and will do it better than you. Any museum is a dialogic museum by the nature of the human mind: as the object of cognition (doomed to dialogue) and as the subject of consciousness (also doomed to dialogue). Probably today it is the time to expand the set of professions in museum communication to include experts in the cognitive sciences, as happened 50 – 70 years ago when professional educators and sociologists began to participate in museum activities. They will help in reflecting on the theme of the dialogue that takes place in museums. It seems very important to reconsider our terminology. In that sense the use of definitions such as “the dialogic museum” does not seem fruitful to me, as its meaning is indistinct, and the choice of the definition “dialogic”, as I tried to show earlier is not unequivocal.

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EXPERIENCING DIALOGUE: BEHIND THE CURTAINS OF MUSEUM PERFORMANCE

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*“I’m glad you appreciate my work at last, Dorian,’ said the painter, coldly, when he had recovered from his surprise. ‘I never thought you would’. ‘Appreciate it? I am in love with it, Basil. It is part of myself. I feel that.’ ‘Well, as soon as you are dry, you shall be varnished, and framed, and sent home. Then you can do what you like with yourself.’”
(Oscar Wilde - “The picture of Dorian Gray”)*

ABSTRACT

This paper proposes a theory of performance for museums. In museums, the theatrical analogy has for long been used to explain the relation to the audience. Museum and theater are analogous in the encounter they promote with the authentic. But museums do not simply present the real; through performance, museums add something else to reality. Musealization, thus, is a reflexive process: like in a verb, it instates the subjunctive mood in reality, and it plays with the things in the real. In fact, like in the example of ecomuseums, it is no longer possible to use the metaphor of the mirror. The museum performance, then, works as if it could restore the past through regenerative action. Museums perform the past, and also our relationships – as actors in the present – with it. Performance is a plea for the permanent creation of a new attitude towards the ‘old’, familiar aspects of the world. Museums, thus, not only perform for their audiences, but they perform the audiences, generating reflexive dialogues from which identities arise.

Keywords: Museum. Museology. Performance. Audience. Identity.

RÉSUMÉ

L’expérimentation du dialogue : derrière les rideaux de la performance muséale

Cet article propose une théorie de la performance pour les musées. Dans les musées, l’analogie avec le théâtre a été utilisée, depuis longtemps, pour expliquer la relation avec le public. Le musée et le théâtre se ressemblent dans la rencontre qu’ils promeuvent avec l’authentique. Mais les musées ne représentent pas simplement le réel ; au moyen de la performance les musées ajoutent quelque chose de plus au réel. La muséalisation est donc un procédé réfléchi : comme dans un verbe, elle instaure le mode subjonctif dans la réalité, et elle joue avec les choses du réel. En effet, comme dans l’exemple des écomusées, il n’est plus possible d’utiliser la métaphore du miroir. La performance muséale fonctionne alors comme si la restauration du passé pour l’action régénératrice était possible. Les musées représentent le passé, et aussi nos relations présentes avec ce passé. La performance est un appel pour la création permanente d’une nouvelle attitude à l’égard du “vieux”, des aspects familiers du monde. Ainsi les musées ne s’exposent pas seulement pour leurs publics, mais ils exposent leurs publics, en générant des dialogues réfléchis à partir desquels les identités sont formées.

Mots-clé: Musée. Muséologie. Performance. Public. Identité.

RESUMEN

Experimentando el diálogo: descorriendo el velo de las performance en Museos

Este artículo propone una teoría de *Performance* para museos. En los museos, la analogía con el teatro fue, por mucho tiempo usada para explicar la relación con el público. El museo y el teatro son análogos en el encuentro que promueven con lo auténtico. Pero los museos no representan simplemente lo real, a través de *performance* enriquecen la realidad. La musealización es un proceso reflexivo: como un verbo instauro el modo subjuntivo de la realidad y juega con las cosas de lo real. De hecho como en el ejemplo de los ecomuseos, ya no es más posible usar la metáfora del espejo. La *Performance* museal, entonces, funciona como si pudiese restaurar el pasado a través de una acción regenerativa. Los museos representan el pasado, y también nuestras relaciones, como actores del presente, con ese pasado. La *Performance* es una apelación a la creación permanente a una nueva postura en relación a los 'viejos' y familiares aspectos del mundo. Los museos, de esta manera, no sólo presentan una *performance* para sus públicos, sino que representan a los públicos en la *performance*, produciendo diálogos reflexivos desde donde se conforman las identidades.

Palabras clave: Museo. Museología. Performance. Público. Identidad.

摘要

體驗對話：拉開博物館表演的序幕

本文為博物館提出一表演理論。博物館界長久以來一直都用戲劇的觀念來說明博物館與訪客間的關係。博物館與劇場都強調要讓訪客能夠有真實的體驗。但博物館不能只是呈現真實；透過表演，博物館還能提供訪客更豐富的體驗。博物館省思是一種省思過程。就像動詞一樣，這個詞彙意涵著我們對現實的主觀感受，同時也與現實中的事物有所交集。事實上，從生態博物館的例子，我們就可以了解，我們已經無法再使用鏡子來譬喻。但博物館表演的概念可以透過為博物館帶來新生命。博物館表演的是過去的事物和我們這些演員與這些事物的關係。表演便是不斷以新的態度來面對這個世界上「古老」熟悉的一切。因此，博物館不單只是為訪客表演，也表演訪客。這樣的方式也讓我們可以省思博物館到底有哪些身份。

關鍵字：博物館、博物館學、表演、觀眾、認同

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1. Opening the curtains for a *reflexive* museology

In the past decades in the social sciences a major move has been occurring towards the study of processes, mediations and performances. More and more, some renowned social scientists have been studying 'man' as a self-performing animal. A theory of performance applied to museums, however, has surprisingly never been

developed by the museology thinkers. In fact, the performance angle has been, until now, underexplored, considering its potential to reveal how museums operate and produce cultural meanings.

It is safe to point out that in our daily lives the main mediator of the dialogues we establish is performance. Through its action we are who we are to ourselves and to others – and identities are created and exercised in this process. Every action that supposes the existence of an audience, or of the elusive ‘Other’, involves a performance. As Erving Goffman put it, ordinary life in a social structure is itself a performance¹. The Museum, as a fluid part of the modern social reality, is a consecrated realm where performance and theatricality can be freely manifested.

As an intrinsic part of “social dramas”², cultural performance is always connected to ‘real’ events, but performances are not simple expressions of culture or even of changing culture. According to Victor Turner, they may be active agencies of change themselves, “representing the eye by which culture sees itself”³. Considering some cultural forms as not so much *reflective* as *reflexive*, Turner points out that here the analogy is not with a mirror but rather with a reflexive verb. In that sense, culture, like verbs, has, in most languages, at least two “moods”, indicative and subjunctive, and these are most hopelessly intermingled. As Turner explained it, when society bends back on itself, it

meanders, inverts, perhaps lies to itself, and puts everything so to speak into the subjunctive mood as well as the reflexive voice.⁴

By doing that, society works in a state of supposition, desire and possibility, rather than stating actual facts. This arrangement of things dissolves what were once factual components of reality and instates a more playful spirit. In that case, the very idea of what is true or false in a culture corresponds to the particular frames within which these assertions are made – this means that “one culture’s truth may be another culture’s fantasy”⁵.

A ‘reflex’ presupposes ‘realism’. But of course, even in the context of a museum, or in art and literature, realism is only a matter of artifice and what is real is a result of cultural definition. For Turner, the genres of cultural performance are not simple mirrors, but rather “magical mirrors of social reality”, because they are capable of exaggerating, inverting, re-formatting, magnifying, minimizing and even falsifying, the known chronicled events⁶. For that reason, the museum performance is not one without ethical consequences. It involves not just the truth, but what people think of the truth. By performing culture through drama to a society, museums also enact the very drama of the ‘museum’, its meaning, its authority, its power.

Performative reflexivity is a condition in which a sociocultural group, or its most perceptive members acting representatively, turn, bend or reflect back upon themselves, upon the relations, actions, symbols, meanings, codes, roles, statuses,

¹ Erving Goffman, *A representação do eu na vida cotidiana*, [The presentation of self in everyday life], Petrópolis: Vozes, 2009, passim.

² Social dramas are, in Turner’s performance theory, social processes in which societies can understand themselves by having its structure exposed through a series of conflictive events or crisis. For the author, drama is rooted in social reality, which is why it is useful to explain it. Turner, Victor, *The Anthropology of Performance*, New York: PAJ Publications, 1988, passim.

³ Id, “Images and reflections: ritual, drama, carnival, film, and spectacle in cultural performance”; in: Turner, op. cit., p.24.

⁴ Ibidem, p.25.

⁵ Victor Turner, “Social drama in Brazilian umbanda. The dialects of meaning”; in: Turner, Victor, *The Anthropology of Performance*, New York: PAJ Publications, 1988, p.41.

⁶ Ibidem, p.42.

social structures, ethical and legal rules, and other sociocultural components which make up their public ‘selves’⁷. The reflexivity, then, is not mere reflex, a quick, automatic or habitual response to some stimulus, but it is highly artificial, cultural, theatrical or even museal. Things in a museum exhibition are things that we have to think about. They are performed: I don’t think about a spoon when I’m eating at home or at a restaurant, but once the spoon is in the showcase of a museum I’m led to think about it because I am, then, confronted with the performed spoon and I’m obliged to dialogue with it.

The reason why museums are powerful is for because they are subjunctive versions of reality and of ourselves (as audiences). Mind that we are not looking for definitions here (and indeed, all definitions are themselves performative⁸), but if we had to choose a verb to describe how museums work, we could easily say that museums are *performed*.

2. Museum and theater

In different occasions museums have been compared to other dramatic social institutions, like temples, churches or even royal palaces. What all these institutions have in common, though, is the practice of performance. Initially perceived by anthropologists in ritual, performance was defined by often being ordered by a dramatic structure, a plot, which gives sense and brings to life the interdependent communicative codes of a social group. For Richard Schechner ritual is only one side of performance, theater being the other⁹. According to him, ritual and theater define different domains of performance, and most performance genres happen somewhere in between the two of them.

Throughout history, museums have flown from one domain to the other, becoming more and more theatrical while never abandoning their previous ritualistic position. With ritual, museums perpetuate in societies the belief in their undisputed, sacred power, by performing the *museological drama* in which museums would be eternal temples of the truth. With theater, on the contrary, they start recognizing their playful, subjunctive mood, revealing that a single truth does not stand.

Progressively, in the social sciences, the drama analogy is being used for social life – and for understanding social institutions – in a less depreciatory “mere show” mode, and more in a constructional, genuinely dramaturgical one, “in which ‘making’ is not the same as ‘faking’”¹⁰ as in its general use. In museums, the theatrical analogy has for long been used to explain the relation to the audience. Museum and theater are analogous in the encounter they promote. In both instances the audience expects to see the real, the authentic, yet not in its ‘ordinary’ form. What is presented is a new setting of the things from reality, in which real things *re-act* the real.

There is an ontological difference between reality and what museums re-present. Although constituted of the real, the museum performance differentiates itself from reality. Museums offer something else for their audiences, something that goes beyond the ordinary world of things that exist outside of the museological frame. In other words, there is more in the museum performance than there is in ordinary life.

⁷ Id, “Images and reflections: ritual, drama, carnival, film, and spectacle in cultural performance”; in: Turner, op. cit., p.24.

⁸ Henry Bial, “Introduction”, p.1-4; in: Bial, Henry (ed.), *The performance studies reader*, London and New York: Routledge, 2008. p.1.

⁹ Richard Schechner, *Between theater and anthropology*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985, passim.

¹⁰ Clifford Geertz, “Blurred genres. The refiguration of social thought”, p.66-69; in: Bial, Henry (ed.), *The performance studies reader*, London and New York: Routledge, 2008. p.66.

Spectators, in general, are very aware of the moment when a performance takes off. A 'presence' is manifested. Something has 'happened'. The performers have touched or moved the audience, and some kind of collaboration, collective special theatrical life, is born. This intensity of performance has been called "flow" by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi¹¹, and it may be defined here as a *dialogical force* that takes both the performers and the audience to another level of existence. The museum, in the encounter of the objects and the spectators, transport them to an environment that is not real life, but, yet, that is still the real.

Martin Schärer calls attention to the artificiality of the exhibition situation¹², in which – it is possible to say – things and persons are out of context, and a 'new', reframed reality must be composed so that they can establish a fresh relationship in the museum scenario. This artificiality comes from the fact that, as Marc Maure put it, in the real world, objects do not exist in isolation: "an isolated object is a hypothetical construction"¹³. In other words we can say that after an object is removed from a previous context and it enters the museum scenario most of his past is left to the *imagination*. Hence, musealization is much more a subjective process than an objective one. For Schärer, an essential reason for this lies in the fact that, thanks to their physical durability, things often outlive the meaning systems of their first life¹⁴ – which is usually related to a performative value that have been assigned to them in the past, justifying their durability in the present. What museums musealize, in the end, is not the thing in itself, but all the relationships it can perform, and the values produced in these performances. And there is no deceiving in this process, since the audience knows where the line has been drawn between reality and theater. The spectators' emotions, from the moment the performance starts, are real in the new state they experience.

The essence of museums, as well as that of theater, is presentation. This essence – that can be translated as *theatricality* in one case, and *museality* in the other – is a way to look at the things in their context of origin as if they were strange to it, or, in a slightly different situation, a way to make things that are exotic and dislocated look completely ordinary. Theatrical performances stage repetitions as if they were brand new. A theatrical audience sees the material of real life presented (or re-presented) in a new meaningful form. But, of course, according to Turner, it is not just a matter of simplifying and ordering emotional and cognitive experiences that are chaotic in 'real life'. It is more a matter of raising problems about the ordering principles deemed acceptable in "real life"¹⁵. Theater is, in the end, simply a creation from the re-creation of the world – and in that sense it doesn't differ much from the work of musealization.

2.1 Between "to be" and "not to be": indeterminacy in performance

In a performance the 'self' is split up the middle. According to Turner it becomes something that one both is and that one sees and, furthermore, acts upon as though it were another¹⁶. Between the multiple selves, the dialogue, then, occurs inside the performer and each of the spectators. It is offered to them the chance to act upon their own selves. To make it possible, a performance involves a separation, a transition (or

¹¹ Csikszentmihalyi (1975, p.35-36, apud Schechner, 1985, p.10).

¹² Martin R. Schärer, "Museology and History", *JSS* 35, 2006, p. 35-51. p.36.

¹³ Maure, Marc, "The exhibition as theatre. On the staging of museum objects", *Nordisk Museologi*, n.2, 1995, p.159.

¹⁴ Schärer, op. cit., p.36.

¹⁵ Victor Turner, "Images and reflections: ritual, drama, carnival, film, and spectacle in cultural performance"; in: Turner, Victor, *The Anthropology of Performance*, New York: PAJ Publications, 1988. p.27.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p.25.

liminality), and an incorporation¹⁷ (or restoration), and each of these phases is carefully marked. In initiations people are transformed permanently, whereas in most performances the transformations are temporary (transportations). Like initiations, performances “make” one person into another. But as Schechner points out, unlike initiations, usually in performances the performer gets his own self back. The performance itself is liminal, analogous to the rites of transition¹⁸. The *liminality* is, indeed, an important aspect of theater, because it instates the gap between social life and the performance genre.

A *limen*, as it has been defined in Arnold van Gennep’s theory, is a “threshold”, and the author uses the term to denote the central of the three phases of the “rites of passage”. In these processes, rituals separate specified members of a group from everyday life, placing them in a limbo that was not any place they were in before, and then returning them, changed in some way, to mundane life¹⁹. Rites of passage, as rites of separation, imply a detachment from the social structure. When separated from its structure an individual can look at its own society, admire its own values and maybe even rethink them. As an incomplete rite, theater has its focus on the liminal stage of ritual. It fosters a transportation that may or may not imply a transformation of the actors involved.

Being ritual the mediation between form and indeterminacy, and liminality the stage of ritual that embraces the indeterminate and that evinces the ambiguities of society, performance can be understood as a moment of reflection because it exposes the chaos in the social structure. Museum and theater are instances where the boundaries of reality and fantasy are usually imprecise. The liminal state that is created in theater and in museums is implicit in the space between an actor and its mask. According to Schechner, the distance between the character and the performer allows a commentary to be inserted²⁰. That is precisely why for the actor to succeed he or she must never lose contact with the true self. The mask is not a lie, it is simply a liminal state in which something or someone can be itself and yet not itself. For Goffman, the masks that we wear in our everyday lives may represent the conception we have formed of ourselves, the role we are striving to live up to – the mask is our truer self, the self we would like to be²¹. And so, most of the times, liminality contains more information about reality than reality itself.

Performance is a plea for the permanent creation of a new attitude towards the ‘old’, familiar aspects of the world. In the occasion which an individual plays a part, “he implicitly requests his observers to take seriously the impression that is fostered before them”, and in the relation that is, then, established the observers are asked to believe “that the character they see actually possesses the attributes he appears to possess”²². The belief in what is performed is in fact a belief in the belief of the performer in its own performance, and it is, indeed, a precondition for the audience to be *transported* with the performer. In that moment when the performer is “betwixt and between”²³, in Turner’s words, it isn’t that he or she stops being himself or herself when becoming another, the fact is that “multiple selves coexist in an unresolved dialectical tension”²⁴. Responding to that tension, Fabian introduces the thesis that “if ‘to be or not to be’ is

¹⁷ Van Gennep (1980 [1960] apud Turner, 1988).

¹⁸ Richard Schechner, *Between theater and anthropology*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985. p.20.

¹⁹ Turner, op. cit., p.25.

²⁰ Schechner, op. cit., p.9.

²¹ Park (1950, p.249, Goffman, 2008, p.62).

²² Erving Goffman, “Performances. Belief in the part one is playing”, p.61-65; in: Bial, Henry (ed.), *The performance studies reader*, London and New York: Routledge, 2008. p.61.

²³ Victor Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance*, New York: PAJ Publications, 1988, passim.

²⁴ Richard Schechner, *Between theater and anthropology*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985. p.6.

the question, then ‘to be *and* not to be’ – the most succinct conception of performance in his view – “might be the answer”²⁵.

2.2 Regenerative action, or how museums perform

As something that is located in a liminal position between worlds of meanings, theater owes its specific genesis to what Schechner has described as “restoring the past”. In fact, for this author, the main characteristic of performance is *restored behavior*. Behavior is, indeed, separate from those who are behaving; it can be stored, transmitted, manipulated, transformed²⁶. For that matter, all behavior can be repeated, which justifies the common belief in the fact that past behaviors can be restored – and that museums can restore the past. Performance, then, means “never for the first time”; in Schechner’s view performance is “twice-behaved behavior”. And as the author defines it,

Restored behavior can be put on the way a mask or costume is. Its shape can be seen from the outside, and changed. [...] Existing as “second nature”, restored behavior is always subjected to revision. This “secondness” combines negativity and subjunctivity.²⁷

Schechner classifies restored behavior as either a projection of “my particular self” or a restoration of a historically verifiable past, or – most often – a restoration of a past that never was²⁸. In this last case, in which the past is invented in the present as if it was ‘real’ or ‘right’, the performance is valuable for its effects on the present. The ‘fabricated’ tradition is heritage that is acquired in the present, and in the present it can be effectively used. This common occurrence, of a performance that *creates* the past when ‘repeating’ it, can be thought as a ‘*true invention*’, a familiar notion for museums.

In order for a performance to ‘work’, the restored behavior must be able to convince the audience about its legitimacy. As a result, meaning will arise in memory, in cognition of the past, and it will be concerned with negotiation about the “fit” between past and present²⁹. Meanings in museums work as bonds that connect people to other people, and people to their flux of present identities. By working on the restoration of the past, museums produce this ‘true inventions’ that make the past “fit” the present, and vice-versa. They accommodate the rests³⁰, by creating new bridges between past and present. The museum action is, indeed, a regenerative one.

Regenerative action can be seen in many known examples of museums that were born in the subsequent moment and in the exact place where something goes missing. If we go back to the 1970s, in France, when the first ecomuseum was being conceived, in the urban community of the *Creusot Montceau-les-Mines*, where a cultural institution was being created by the very social group that would benefit from it, we will see how the past is restored in the present, within a complex net of meaningful negotiations. What happened there, in the end of the 1960s, was the ruin of an industrial empire which led to the rearrangement of its rests in order to form a new kind of museum later, where the old industrial symbols of the region became nostalgic monuments of ‘ancient times’³¹. The Creusot, then, in the 1970s, after being a temple for the industry,

²⁵ Johannes Fabian, “Theater and anthropology, theatricality and culture”, p.208-215; in: Bial, Henry (ed.), *The performance studies reader*, London and New York: Routledge, 2008. p.212.

²⁶ Schechner, op. cit., p.35.

²⁷ Ibidem, p.37.

²⁸ Ibidem, p.38.

²⁹ Victor Turner, Victor, *From ritual to theatre*. The human seriousness of play, New York: PAJ Publications, 1982. p.75.

³⁰ Octave Debary, *La fin du Creusot ou L’art d’accommoder les restes*, Paris: CTHS, 2002, passim.

³¹ François Mairesse, *Le musée temple spectaculaire*, Paris: Universitaire de Lion, 2002. p.108.

becomes a theater for the memory of a village that wanted to revolutionize its history thanks to the museum³².

The ecomuseum of the Creusot³³ was defined by some of the authors who studied it after the experiment was over, as a particular case in which the rests of a strongly forgettable past fought to be remembered through the re-acting of history and of the social relations from before. Meanwhile, by trying to restore the past from its scars, the Creusot became something else, and the objects that would be preserved as valuable heritage of that group were never seen with the same eyes that saw them in their ordinary lives. After the industry was gone, and the museum performance took place, they became rare products of an activity that couldn't produce them any longer³⁴. They constituted, in that moment, pieces of collections; they were testimonies of the social relations within which they existed. The museum, here, is responsible for the regeneration of a reality that perhaps never was, and yet it was brought to life. With the label of an 'ecomuseum', this museum takes the role of restituting people for what they have lost. This restitution takes form in the regeneration of the emotional bonds with the past, or with what people imagine of it. The performance, then, fills the gaps left by the time dilapidation, restoring the emotional tissue.

Dialogue is what keeps museums alive, and all museums are dialogic; whether they foster dialogues with different peoples, different times or places, they will always be responsible for promoting meaningful dialogues within the very individuals who are part of their audience. Museums do not deal with the past, but with what is possible to do with it. In that sense, history is not what happened but what is encoded and transmitted. Performance is not merely a selection from data arranged and interpreted; it is behavior itself "and carries in itself kernels of originality, making it the subject for further interpretation, the source of further study"³⁵. And, so, re-remembering is not merely the restoration of some past intact, but setting it in living relationship to the present³⁶. Museums perform the past, and also our relationships – as actors in the present – with it.

3. Towards a relative museology: the audience as experience

As it was stated by Oscar Wilde, "it is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors"³⁷. Performance – as the art of giving oneself to an audience – is, indeed, distinct from what we call life, or reality. Museums are not showcases of 'life', but platforms for performances. Likewise, museums are not conceived as mirrors of its spectators; their work is presenting a reflexive version of their audiences. Performance is always performance *for* someone: it is the audience that recognizes and validates it as performance. Museums are dialogic because they are conceived as means between cultures, individuals, imaginaries and experiences. As a performative phenomenon, a museum is made of what it performs. And for that reason, 'visitors' can only be conceived as unpredictable experiences, or expectations.

As the fertile movement of New Museology has shown in the past decades, museums not only perform for their audiences, but they perform the audiences. Hence, the

³² Debary, op. cit., p.9.

³³ *Écomusée de la Communauté urbaine Le Creusot-Montceau-Les-Mines – musée de l'Homme et de l'Industrie*.

³⁴ Thierry Bonnot, *La vie des objets : d'ustensiles banals à objets de collection*, Paris: Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 2002. p.6.

³⁵ Richard Schechner, *Between theater and anthropology*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985. p.51.

³⁶ Victor Turner, *From ritual to theatre*. The human seriousness of play, New York: PAJ Publications, 1982. p.86.

³⁷ Oscar Wilde, *The picture of Dorian Gray*, London: Penguin popular classics, 1994. p.6.

paradigm of performance for museums instates that ‘visitors’ should actively engage as cultural participants, and not passive consumers. The audience is an agent in the so-called ‘new’ participatory museums – and that is, perhaps, the main reason for their success. These institutions where identities are exposed and explored are very familiar with differences. Rather than delivering the same content to everyone, a participatory institution collects and shares diverse, personalized and changing content co-produced with the audiences³⁸. What is collected and valued here are not objects or subjects, but the experiences that arise from their interactions. The work of the museum, in the best case scenario, is to give something and to get something back.

For all that, the issue of the role of theatricality and performance in gaining knowledge of other cultures and of our own is a problem that will force us to question the very concept of culture as defining identities, because identities are themselves also liminal. According to Fabian, taking theatricality seriously may lead us to doubt the equation of social existence with cultural identity³⁹. Culture is, then, a result of meaningful dialogues which produce the idea of identities, i.e. of belonging to a certain performance.

Dialogue is an encounter of experiences, but also an encounter of expectations, which is the main ingredient of performance. The ‘Other’ is actually an intrinsic part of the performance. In fact, it is usually this sometimes elusive ‘Other’ in the audience – which is an imagined audience that exists inside of the self – that dictates the performance. For Fabian, the greatest challenge for intercultural tolerance is not to accept, on some philosophical or political principle, the values and beliefs of the other culture. Instead, the real confrontation with the otherness in its everyday theatrical forms of self-presentation requires courage, imagination and practice⁴⁰. Performances are not tolerated or accepted, they are experienced and they are lived.

To become a platform for the expression of different ‘selves’ and different performances, a museum has to make itself vulnerable in the first place, so that its users can express their own identities relative to the institution. The essence of this dialogical process is the notion of a *relativization for museums*, throughout which they will rehearse new ways of existing socially, no longer as centers of impositions but as *indeterminate phenomena*. With the relativization of the Museum and its object, we instantly promote the relativization of the audience. Museums cannot predict what the audience will see inside their walls, as much as the spectator can’t predict how a certain museum will interpret a particular topic or an object. And that doesn’t result in a problematic relationship, because the element of surprise is often important for performances and performers.

Furthermore, in museums where the audience is also the performer (community museums or ecomuseums), i.e. in which the creators put themselves in the position of ‘visitors’, the two roles are played in different moments of the performance. This means that it is an illusion to believe in the fable according to which the ecomuseum *is* the reality. Every museum is a representation, and the metaphor of the mirror has already been broken. As Desvallées puts it, the “dead object” represented in the museum is not the same as the object alive somewhere else⁴¹, because, as we have seen it, museums add something else to reality, and this additional part of the musealized things is performance.

³⁸ Nina Simon, *The Participatory Museum*, Santa Cruz, California: Museum 2.0, 2010. p.iii.

³⁹ Johannes Fabian, “Theater and anthropology, theatricality and culture”, p.208-215; in: Bial, Henry (ed.), *The performance studies reader*, London and New York: Routledge, 2008. p.212.

⁴⁰ Ibidem. p.214.

⁴¹ André Desvallées, “Introduction”. p.11-31; in: Desvallées, André (dir.), *Publics et Musées, L’ecomusée: rêve ou réalité*, n°.17-18, Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 2000. p.13.

Museums have been defined as temples, in the era of their unquestionable power, and as forums when they were characterized as modern institutions and means of communication. In their contemporary conception, under the challenge of representing different Others in their most honest interpretations, museums have been learning how to show processual identities and fluid societies – and we, as audiences and also as researchers, are realizing that a reflexive and relative museology is possible. Finally, the phenomenon Museum has already shown that there is no dialogue if there is no difference! For that reason, in the perspective of a social analysis, museums cannot be conceived as temples or forums, palaces or cemeteries, because it is much more useful to think of them as stages.

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PERFORMANCE WORKSHOP, DIALOGIC TOUR AND MULTIMEDIA STORYTELLING: New Relationships in the Dialogic Art Museum

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ABSTRACT

The paper presents some aspects of ideas on the dialogic museum applied in literal terms to museums of art and archaeology. It is not so simple to move them into a dialogic form; it is however possible to use dialogic technique – like Socratic dialogue– to communicate with audiences. Pictures, sculptures and other art objects naturally have communicative meanings. Some of these new techniques are: Multimedia Storytelling, Dialogic Tours and Performance Workshops. Multimedia storytelling gives various opportunities of dialogic interaction. The dialogic tour is a technique adopted by actors who interpret heroes or scientists or artists of the past and allow audiences to talk with them like strangers coming from the future. In *Lebende Bilder* (German for Living Image) a performer imitates a principal character of a picture or sculpture and tells his story. The performance workshop instead is part of the exhibition of contemporary art. The performer interprets an artwork, and at the same time the artist actively engages in the workshop through telling his history or emotions, with voice recordings. Audiences can interact too by asking questions or talking with the performer. At the end of the experience the audience remembers details, which would be almost unnoticed after a “conventional” visit to the museum.

RÉSUMÉ

Ateliers de performance, visite dialogique et narration multimédia : nouvelles relations dans le musée d'art dialogique

Cette contribution présente des idées sur le musée dialogique, appliqué dans un sens littéral au musée d'art et d'archéologie. Quelques musées sont organisés avec des techniques traditionnelles par rapport à leur histoire et à leurs objets. Il n'est pas simple d'orienter ces musées vers une forme dialogique, mais il est possible d'utiliser la technique dialogique, comme le dialogue du philosophe grec Socrate, pour communiquer avec le visiteur. D'autre part peintures, sculptures et autres objets d'art ont naturellement une signification communicative. Dans ce texte sont présentées quelques unes de ces nouvelles techniques. La narration multimédia donne différentes opportunités d'interaction dialogique. La visite dialoguée est une technique dialogique adoptée par des acteurs qui interprètent des héros, des savants ou des artistes du passé en permettant aux visiteurs de parler avec eux. Dans *Lebende Bilder* (terme allemand pour l'image vivante) un performeur imite le personnage principal d'une peinture ou d'une sculpture et raconte son histoire. L'atelier de performance au contraire est réalisé exclusivement pour les expositions d'art contemporain. Le performeur interprète une œuvre d'art et au même moment l'artiste s'occupe activement dans l'atelier en racontant son histoire ou en exprimant ses émotions, avec des enregistrements de sa voix. Le public peut aussi interagir et poser des questions ou dialoguer avec le performeur. A la fin

de l'expérience les visiteurs se souviendront de détails qu'ils n'auraient pas remarqués après une visite « traditionnelle » dans le musée.

RESUMEN

Talleres de Performance, recorridos dialógicos y narrativas multimediales: Nuevas relaciones en los museos dialógicos de arte

Este documento presenta algunos aspectos e ideas aplicados en términos literales a museos de arte y arqueología. Estos museos están organizados con técnicas tradicionales en relación a su historia y a sus objetos. No es simple orientarlos a una forma dialógica, pero sí es posible usar técnicas dialógicas -como el diálogo socrático- para que se comuniquen con sus visitantes. Por otra parte pinturas, esculturas y otros objetos de arte conllevan naturalmente una significación comunicativa. Algunas de esas nuevas técnicas son Narrativas Multimediales, Recorridos Dialógicos y Talleres de Performance. Las narrativas multimediales nos ofrecen oportunidades variadas de interacción dialógica. El recorrido dialógico es una técnica en la que intervienen por actores que interpretan a los héroes o a los científicos o a los artistas del pasado permitiendo a los visitantes hablar con ellos. En *Lebende Bilder* (en alemán *Imagen Viviente*) un intérprete imita al personaje principal de una pintura o escultura y cuenta su historia. Por el contrario el Taller de Performance es parte de una exhibición de arte contemporáneo. El actor interpreta una obra de arte y al mismo tiempo el artista se compromete activamente contando su historia y sus emociones a través de grabaciones de voz. Los visitantes pueden también interactuar preguntando o charlando con el intérprete. Al final de la experiencia los visitantes recuerdan detalles que hubieran pasado totalmente por alto en una visita "convencional" al museo.

摘要

表演工作坊、對話之旅與多媒體說故事：對話型藝術博物館的新關係

本文以藝術博物館與考古學詞彙說明對話博物館的概念。我們並不是單純地把這些詞彙變成對話形式，而是以對話的技巧，例如蘇格拉底的答辯方式，來與觀眾溝通。相片、雕塑與其他藝術品本來就有溝通的意涵。溝通的新技術包括多媒體說故事、對話旅遊與表演工作坊。多媒體說故事的方法提供各種對話互動。對話旅遊是飾演歷史上的英雄、科學家或藝術家的演員常會採用的一種方式。這些演員跟觀眾談話時會把觀眾當作來自未來的陌生人。在 *Lebende Bilder* (生活影像)中，表演者會模仿照片中的主要角色或某個雕塑來述說故事。表演工作坊則是現代藝術展的一部分。表演者會詮釋一件藝術品，同時藝術家也會透過錄音主動參與，在工作坊中述他的歷史或情緒。觀眾也可以發問或與表演者交談。這樣的經驗會讓觀眾記住很多細節。相較下，觀眾在參觀「傳統」博物館後往往都沒注意到這些細節。

* * *

Today's museum presents itself both as a cultural container and a dialogic space for the scientific community and the public. There are many potentials regarding museum communication and many ideas regarding the role of museums in society. The purpose of studies regarding innovative forms of relationships in the museum environment is that of expanding considerations on the nature and value of each visitor's experience.

A museum engaged in a creative, dialogic practice opens itself to multiple voices and it creates and curates its expositions with its audiences. This is distinctly different from traditional curatorial practices where ideas are fully synthesized by an individual curator prior to any public presentation and indeed, sometimes, even prior to internal communication. It is through "working together" (museum and public) that barriers are broken down and relationships are built up¹. Nevertheless, a collaborative museum is difficult to realize in some types of museums because of the specific nature of historic art collections and also because of the diffusion of traditional curatorial practices in some countries.

This paper will examine the importance of actual dialogue with audiences in educational museum activities by going beyond the ample metaphoric significance of this term². This consideration concerns above all art museums or archaeological museums of some countries where communication through dialogic forms seems to difficult to initiate.

Some of the dialogic modalities that will be discussed have already been consolidated, while others are experimental and are connected with narrative, plurisensorial or synaesthetic approaches. The idea of the "relational museum"³ was a first step in recognizing the importance of narrations and dialogue within museums. With regard to this it is very important to remember that in antiquity the mouseion room in the library of Alexandria in Egypt was a dialogic space shared by scientists and philosophers. Dialogic practices in museums therefore are nothing else but a return to the ancient significance of what a museum should be⁴.

The systemic vision that presents the museum as a dialogic meeting place of knowledge has led some museums to adopt theatrical means for communicating with its public. In a certain sense dialogue already exists in art museums because artworks are created to be seen and therefore they already establish a visual dialogue with viewers. The application of a literal dialogue model is very valid for these museums⁵. It would establish a new creative relationship between the collections and the public and would be the premise for a greater awareness of education regarding cultural heritage. It would also lead to an improvement in the dialogical rapport between curators and the public.

It is necessary to remember that from the time of Socrates dialogue has become a form of knowledge and communication that places under scrutiny not only words but also a profound awareness of knowledge that has been acquired and shared. In the contemporary museum the concept of dialogue assumes a large significance of intellectual exchange where modalities such as narrative and theatrical forms involve viewers in always more interactive ways.

The art of storytelling has ancient origins and it begins as a social, primordial exigency of communication within human relationships. From the Homeric poems to the

¹ Jessica Gogan, "The Warhol Museum as artist: creative, dialogic & civic practice", see http://www.artsusa.org/animatingdemocracy/reading_room/case_studies/visual_arts.asp#tawm.

² Daniel Jacobi, "À propos du dialogisme dans les musées", available in the English version on: network.icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/Jacobi-dialogism_eng.doc.

³ S. Bodo, a cura di, *Il museo relazionale. Riflessioni ed esperienze europee*, Torino, Fondazione Agnelli, 2000.

⁴ Lucia Cataldo, Marta Paraventi, *Il museo oggi. Linee guida per una museologia contemporanea*, Milano, Hoepli, 2007, p. 3-4.

⁵ Eilean Hooper-Greenhill. "Learning in Art Museums: Strategies of Interpretation", in: *The Educational Role of Museums*, London, Routledge, 1999, p.47.

medieval bards narration has been the primary means of communication. The idea of combining storytelling with the museum environment begins with the concept of narrative museums, in other words conceiving the museum as a body of stories rather than as an absolute truth. In fact, the museum is a container that is influenced and always will be influenced by the ideas of those who either created, collected or selected the displayed works of art. For this reason we can consider that the messages emanated from the museum as stories or as narratives that must be read and interpreted by visitors⁶. The general purpose of theatrical modalities is to encourage mediation or rather create a dialogue between the displayed object and the audience. The theatrical action arouses curiosity; it attracts attention to that which is displayed and establishes a relationship of exchange by pretending, in a certain way, to be a mediator or interpreter of the work of art⁷. Within the museum the theatrical modalities that comprise dialogue with visitors are various, from theatrical tours to storytelling and from museum theatre to more complex types in which real historic events (living history) are represented at times even by amateur actors or directly by the public itself⁸.

“Dialogic tours” conducted by guides that are actors/animations are also interesting. They involve the visitors –through dialogue- in a series of educational and amusing “acts”. There are also performances enacted by single actors that interpret the role of a great scientist, an artist of the past or even the role of the principal character of a picture (*Lebende Bilder*, “living image” in German museum didactics). There are even performance workshops which will be mentioned later on.

Completed studies and experimentation in the field⁹ confirm that theatrics applied to the museum environment are optimal methods for encouraging and bettering relationships with the public. They are also proof of the fundamental importance of dialogue in museums even if in many cases the necessity of offering detailed scientific information to the public rather than communicative messages about museum collections still seems to be the most pressing problem for curators.

The advent of new technologies adjoins other interactive modalities such as digital storytelling and multimedia narration to theatrics.

Every one of these modalities is able to interpret content and address types of audiences that are diversified by experience, acquired knowledge, and by the interests and motivations that bring them to the museum. What visitors have in common is the curiosity that exists in wanting to learn and comprehend and also the importance of an individual experience with this “new” context. Inside of the contemporary museum, where the visitor’s experience is practically the centre of attention, theatre is considered a strong resource for the involvement of people and for the enrichment of their educational experience. It is a language that consents an interpretative approach of experimental and creative contents of strong emotional impact. This characteristic of theatre represents –and is utilized- as an educational

⁶ Tessa Bridal, *Exploring Museum Theatre*, Walnut Creek, CA, Altamira Press, 2004, p. 19-20.

⁷ Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, “Learning from Learning Theory in Museums”, *GEM News*, v. 55, 1994, p. 9-10

⁸ Catherine Hughes, *Museum Theatre. Communicating with Visitors Through Drama*, Portsmouth, NH, Heinemann, 1998, p. 33-45. Tessa Bridal, *Exploring Museum Theatre*, Walnut Creek, CA, Altamira Press, 2004, p.19-41.

⁹ George E. Hein, *Learning in the Museum*, London, Routledge, 1998. Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, “Audiences: a Curatorial Dilemma”, in: *The Educational Role of Museums*, London, Routledge, 1999, p. 262-264. G. Kindler (ed), *MuseumsTheater: theatrale Inszenierungen in der Ausstellungspraxis*, Karlsruhe, 2001.

instrument which can facilitate the construction of new knowledge and comprehension, especially of a non expert public¹⁰.

The analysis of communication modalities, especially those that are more interactive and dialogical, indicates some categories:

1. *Theatrically Guided Tours*. These tours include all of those series of experiences that starting from the traditional guided tour become new tour forms led by an expert that narrates and encourages visitor interaction through theatrical language. This type of tour creates a major interaction between visitors and displayed objects or works of art. Within this type of interaction a particularly meaningful tour/dialogue with a historic character (called dialogic tour or dialogue visit) has been used for many years in the Children's Museum of Florence, Italy. This representation generally occurs at the end of a guided tour and is a very interesting moment. The actor that becomes the historical figure, thinks, behaves, and adopts the same social role that his character would have in the epoch in which he lived. The actor even pretends to not know that he is talking to people of another century. In this way the visitor also becomes an actor. He must pretend to be a "strange foreigner" that has come far away and not from the future. The whole experience of the visitor turns into a comparison between two epochs.

2. *Animated Guided Tour*. This tour, in which the guide is an animator and not an actual actor, is conducted with particular expressions and gestures that involve the public in such a way that it feels free to intervene and ask questions during the tour.

3. *Radio Guided Tour*. Theatrically radio guided tours transform simple museum visitors into active spectators that are invited to step into the roles of different historical characters and thus become interpreters of history. The theatrical tour is individual in order to preserve the intimacy of an experience that is not only cognitive but above all emotional. In this type of interaction dialogue therefore occurs in a metaphoric manner.

4. *Performance*. Performances for museum communication produce interesting experiences such as the German "Lebende Bilder"¹¹ or the "Performance Workshop" which this text will mention later.

5. *Performance Workshop* This workshop is a type of "emotional workshop" where performances that dialogue with the public are realized within the context of an exhibition. In our opinion this type of activity can be carried out with the help of the artist of the exhibition. The artist accepts the challenge of involvement in the performance and works in an active and collaborative manner to help the performer interpret his work¹². The performer interprets the contents of a work of art through dramatic techniques and often interacts with the audience to create an empathic experience. During the performance the artist may intervene, with voice recordings, to tell a fragment of his history or emotions. The audience may also intervene by asking questions or by changing the positions of the artwork in the show. This type of workshop does not intend to provide preconceived explanations of the artwork, but instead aspires that the audience will apprehend all of the aspects of the show through

¹⁰ Maria Xanthoudaki, "Presentazione", in: Cataldo, Lucia, *Dal Museum Theatre al Digital Storytelling. Nuove forme della comunicazione museale fra narrazione, teatro e multimedialità*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 2011, p. 11-12.

¹¹ Jurgen von Schemm, "Lebende Bilder", in *Standbein Spielbein*, n°64, 2002.

¹² Lucia Cataldo, *Dal Museum Theatre al Digital Storytelling. Nuove forme della comunicazione museale fra narrazione, teatro e multimedialità*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 2011, p.120-142.

personal reflection. In this way the experience becomes transformed into a multiplicity of meanings that go beyond the aesthetic reflection to become “aesthetic emotions”¹³.

One peculiar aspect of the event is the synaesthetic experience which occurs during the created double communication register of audio recordings and the performance. The scene and movements of the actor involve spectators not only visually but also emotionally since the performance in the show becomes a physical context where performers and spectators interact. Here methodology interaction not only triggers a new inner quest but also a modality of discovery. The audience is no longer the simple spectator of pre-constituted truths but becomes a protagonist that asks questions, makes comparisons, finds meanings, intervenes in the set, and changes the sense of the artwork.

Some analogous museum experiences demonstrate that close contact with artwork and artists brings people to internalize the artistic expressions to such an extent that they unconsciously relive them after the show. At the end of the experience visitors remember details which would have probably remained unnoticed after a conventional visit to the museum¹⁴.

6. *Storytelling*. Digital Storytelling and Multimedia Narration. These two methods belong to the narrative ambit. They are narrations in which the actor uses images and multimedia to complete and reinforce the communicative impact¹⁵. Story telling and multimedia narration are often important instruments for involving visitors, especially in technical museums and archaeological sites where objects risk remaining “mute” if they are not presented in an adequate manner.

Storytelling has brought the capabilities of dialogue and reflection into museums. It combines stories, the idea of participation, the social function of theatre and the active role of the spectator that recalls Bertold Brecht's theatrical model.

Digital storytelling instead derives from the practice of therapeutic narration recently used in psychoanalysis. It uses an interpreter and a multimedia support, a screen for example, with which the actor interacts as a mediator with the public¹⁶.

Multimedia narration is different from digital storytelling in that it does not need someone to physically narrate. The dialogue is not with the public but between the represented characters. Multimedia narration can be divided into the following groups: holographic projections of actors, suggestive sonorous and visual events, and the experimental uses of multimedia techniques. Hologram presentations can introduce a “virtual” character, an historical personage or an artist, whose autobiographical narration is supported by the help of a narrator or another actor within the projection. In some cases visitors may select parts of the scenes. This approach has an emotional and communicational intent in imparting the knowledge of historical and artistic contents based on original materials and sources¹⁷. It demonstrates that it is possible to obtain a correct balance between scientific discipline, emotional communication and the active participation of spectators in museums (most specifically ancient art museums) where these methods seem difficult to enact.

¹³ Vezio Ruggieri, *L'esperienza estetica. Fondamenti psicofisiologici per un'educazione estetica*, Roma, Armando Editore, 1997.

¹⁴ Jurgen von Schemm, “*Lebende Bilder*”, in *Standbein Spielbein*, n°64, 2002, p. 37-38.

¹⁵ Carlo Infante, *Imparare giocando. Interattività fra teatro e ipermedia*, Torino, Bollati Boringhieri, 2000.

¹⁶ Carlo Infante, *Performing Media*, Roma Novecentolibri, 2004, p.111-112.

¹⁷ Lucia Cataldo, *Dal Museum Theatre al Digital Storytelling. Nuove forme della comunicazione museale fra narrazione, teatro e multimedialità*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 2011, p. 40-44.

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FROM DIALOGUE TO UNDERSTANDING: A CASE STUDY OF THE TAIWANESE GAY AND LESBIAN EXHIBITION CURATING

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ABSTRACT

In this article, I intend to use “narrative inquiry” as the methodology to review the time I spent as a museum staff member and a PhD student of multi-cultural education. I have tried and resolved the difficulties between my museum practices and social action groups (for example, non-governmental organizations) to curate a Taiwan local exhibition on homosexuality, “Visualizing Others: An Artistic Puzzle of Lesbian & Gay Stories” in Taipei Gingins Gallery from December 25th, 2003 to January 3rd, 2004, as well as recorded the thoughts of my LGBT [lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender] friends involved in this exhibition and the reactions from all visitors both heterosexual and homosexual to show the resistance and transformation of visitors’ perceptions toward stigmatized homosexuality. In my opinion, “Visualizing Others” became not only an alternative kind of “public sphere” to know ourselves and each other again from dialogue to understanding, but also gave Taiwan museums a goal for the future. For me, this paper is just a preliminary exploration for the further study of curating exhibitions.

Keywords: homosexuality, exhibition curating, narrative inquiry, stigma

RÉSUMÉ

Du dialogue à la compréhension : un cas d’étude concernant l’organisation de l’exposition taïwanaise sur les gays et les lesbiennes.

Dans cet article j'ai l'intention d'utiliser "l'enquête narrative" comme méthodologie pour étudier le temps que j'ai passé en tant que membre de l'équipe du musée et comme étudiant en doctorat d'éducation multiculturelle. J'ai essayé de résoudre les difficultés entre mes activités au musée et les groupes d'action sociale (ONG), pour organiser une exposition locale à Taiwan sur l'homosexualité "Regards sur les autres - un puzzle artistique d'histoire de lesbiennes et de gays" dans la Galerie Gingins à Taipei, du 25 Décembre 2003 au 3 janvier 2004. J'ai aussi enregistré les opinions de mes amis LGBT impliqués dans cette exposition ainsi que les réactions de tous les visiteurs homosexuels et hétérosexuels afin de démontrer la résistance et la transformation des perceptions des visiteurs à l'égard de la stigmatisation de l'homosexualité. Je pense que "Regards sur les autres" est devenu non seulement une sorte d'alternative dans la sphère publique pour nous connaître nous-mêmes et chacun des autres, en allant du dialogue à la compréhension, mais, a aussi donné aux musées de Taiwan un but pour le futur. Pour moi cette contribution est juste une exploration préliminaire en vue de l'étude future de l'organisation d'expositions à fins « curatives ».

RESUMEN

Del diálogo a la comprensión: un caso de estudio sobre la curaduría de una exposición sobre gays y lesbianas taiwaneses.

En este artículo intento usar "encuestas narrativas" como metodología para estudiar el tiempo que pasé como parte del equipo del museo y como estudiante en el doctorado de educación multicultural. He procurado conjugar y resolver las dificultades entre mis actividades en el museo y los grupos de acción social (ONG), para organizar una exposición local en Taiwan sobre la Homosexualidad: "La mirada sobre los otros - un rompecabezas artístico sobre la historia de lesbianas y gays" en la Galería Gingins en Taipei, desde el 25 de Diciembre del 2003 al 3 de Enero de 2004. También registré las opiniones de mis amigos LGBT involucrados en esta exposición como también las reacciones de todos los visitantes homosexuales y heterosexuales a fin de demostrar la resistencia y la transformación de las percepciones de los visitantes hacia la estigmatización de la homosexualidad. Pienso que "Mirada sobre los otros" ha devenido no solamente en una especie de alternativa en la esfera pública para conocernos mejor a nosotros mismos y a los otros desde el diálogo a la comprensión, como así también proponer a los museos de Taiwan un objetivo para el futuro. Para mí este documento es una exploración preliminar en vistas al estudio de la organización de futuras exposiciones.

Palabras clave: homosexualidad, curaduría de exposiciones, encuestas sobre narrativa, estigma

摘要

從對話到理解：以臺灣同志策展為例

本文以敘事(narrative)的方式回溯我在博物館館員與多元文化教育博士生的雙重身份，如何穿梭於博物館體制內與社運團體之間，試圖發展同志／同性戀策展行動時所遭遇的種種情境與歷程，並記錄我和參與策展的同志朋友、還有觀眾（異性戀與同性戀等）對於「同志情誼」之污名、抗拒與轉化。2003年，我以《同畫故事－11位男女同志的藝術治療創作展》(Visualizing Others: An Artistic Puzzle of Lesbian & Gay Stories, 12月25日至隔年1月3日於台北晶晶藝廊開展)作為媒介展開一連串的策展行動。當時，我是主要策展者，也是與同志社群（臺灣同志諮詢熱線協會）、藝術治療師等共同完成展覽的催化者。七年後，當我重新回溯並書寫此策展行動歷程時，有以下諸個事主軸反覆出現，包括：1.「誰來決定、命名展覽名稱？」、2.「誰合適做同志團體的藝術治療師？」、3.「同志需要藝術治療？」、4.「異性戀情侶觀眾透過同志創作，看見自己」、5.「隱身於異性戀世界裡的同志觀眾身影」。在第1-3段敘事主軸已說明：將「同(志以)畫(說)故事」等同於「(異性戀的)童話故事」，乃直指同志對幸福的期待以及對未來「成家」的想像，就情感本質而言，實與異性戀一樣並沒有不同，乃再現了不同性取向的多元社會秩序。在第4-5段敘事主軸則點出：當不同性取向觀眾的經驗投入時，無論是對「同志情誼」有先入為主的排斥與污名化眼光，或是能夠感受到策展所提供另類觀點並產生抗拒與轉化等不同的觀展經驗，不僅已撐出一個小小的文藝公共領域，並可提煉出未來我在推進體制內博物館與社運團體間合作的策展行動。

關鍵字：同志情誼、策展、敘事探究、污名

* * *

Foreword: From “Workshop” to “Exhibition”

Taiwan Tongzhi Hotline Association (TTHA) is the first registered national LGBT [*lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender*] organization in Taiwan. In March 1998, a news report regarding a gay adolescent committing suicide brought shock and pain to several LGHT rights activists. The news inspired friends and allies from four different organizations, including Gay Counselors Association, Queer & Class, LGBT Civil Rights Alliance and Gay Teachers’ Alliance, to establish a permanent organization. As a result, TTHA was created to provide LGBT members a channel for recognition and emotional support. However, the hotline soon came to realize that taking phone calls was not enough; many gays and lesbians were still faced with serious discrimination and prejudice in Taiwan. Hence, TTHA filed a registration application to the Ministry of Interior on June 9th, 2000 and became the first registered national LGBT organization in Taiwan. With ideas of peer counseling and building a support network and community center, TTHA anticipated eliminating discrimination and unjust treatment towards the LGBT community. Now, TTHA provides several various and rich services, such as: human rights advocacy; a hotline for LGBT people from 7 to 10 every night; counseling and support groups for parents of LGBT children; companionship for senior LGBT people; an oral history of senior LGBT people; anonymous HIV/AIDS testing; AIDS and safe sex education; coming out workshops; gender and queer education; and so on.

In the summer of 2002, I had some of my gay and lesbian friends, who were TTHA volunteers, gave me lots of ideas, as I was also pursuing my second master’s degree in museum studies and my PhD program of multi-culture education. We were thinking of any cultural activity in order to let the public to have a real insight about LGBT issues, and maybe it was a good idea to curate an exhibition on homosexuality. I took a proposal by the name of TTHA to apply for official funding. I was told that my proposal was granted official funding from the Taipei City Department of Cultural Affairs ten months later. I’ve used “Visualizing Others” as a beginning to develop a two-weekend LGBT art therapy workshop. At that time, I was the main coordinator between workshop members from the Taiwan Tongzhi Hotline Association (TTHA) and the art therapists who worked together to complete the exhibition, and the whole cooperation process used “action research” (Schön, 1983) as the source of methodology.

The exhibition titled “Visualizing Others: An Artistic Puzzle of Lesbian & Gay Stories” in Taipei Gingins Gallery from December 25th, 2003 to January 3rd, 2004 was a result (Figure. 1). After 7 years, as I reviewed the whole exhibition process, I found the following narrative topics, including:

- I Who decided and named the title of exhibition?
- II Who could be appropriate as an art therapist for a homosexual group?
- III Would homosexuals need any art therapy only because of their sexual orientation and gender identity?
- IV Would visiting heterosexual couples see each other in those homosexual artworks?
- V How did homosexuals living as heterosexuals feel about this exhibition?



Figure 1. “Visualizing Others: An Artistic Puzzle of Lesbian & Gay Stories” in Taipei Gingins Gallery, 2003. Provided by TTHA.

The first to third topics - “Sketching LGBT life stories (同畫故事)” - sound like the name for “fairy tale (童話故事)” in Chinese, which reflects the intimation that homosexual expectations of happiness and settling down with a same sexual lover in the future are the same as heterosexuals. As for the fourth and fifth topics: those different sexual visitors who live with/without the stigmatized views of homosexuality could experience the alternative exhibition experience and provide feedback on the resistance and transformation toward stigmatized homosexuality.

Narrative Topic I: Who decided and named the title of the exhibition?

One of the original ideas about “Visualizing Others” came from my previous experience in art therapy workshop and some of my gay and lesbian friends’ invitation to do something interesting and different for the public. Another one was that Taiwan just happened to hold a gay social event at that time. LGBT was no longer a new issue in Taiwan. However, to the public, LGBT was only discussed in terms of social events in newspapers, always with an unfriendly attitude and still filled with all kinds of weird imaginings and misunderstandings. In light of this, two of my friends at TTHA and I began an art exhibition project combined with art therapy. This project title was “Virgin (童貞) vs. LGBT real images (「同」志「真」實形象),” which both sound similar in Chinese. The main concept was described below:

.....For the LGBT community, their real images, like virgins, were no longer forgotten and closed just because of societal pressure or in attempt to protect themselves from social discrimination. In this art exhibition project, we tried to develop a serious art therapy workshop about LGBT life stories and transform that into an exhibition. It gave LGBT people the opportunity to review their own life stories and the public a chance to understand LGBT in a natural and friendly way. (TTHA, 2002)

In order to visualize real LBGT images, the whole project was involved around LBGT life stories and careers. Several important issues were included, such as my self-portrait and mask (self image and identity), my family (the influences of original family), my love stories (the development of desire and close relationships), my LBGT world (focused on LBGT careers). Therefore, this project needed to collaborate with the LBGT community, art therapists and museum professionals to enrich a serious workshop about LGBT life stories and transform it into an exhibition. At that time, I had some of my gay and lesbian friends, who were TTHA volunteers, gave me lots of ideas. I took a proposal by the name of TTHA to apply for official funding and had an agreement with TTHA that we would cooperate only if we had official funding; we would not use any money from TTHA.

From my personal experience, “Visualizing Others” originated from my curiosity about museum exhibition curating mechanisms. I really believe that the museum is not only a temple, but can also be a forum. Museums could be the bridge between controversial social issues and its visitors if it were the forum. But what was its basic role and identity nowadays, especially when facing controversial issues? In Taiwan, most museums belong to the government and are easily regarded as temples, not as forums. There have never been any exhibitions about LGBT issues. When I gave this project the title “Virgin (童貞) vs. LGBT real images (「同」志「真」實形象)” for the application processes at the Taipei City Department of Cultural Affairs, I was not concerned with the opinions from the LGBT community. Using training from my museum studies, I used the simple structure and conception to shape this exhibition story line and its overarching idea. But when working with the LBGT community, art therapists and

lesbian and gay participants, I began to have more concerns about “who decided and named the title of exhibition.”

Narrative Topic II: Who could be appropriate as an art therapist for a homosexual group?

When I was told that my proposal was granted official funding from the Taipei City Department of Cultural Affairs ten months later, the first challenge I faced was “who could be appropriate as an art therapist for a homosexual group?” TTHA suggested some gay-friendly counselors; I also tried to find an art therapist list from Taiwan’s art therapy textbook and then proceeded to contact some of them.

The first art therapist I contacted, referred to as Ms. A for anonymity, used to collaborate with TTHA. After greeting each other, I explained the background of this art project and my preliminary planning. Ms. A immediately agreed to this proposal with a high degree of interest, although she expressed the issue of not understanding LGBT issues very deeply and her lack of art therapy background. But if I could provide art media about LGBT issues, she might transform them into a small workshop. At the same time, Ms. A suggested referred me to another art therapist, Prof. Nian-Hua Lai. After the first meeting with Ms. A, I was afraid her high interest was only because of the limited scope during conception. I began to think about what kind of art therapist would be suitable for this LGBT art project, especially as she or he not only needed to translate art therapist material for personal healing into artworks for public exhibition, she or he also had to accept (or at least respect) the LGBT lifestyle. Therefore, I finally knew I needed to choose the right art therapist more carefully, even if she or he was not easy to find.

I went on contacting other art therapists, but I did not receive any more positive responses. I began to worry this project would fail without a suitable art therapist. I decided to make a phone call to Prof. Lai. When we met, I thought she might be my last and final hope and was pessimistic approaching the opportunity. Prof. Lai was aware of my situation and said, “You are the curator of this project, you have the right to choose whom to cooperate with.” This opened our conversation. Prof. Lai also told me, “I am a Christian and so I might be unsuitable for this project as I have some slight reservations.” And then she asked me, “What kind of basic attitude, do you think, would be necessary in your project?” After a moment, I simply replied, “I think it is open-minded.” This led to a conversation that lasted more than an hour.

Based on our open-minded and honest conversation, we decided to try to collaborate. But both of us kept in mind our doubts of “who could be appropriate as an art therapist for a homosexual group?” “who could actually decide?,” and “was Prof. Lai, I, or all of the members participating in the workshop?” Regarding those concerns, I told TTHA that we needed some insiders from the LGBT community to examine our idea. TTHA suggested Mr. Ming-Ji Wang, the senior counselor and supervisor of the TTHA hotline, as another collaborator. As a result, Prof. Lai, Mr. Wang and I began as a team and consulted with each other at every break time during the workshop.

The first day of art therapy workshop, Prof. Lai used “we are homosexual...” as an opening. I knew the intent of Prof. Lai was to get the workshop members’ trust, but for them, there was another voice : “Obviously you (Prof. Lai) are not homosexual.” When Mr. Wang noted this timely response from some members as the first program of workshop took a break - some felt awkward instead of feeling consensus and trust - and Prof. Lai decided to face and reflect this feedback directly before the next program. After we modified the concept and completed the whole project, she wrote some feedback:

..... *the truth is, in my heart I knew, although I could work with homosexuals and told myself I could accept the identity and lifestyle of homosexuals, I knew I could not actually accept it if my son were to tell me he is gay someday. Therefore, my concern and acceptance toward homosexuals were called into question, but because of my honesty in sharing ; I got the trust from the LGBT workshop members...* (TTHA, 2003: 53)

.....事實上，我心裡明白，縱使我曾經與同志工作、共識，縱使我總是宣稱自己可以關照對方，可以接納同志的身分與角色。實際上，我清楚知道：倘若自己的孩子是同志，我依舊無法接納與認同。因此，我對同志的關心與接納是值得被質疑的！但由於，我誠實相告與清楚的會心，反而讓同志接受了我。.....(TTHA, 2003: 53)

In short, the whole cooperation process used “action research” as the source of methodology. All of us had our own professional practices and developed several action paths under the framework of an exhibition. Prof. Lai tried to develop a particular art therapy workshop combined with various homosexual life stories ; Mr. Wang always shared with us the community opinion as a mirror and bridge between TTHA workshop members, Prof. Lai, and myself; and I tried to translate everything into an exhibition storyline by getting as many ideas from this workshop as possible. At the same time, we continued to change, modify and reframe by reflection-in-action by consulting each other during break times. And, as we never knew what was the next step for the whole workshop, our teamwork grew more careful and intimate.

Narrative Topic III: Would homosexuals need any art therapy only because of their sexual orientation and gender identity?

After successfully finding an art therapist, I began to receive questions on “why LGBT needed art therapy.” A member of TTHA said, “I would like to participate in this art project, but I do not think that I need art therapy.” This made me notice how the word “therapy” implied that homosexuals were ill and needed to be cured - this being a major source of contention between the LGBT community and heterosexual mainstream society. TTHA was dedicated to the efforts of washing away homosexual stigma. For me personally, I used to participate in art therapy workshops and simply thought they would be a useful tool to help visualize LGBT life stories ; I never thought of “therapy” and “homosexual stigma” as a linked public stereotype. Therefore, I kept in mind that there were some gaps between TTHA’s ideology and mine, and that our society had more complex issues than I had originally thought. This question, “Would homosexuals need any art therapy because of their sexual orientation and gender identity ?” had already reframed my imagination and perception toward stigmatized homosexuality.

After the two-weekend art therapy workshop, I planned to interview workshop members several times to make sure what happened and learnt of their experiences. Based on the interview results, I created another exhibition titled “Sketching LGBT life stories (同畫故事),” which in Chinese sounds like “fairy tale (童話故事).” It reflected that homosexual expectations of happiness and settling down with a same sexual lover in the future are the same as heterosexuals. Instead of “Virgin (童貞) vs. LGBT real images (「同」志「真」實形象)” from the first original proposal, the grand theme (ie. the big idea in the term of museum studies) was condensed into two sentences:

*Fairy tales (童話故事), that everyone loves to read,
were created by our imaginations for the future well-being of the world.*

LGBT life stories (同畫故事), sincere and true, were an artistic puzzle and a self-treatment through the creation of artwork. (TTHA, 2003)

童話故事，人人愛讀，
造就了你我對於未來世界的幸福想像。
同畫故事，誠懇真實，
是一幅幅同志生命故事的藝術拼貼，更是在創作中的自我治療。(TTHA, 2003)

This title also provided visitors an alternative way of seeing. By using fairy tales everyone knows as a frame, visitors would be invited to review their own life experiences and reflect on the similarities and differences between homosexuals and heterosexuals. In the introduction of the main exhibition, I added some more connections between LGBT artwork and art therapy and wrote (Figure. 2):

Perhaps you are full of curiosity about why “LGBT” needs “art therapy”? Our answer is: This exhibition is not to show “LGBT people need to be cured,” but to show LGBT themselves and their self-growth by artworks through art therapy workshops. (TTHA, 2003)

或許你好奇：為什麼「同志」需要「藝術治療」？
我們的答案是：這個展覽不是「需要」的展現，而是同志朋友借助藝術創作，接近自己的開始、自我成長的展現。(TTHA, 2003)



Figure 2. The main introduction of “Visualizing Others: An Artistic Puzzle of Lesbian & Gay Stories” in Taipei Gingins Gallery. Provided by TTHA.

The only reason I wrote “this exhibition is not to show LGBT people need to be cured” was in reaction to TTHA’s basic attitude of washing away homosexual stigma. For most visitors, they might have the same questions upon first impression. In order not to mislead them, the best way was to tell them at the beginning of “Visualizing Others.” Finally, I developed the four sub-topics by reviewing all of the interviews several times to get a common consensus from all the workshop members. There were the four sub-topics, such as “Identity as the Beginning (認同的開始),” “Sweet Taste of Love (愛情的滋味),” “Imagination of Happiness (幸福的想像),” and “Disillusion and Regeneration (幻滅與重生),” which not only referred back to the essence of life, the expectation for love and the desire for intimacy, but also called to mind the combination with their original family, even with the heterosexuals mainstream social structure. At the same time, Taipei Gingins Gallery, which opened as the first Taiwan LGBT bookstore and gallery, was selected as the first exhibition site, dated from December 25th, 2003 to January 3rd, 2004.

Narrative Topic IV: Would visiting heterosexual couples see each other in those homosexual artworks?

In “Visualizing Others,” we arranged an educational dialogue between curators and visitors titled “When LGBT Stories Meet Art Therapy.” The main curators, Prof. Lai (the art therapist), Mr. Wang (the TTHA counselor) and I, shared our experience of teamwork and answered some visitor questions. Throughout the two-hour dialogue, there were many wonderful and sensible conversations, and one of the most special was the feedback from a heterosexual couple. At first, this couple had some misconceptions about the exhibition, thinking that “Visualizing Others” might be alike a sex shop. However, after entering the exhibit, the female visitor asked her boyfriend:

“Which one of those artworks made you feel most peaceful?” When he told me [“I, She and It”], I had no idea and thought it was a BIG surprise. Perhaps in my boyfriend’s inner mind, he wanted to pursue the world, just the two of us, and then we would have our own family. I was shocked and was not aware that he had desires like that. I was always in hot pursuit of my own life and what kind of lifestyle I wanted and liked. When I heard my boyfriend’s answer, it made me notice. In my pursuit, I needed to pay more attention to my boyfriend and my family and try to know what they wanted, rather than only do what I wanted. I used to be in a blind pursuit. I felt I would cherish all I have here and now more and more. This is my feeling so far about “Visualizing Others.” Thank you!¹

When this female visitor heard her boyfriend’s answer, it led to her giving great feedback. “I, She and It” (Figure. 3) is a work of art by a lesbian; the lesbian artist painted herself, her lover (she and I) and their beloved cat (it) in a family portrait structure. The painting shows an atmosphere of comfort and stability. This image caught the interest of the female visitor’s boyfriend and hinted to his deep desire, which led to the female visitor’s self-revelation about her own life goals. Through this homosexual artwork, a dialogue was opened between the heterosexual couple and showed their personality differences, and it gave them the opportunity to talk, know and see each other again.



Figure3. “I, She and It” Permission from the author. Provided by TTHA.

Narrative Topic IV: How did homosexuals living as heterosexuals feel about this Exhibition?

When we planned to put together another series of homosexual exhibitions, Mr. Wang asked me, “What did you expect visitors to learn from our exhibition?” My answer was,

¹ The author extracted from the dialogue of “When LGBT Stories Meet Art Therapy,” 2003.

“I hope visitors could see their life situations through these artworks whether they are homosexuals or heterosexuals. Because the exhibition itself must be catching visitors’ attentions somehow and resonating with their life experiences. For me, it was a very real and encouraging experience to curate such an exhibition.” My expectation was coincided by a female visitor’s feedback in the guestbook. She went through the entire exhibition and wrote her message with a drawing of a big blue sea (Figure. 4):

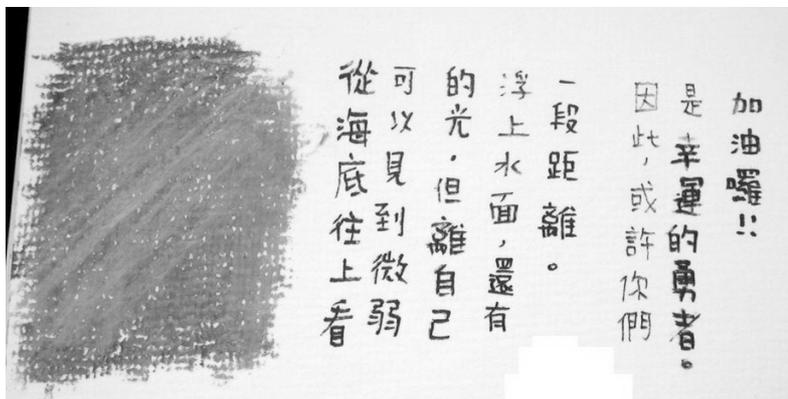


Figure 4. A visitor message with her graffiti in the guestbook. Provided by TTHA.

I might see

*some faint light from the bottom of the sea,
But there is still a distance from my head to the surface of the sea.
Perhaps you are brave with happiness. Keep going²!*

從海底往上看，可以看到微弱的光，
但離自己浮上水面，還有一段距離，
因此或許你們是幸福的勇者，加油囉！

When the female visitor wrote her message, I happened to have the final exhibition examination on the premises. She looked carefully at every piece of artwork, and I saw there might be various homosexual figures and subjects who lived and hid themselves in a heterosexual world. This female visitor’s experience and feedback reminded me that heterosexuals and homosexuals may sometimes live in the different worlds, but echo each other in a multiple of ways. It also encouraged my original intent of representing real life LGBT situations through curating exhibitions.

From dialogue to understanding: a preliminary experiential understanding on resistance and transformation of visitors’ perceptions toward stigmatized homosexuality

In this article, I intend to use “narrative inquiry” as the methodology to review the time I spent curating an exhibition on homosexuality, “Visualizing Others: An Artistic Puzzle of Lesbian & Gay Stories” from 2003 to 2004. It has been more than seven years now since the start of the exhibition. As “Visualizing Others,” the first exhibition I have curated, was opening, I was excited but tired. The last things I needed to finish as soon as possible were to write the final report, give it to the Taipei City Department of Cultural Affairs, and then closed this project. However, I ignored the thoughts of my LGBT friends involved in this exhibition, the reactions from all the visitors that showed the resistance and transformation of their perceptions toward stigmatized homosexuality, and the attitudes and changes of the project’s team members (Prof. Lai, Mr. Wang and I). In the winter of 2009, I decided to tell some stories about curating this exhibition to make a bridge between Taiwan museums, art education and gender

² The author extracted from the guestbook of “Visualizing Others.”

equality education. At that moment, I needed a tool to review all I experienced and what I saw in “Visualizing Others,” and then developed a way of storytelling.

In short, narrative inquiry is an approach to understanding / researching the way people make meaning of their lives as narratives; it should be distinguished from storytelling in that the word ‘narrative’ implies an audience and a narrator. Of interest to narrative inquirers is not what happened so much as what meaning did people make of what happened. According to D. Clandinin and F. Connelly, “The study of narrative is the study of the ways humans experience the world. This general concept is refined into the view that education and educational research is the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories ; learners, teachers, and researchers are storytellers and characters in their own and other’s stories.” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990 : 2) It made me choose “narrative inquiry” as the methodology and let me explore what happened in “Visualizing Others,” as well as examine what kind of meaning everyone took from the exhibition.

After I reviewed all the stories several times using “narrative inquiry,” I finally noticed that the first to third narrative topics, “Sketching LGBT life stories (同畫故事),” sounded like the words for “fairy tale (童話故事)” in Chinese, which reflected the intimation that homosexual expectations of happiness and settling down with a same sexual lover in the future were the same as heterosexual expectations. As for the fourth and fifth narrative topics: those different sexual visitors who live with/without the stigmatized views of homosexuality could experience the alternative exhibition experience and provide feedback on the resistance and transformation toward stigmatized homosexuality.

When Prof. Lai, Mr. Wang and I worked together as a team to complete the whole project, we had been able to feel our social system in play; there were more differences and fewer similarities between homosexual and heterosexual situations, but we tried another alternative way to curate “Visualizing Others.” It meant that in the face of mainstream heterosexual society, “Visualizing Others” tried to show that LGBT issues have “a common ground, rather than a difference and divergence, between heterosexuals and homosexuals.” As a result, we decided to produce some artworks to display to the public and developed an alternative exhibition title which implied “Total Similarity, Little Difference.” However, I still wondered if it really made the different communities closer and gave them more empathetic understanding of each other when I took on my theme and exhibition strategy. From some visitors’ feedback, it showed visitors could not accept this way of “total similarity, little difference” directly and also have their own experience and point view under their own perception of LGBT issues.

In “Can we live together? Equal and difference,” Touriane (1997, translated by D. Macey, 2000) said:

..... At the political level, the recognition of cultural diversity leads to the protect of minority cultures... The same conception gives museum an increasing importance in our society, the views of those who believe that a modern society must eradicate the past and only to the future notwithstanding (Touriane, 1997: 173).”

In my opinion, “Visualizing Others” became not only an alternative kind of “public sphere” to know ourselves and each other again - it might just be the beginning for the resistance and transformation of visitors’ perceptions toward stigmatized homosexuality through curating a Taiwanese gay and lesbian exhibition –it also gave Taiwan museums a goal for the future. For me, this paper is just a preliminary exploration for the further study of curating exhibitions.

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THE DIALOGIC MUSEUM AND THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents some of the points that make dialogic relation in museums possible. As praxis, that is, as museography, communication in the museum, is achieved by means of exhibitions and education within a cultural perspective. Dialogism in museums depends on these communicational resources, as well as on mechanisms aimed at understanding how the public takes part in the curatorial process. To this end, museum-designed reception research advocates platforms for expographic and educational processes, and for dialogic relations. The museum visitor's participation is seen as experience featuring ritualistic and performative characteristics, i.e., models to implement methodologies that take into account the curatorship process, the circulation of the museological message in people's daily lives, and finally, the dialogic relation between museum and society.

RÉSUMÉ

Le musée dialogique et l'expérience du visiteur

Ce papier présente quelques uns des points de ce qui rend possible la relation dialogique dans les musées. Comme pratique, c'est-à-dire comme muséographie, la communication muséale est réalisée au moyen des expositions et de l'éducation dans une perspective culturelle. Dans les musées, le dialogisme dépend de ces ressources communicationnelles, aussi bien que des mécanismes finalisés sur la façon dont le public prend part aux procédures de conservation. À cette fin, la recherche touchant à la réception expographique préconise des plateformes pour des procédures expographiques et éducatives et pour les relations dialogiques. La participation du visiteur de musée est vue comme une expérience caractérisant les rites et la performance, c'est-à-dire les modèles pour développer les méthodes qui prennent en compte les procédures de conservation, la circulation du message muséologique dans la vie quotidienne des gens et, finalement, la relation dialogique entre le musée et la société.

RESUMEN

El museo dialógico y la experiencia del visitante

Este documento presenta algunos de los puntos que hacen posible la relación dialógica en los museos. Como praxis, es decir como Museografía, la comunicación en el museo se logra por medio de exhibiciones y educación desde una perspectiva cultural. El dialogismo en los museos depende de esos recursos comunicacionales, como en los mecanismos destinados a la comprensión de cómo el público es parte del proceso curatorial. Con ese fin el museo diseña investigaciones, verdaderos "análisis de recepción" que se constituyen en plataformas que representan las voces de la audiencia en los procesos expográficos y educativos. La participación del visitante del museo es

vista como una experiencia de características performativas y rituales, por ejemplo modelos para implementar metodologías que tengan en cuenta el proceso curatorial, la circulación del mensaje museológico en la vida cotidiana de la gente y finalmente la relación dialógica entre museo y sociedad.

摘要

對話型博物館與訪客經驗

本文闡述實現對話型博物館的方式。從文化觀點，透過展覽與教育的方式，實踐博物館展示 (museography)，亦即博物館內的溝通方式。博物館對話主義仰賴這些溝通資源，也仰賴各種機制幫助他們了解如何讓民眾參與策展過程。博物館設計的接待研究提倡建立一個平台來促進展覽設計、教育過程與對話關係。訪客參與博物館活動的經驗又像儀式又像表演，因為實現訪客參與的模型把策展過程、博物館訊息在人們日常生活中的流通，以及博物館和社會的對話關係都納入考量。

* * *

Introduction

An initial comparison between communication and museological communication shows that although museums see the public as their prime reference, in its practice we still find that communication models, albeit hegemonic, are outdated. These models are clearly expressed in visitor studies carried out in this context, revealing motives and intentions that at times cater to marketing interests, and at times to functional interests or interests of a behaviorist nature. One finds that the information science model still has a strong influence on the practice of transmission in museums, or rather there is an asymmetric sender-receiver relation structured as a transmission-of-knowledge attitude. The sense of an exhibition or educational action's effect or impact on the public is still predominant as a reflection of the capacity of museological action to impart information and thus substantially modify the public.

Museological exhibitions and educational action are the main forms of communication with the public and, in an integrated manner, the principal expressions of a museological communication policy and evidence that the museum takes the public into consideration. Exhibitions and educational action are communicative forms and there can be no dialogic relation in the museum if there is no *de facto* communication process. Understanding of how the public grasps exhibitions accompanied with educational action, or how that public re-elaborates them and re-creates them in the form of another discourse is unavoidable. Reception by the public must be studied in view of institutional assumptions, seeing reception as part of a process that implies sequential creation, production and publicizing of the exhibition and educational action, integrating planning and production. One can argue that the museological exhibitions and the educational situations constructed in the museum by its professionals are scenarios that facilitate or hinder the people's cultural lives *vis-à-vis* the museum and material culture. Thus, dialogism in museums necessarily entails a democratic communicational process of constructing meanings about the museum holdings, and reception studies are an essential strategy for implementing a dialogic character museums.

The dialogic museum: to be or not to be

Cultural communication is a process in which the communicative dimension and the cultural dynamic are in the forefront. If culture and communication are overlaid, the material culture – that which is established based on the interrelationships of people mediated by the object – and museological communication – that which is mediated by preservationist institutions – are also overlaid. Culture and communication unite with education because the museum proposes a process of (re)signification of the object that takes place in the core of the material culture by means of the museological communication, a conscious process aimed at participants that accept, reject, propose, or renegotiate the re-signified object. The actual act of musealising – withdrawal from the commercial circuit and insertion in the museum circuit – constitutes cultural (re)signification and is discussed with the public. The education recommended by the museum is, above all, of an attitudinal nature since it takes place within the perspective of the construction of the individual's values.

In the communicational process the dialogic relation requires active individuals. The individuals in a museum are many: the professionals, the creators and users of the museum heritage, the visiting public. The public is composed of active individuals because the role of author was reserved for the public, i.e., the public takes part as the (re)creator of the museological discourse. Creating and writing supplants the reader-decoder role attributed to it for a long time since by reading, the public interprets, and by interpreting, re-creates. There are three distinct, but indissociable, participations: reading, interpretation, and re-creation. Re-creation includes (re)signifying, a process of construction of that which is fluid, and not of deciphering that which is enclosed in the object or in the exhibition. And because the meaning/signification is plural, the public, with other visitors, and obviously with the museum staff, can touch, argue, negotiate, and manifest power in a dialogic relationship based on the meaning of the museological message.

Museological communication must be seen as complex and in tune with daily life and with the multiple and fragmented multi-located mediations, far beyond what the theories of interpretive communities¹ can explain. Meanings are constructed in people's daily lives and it is there that messages acquire meanings for specific publics. Daily life is the methodological place base on which we analyze the forms used in the museum in order to study museological reception. According to Martín-Barbero², reception infiltrates a complex network that constitutes daily life and becomes effective based on daily life. Thus, the communication researcher shifts the focus of interest of communication from medium to mediations. As applied to museological communication, the shift of focus of the museum, of the exhibition, and of the educational action are media for the daily life of the audience – visitors and non-visitors.

Regarding museums as “means to mediations” (shifting of focus) the contemporary approach faced by these institutions should be the public's daily life. People visit museums and have contact with knowledge, meanings, and values. They themselves place all this in contention with the knowledge, meanings, and values they already possess. They sometimes modify what they know, understand, and feel, and sometimes they confirm it. At other times, people reject what they see, and sometimes the confrontation is processed over a long period of time, possibly even throughout

¹ The interpretation community consists of a combination network of mediations that legitimizes the production of meaning by the receiver. The network is formed by the association of the ‘primary appropriation community’ – a group that shares the same manner of producing meaning – and the ‘reference community’ – source of identities for the subjects. Guillermo Orozco Gómez, “Cultura y televisión: de las comunidades de referencia a la producción de sentido en el proceso de recepción” In: García Canclini, Nestor (coord.). *El consumo cultural en México*. México, Pensar la Cultura, 1993, p. 262-294.

² Jesús Martín-Barbero, *Dos meios às mediações: comunicação, cultura e hegemonia*. Rio de Janeiro, Editora UFRJ, 1997.

their lifetime. Reception is a process mediated by the daily life of these people and when they arrive at the museum the process is already underway. This is communication and this is taking part in the cultural dynamic, because although reception is an individual process, it is socially shared. The process of (re)signification stems from the subject-individual and becomes effectively appropriated when it generates another meaning that is shared among and within the social context – the meaning circulates in the cultural context.

Reception studies are essential if *de facto* dialogism is to occur and intervene in the museum's way of being and in how it operates. In other words, if the public is the subject, the public participates intrinsically in the museological process.

The museal experience

Expography, in positivism, was a catalog made up of objects taxonomically displayed in showcases and in space. The (non-specialist) public's experience was contemplative, largely passive, because that public was not versed in scientific classification codes.

With rationalism, exhibitions came to be explanatory, contextual and argumentative narratives. To exercise this revised expography museums build interdisciplinary teams, because argumentation as a form of visitor participation has become the new challenge.

In the 1980s, museums recognized that the public has an interpretative participation in the exhibitions, but failed to grasp all the implications. Museums were still limited to their own viewpoints and did not recognize interpretations differing from their own.

Today there are diverse expographic models proposing diverse experiences to the public. Two recurring models are the aestheticized and/or classificatory exhibitions (not necessarily taxonomic, but featuring scientific thinking). These exhibition models generally fall into the trap of presenting museological objects as fetishes. Thus, they serve to avoid facing the museological object:

[...] in exhibitions, it is the lack of preparation for facing the object that leads to a regrettable shifting of roles: what should be "said" with objects comes to be the responsibility of subtitles and other resources such as audio-visuals and electronics. In this case, museums are dispensable and should be replaced by more effective instruments³.

The starting point for any visitor's museum experience is intelligibility, without which there can be no full reading. Intelligibility is equally important to those who produce exhibitions and to who receive them. Intelligibility is the basic and fundamental prerequisite for effective communication of any museological action.

Intelligibility is structured by common cultural codes between the sender and the receiver. Thus, the museum's team of communication professionals should select the

[...] 'cultural codes' known to reception which then 'decodes' them and, in their own way and based on their own arrangements, incorporates

³ Ulpiano Bezerra de Meneses, "Do teatro da memória ao laboratório da História: a exposição museológica e o conhecimento histórico", *Anais do Museu Paulista*. Nova Série, São Paulo, v.2, jan./dez. 1994, p. 38.

them in a complex manner to construct the symbolic meanings aimed to satisfy their various needs⁴.

The process of recoding and decoding is not enough to provide understanding of how the communication of meaning is achieved, but it is essential if that goal is to be achieved. In order to know the public's codes, the museum carries out reception research. It applies this knowledge to the codes recognizable to the public at the exhibition or educational action. The codes are not universal but cultural – they result from the creativity of a group in a certain time and space. Thus, museological actions are not universal and there is no universal public, which does not mean that there are no transversal or transcultural topics of interest to humanity, but that those topics must be elaborated and presented featuring specific codes for specific cultural contexts. No single exhibition can be presented to all humanity regardless of the cultural context.

According to Valente⁵, another prerequisite for the museum to communicate with various subgroups is that

[...] the semiophores of one sole genre be virtually accessible to all. According to Pomian⁶, treating objects as semiophores and not as useful things, they represent the invisible (the meaning), and it is this 'invisible' that must be accessible. Herein lies the museum's difficulty: in dealing with semiophores museums cannot disregard the nature of the meaning and the possibilities and limits of interpretation of the objects, and must perceive the visitor's role in the process of 'producing' meanings insofar as visitors are free to produce their own 'readings'.

This makes understanding of the museum's role and its distance from content-focused objects clearer, opening up a field for the exploration of experimental and creative activity. Thus, the visiting experience is multiple and never repeats itself, and "the education dimension of the museological experience consists of the integration of the dimensions it comprises"⁷. According to Lauro Zavala, the museological experience of the visiting public is ritualistic because it is experienced in a memorable, intuitive, emotional and sensorial form, to which I would add performative, and because of all this is affective, as the (re)signification of any cultural dynamic should be.

Construction of the expographic experience

An exhibition is a language that is structured in space and becomes ambiance, which is more than space and more than atmosphere. In fact, all exhibitions are oriented to the construction of an ambiance, that is, a space occupied and having particularities that engage the public, physically, affectively, and temporally. The particularities of the ambiance are the expographic elements and resources that possess the attributes inherent to the signification. It is in the ambiance that the public circulates and appropriates the discursive rhetoric and from which it derives its re-elaborations.

According to Bagnall, visitors – using their body, their emotion and imagination – map out the form of appropriation according to how they circulate within the exhibition space.

⁴ Carmem Lígia Torres. "Comunicação, acontecimento e memória" In: *Anais do Congresso Brasileiro de Ciências da Comunicação*, 27., 2004, Porto Alegre. Organização Intercom, [15 p.], 2004. CD, p. 5.

⁵ Maria Esther Alvarez Valente. "A conquista do caráter público do museu" In: Gouvêa, Guaracira; Marandino, Martha; Leal, Maria Cristina (orgs.). *Educação e museu: uma construção social do caráter educativo dos museus de ciência*. Rio de Janeiro, Acess, 2003, p. 42.

⁶ Krzysztof Pomian. "Coleção" In: *Enciclopédia Einaudi*. Imprensa Nacional, Casa da Moeda, v. 1, 1984.

⁷ Lauro Zavala. "La educación y los museos en una cultura del espectáculo" In: *Encuentro Nacional ICOM/CECA México. La educación dentro del museo, nuestra propia educación*, 2., 2001, Zacatecas. *Memoria*, ICOM México, CECA, [2003], p. 21.

That map of the public's movement within the physical space adds value to their interpretation and intensifies the realization of connections between what is exhibited, family and personal memories and biographies, and the cultural biographies of the visitors.⁸

There is a connection between the physical quality of the experience and the emotions and other elaborations generated. As is the case of the virtual space of the Internet, visitors navigate within the expographic environment, and appropriation by means of connections yields cognitive gains beyond the limits of the physical experience itself and of entertainment. Appropriation of the space is a relevant constitutive factor for achieving quality participation on the part of the public.

To map the space is to make choices, connections, and to construct one's own experience, which means redoing the whole process designed by the creators of the exhibition, but now with one's own references – it is a redoing and a re-creation. The physical stimulus adds to allowing visitors to build their own version of that which is presented, as well as their own meanings.

Apart from understanding that the physical space and the ambiance are the places where appropriation takes place, it was understood that it is the place of debate among subjects, i.e., individual participation enriched by social interaction. The "reading" of the exhibition can be shared among friends, groups of students, family members, twosomes, with or without orientation by the museum educators. We believe that social interaction is a relevant experience of co-authorship in the construction of knowledge.

Finally, museums have discovered that the space of the exhibition is a form of creative participation on the part of the public.

Another element of expographic communication is time – the museum's time and the public's time. The museum's time is that which the institution requires to bring to maturity a museological concept, to create, produce, and install an exhibition. The museum's time is a time of rhetoric and creating patterns to foresee how the public will spend its time interpreting the exhibition; creating sequences, accumulating objects, withdrawing or introducing information, proposing hands-on and "attractive" resources, creating focal points of lighting, etc. The creators intervene in reception by generating a certain rhythm to the visit in the belief that the longer the public stays at the exhibition observing its countless resources, the greater its participation – a hypothesis to date unverified. In the time-space relationship, the creators want to make the visitors to follow a certain course of movement and lose the notion of time, because they want time to pass slowly during the reading of the exhibition and want visitors to follow a certain course of movement.

The order in which things appear, the frequency of their appearance, the intensity of objects, [...] everything therefore constitutes material for this aspect of the museum's mediation of time⁹.

Time is not an expographic resource, but rather an element of expography that we must learn to manage. The museum is seen as a time-mediating institution, and it deals with temporality in a complex manner. The museum deals with the time of the Other – the "different" of the past and of the future – it deals with the past (with its

⁸ Gaynor Bagnall. Performance and performativity at heritage sites. *Museum and Society*, v. 1, n. 2, p. 87-103, 2003. Available at: www.le.ac.uk/ms/m&s/issue%202/msbagnall.pdf

⁹ Roger Silverstone. "The medium is the museum: on objects and logics in times and spaces". In: Miles, Roger; Zavala, Lauro (eds.). *Towards the museum of the future: new European perspectives*. London, Routledge, 1994, p. 70.

representation), with the present (immediatism), and with the future (extrapolation). There is the museum's reception time, which is different from the reception time of other media. Being in the museum involves decisions regarding the use of time, relations with time. The appropriation time is free (people set their own rhythm) and permanent (they can always return)¹⁰.

Reception, apart from having its own time, is a process. Communication time can be mediated but never controlled because it is appropriated and re-elaborated and gets lost in the social dynamic as circulation of signification.

Ritualistic and performative experience

Museum experience as a ritual means making a visit to an exhibition a special event, not a mere routine occurrence. There is no assumption here of any hierarchy between special and daily-life events, especially because there is a mutual relationship between the two:

[...] based on the principle that a society has a relatively defined (although flexible) repertoire, shared and public, of categories, classifications, forms, values, etc., what one finds in the ritual is also present in everyday life – and *vice-versa*. We consider the ritual a special phenomenon of society that points out and reveals to us representations and values of a society, but the ritual expands, illuminates, and highlights what is already common to some certain group¹¹.

Expography is a challenge and by seeing the ritual based on the public's experience as a "special event", expography could explore it as a conceptual reference.

The ritual is a cultural system of symbolic communication. It consists of ordered and standardized sequences of words and acts, in general expressed by multiple media. Those sequences have content and arrangements characterized by varied degrees of formality (conventionality), stereotypes (rigidity), condensation (merging), and redundancy (repetition)¹².

The approach to the ritual is of interest to various types of museums because rituals are part of our lives: birthdays, carnival, weddings, graduations, certain political movements, national holidays, the signing of a document, a commitment, a handshake, the final game of the World Cup Soccer championship, etc. And the rituals are of different natures: lay, religious, sacred, civic, festive, scientific, formal or informal, plain or elaborate. Rituals are phenomena of life, not limited to fields of knowledge, and therefore, should not be exclusive to anthropological museums. Museums can redeem the ritualistic moments of life, or even turn certain daily-life happenings into rituals and reflect on them in the museum, regardless of the type of museum.

We consider the ritual a special phenomenon of society that points out and reveals to us representations and values of a society, but the ritual

¹⁰ *Idem*, p. 168-171.

¹¹ Mariza Peirano. *Rituais ontem e hoje*. Rio de Janeiro, Zahar, 2003, p. 10.

¹² Stanley Tambiah. 'A performative approach to ritual' in: *Culture, thought and social action*. Cambridge, Mass, Harvard University Press, 1985. *Apud* Mariza Peirano. *Rituais ontem e hoje*. Rio de Janeiro, Zahar, 2003, p. 11.

expands, illuminates, and highlights what is already common to some certain group¹³.

The ritual as a museological communication model offers special characteristics such as the performative character. There are several mutually nonexclusive meanings for performative: an attitudinal meaning, when saying is also doing; another is when people experience a performance intensely and simultaneously by various means of communication; or a third meaning, when values are created and absorbed by the participants of the performance. The ritual and the performance (and their meanings) have great qualities to be explored by exhibitions and by education. According to Carol Duncan, the

[...] ritual is often considered transformative: it confers identity or purifies or restores order to the world by means of sacrifice, of testing, or of illumination¹⁴.

She sees in the museum a place of a ritual of citizenship. The museum creates symbolic “cues” to provoke responses from the public. These responses are representations that relate to the representations that occurred in the ritualistic site, which is the museum. In the museum, the visitor can be a spectator or have some form of individual or group performance by following a certain circuit, reading a certain text, reliving a certain narrative, connecting with some other structured experience, historic or situational. To Duncan¹⁵, the public experiences the ritualistic site. Gaynor Bagnall¹⁶ propounds that the public experiences museums as ritualistic and performative sites, activating their critical faculties and their capacity to perform. The visitor’s performance is a relevant social practice for these sites and the forms of interaction that occur in performative circumstances are physical as well as affective and cognitive. It is a performance engendered by the type of experience that the museum creates and offers to the public.

To a certain extent, there is some similarity between ritualization and creating a show. Some sociologists suggest that contemporary society is performative and that there has been a spectacularization of sites and people: the person becomes the spectacle, and the audience and the representation are closer. The people represent and see the others as actors in the spectacle. The sociology of audiences suggests that in contemporary western societies, people are as much cultural consumers as producers, and that emotions and imagination are key dimensions of this aspect of the contemporary audience’s activity¹⁷. In the spectacle society, the public experiences co-authorship with the other participants. The notion of spectator-observer transforms itself into acting spectator. The public participates “perambulatorially” and “playfully”

[...] with the intention of expanding the happening to an emotional relation among the participants. The object of this game is an experience in time-space based on the relationships of the bodies in relation to it, stemming from the movements of these bodies collectively stimulated to assume attitudes and decide on their participation in the ritual. Its aesthetic ideal is the harmonization of a multiplicity of

¹³ Mariza Peirano. *Rituais ontem e hoje*. Rio de Janeiro, Zahar, 2003, p. 10.

¹⁴ Carol Duncan. Art museum and the ritual of citizenship. in: Susan S. Pearce (ed.). *Interpreting objects and collections*. London; New York, Routledge, 1994, p. 281.

¹⁵ *Idem*.

¹⁶ Gaynor Bagnall. Performance and performativity at heritage sites. *Museum and Society*, v. 1, n. 2. p. 87.

Available at: www.le.ac.uk/ms/m&s/issue%202/msbagnall.pdf

¹⁷ *idem*

languages, artistic and non-artistic, to reach all the senses of the participants¹⁸.

The dramatization of exhibitions seems to be a new topic, but actually harks back to the universal exhibitions of the 19th century, according to Heloisa Barbuy¹⁹:

Thus, it does not matter if an object or an architectonic group is false, as long as it provides some feeling of reality; what is valued in the simulacre is exactly its power to illude. What is sought is the illusion that proposes models that seem real because materially concrete. The enthusiasm with which simulacres are celebrated signals the value attributed to them [...].

However, there are risks in this approximation and the main risk is creating a sham, a fake show. To avoid this risk, the spectacle must guard itself against certain strategies, a recourse to mass communication media – that currently hover over the museum.

The novelty of crating a drama is that some of its aspects were appropriated by the entertainment industry. That industry discovered the museum as a market space, and the museum saw in that industry a possibility for proposing expographic models to attract the public. In short, like the communication media, the entertainment industry appropriates elements to the taste of the masses – which is the popular aesthetic Martín-Barbero²⁰ refers to – and transports them to their cultural products to be consumed by a large audience. The blockbuster exhibitions are results of these marketing strategies. They have as ingredients the grandiose, luxury, gold and silver objects that belonged to kings and queens, historic or art personalities, sometimes involve mystery or romance, as well as many resources of shadow and light and other dramatic effects. Actually, drama and luxury are the main ingredients and take the place of more elaborated rhetoric discourse. The spectacle museum is elitist and a manipulator of the massive, one more medium where differences brought by the diversity of publics are veiled, considering distinct segments and socioeconomic and cultural situations.

Museums cannot fall into a commercial rationality, and museological experimentation cannot fall into the economic logic of the market, because these experimentations fulfill a

[...] public function of encouraging reflection on what the accelerated and urgent economy of the symbolic industries impose as public, ephemeral, and without memory²¹.

The proposal of the ritualistic and performance experience is an experiment open to approximation with other proposals and concepts that corroborate the museum's symbolic communicational scope. It is the model on which I base my support to proposing reception research on museological communication and to collaborate with building of museological knowledge with regard to expology, expography, and education. It is undoubtedly an alternative to be considered when one wants to escape from the traps of museological simplifications.

¹⁸ Rita Gusmão. "A retomada do corpo" in: Teixeira, João Gabriel L. C.; Garcia, Marcus Vinícius Carvalho; Gusmão, Rita. *Patrimônio imaterial, performance cultural e (re)tradicionalização*. Brasília, UnB, ICM, 2004, p. 157–160.

¹⁹ Heloisa Barbuy. *A exposição universal de 1889 em Paris: visão e representação na sociedade industrial*. São Paulo, Loyola, 1999, p. 123.

²⁰ Jesús Martín-Barbero. *Dos meios às mediações: comunicação, cultura e hegemonia*. Tradução de Ronald Polito e Sergio Alcides. Rio de Janeiro, UFRJ, 1997.

²¹ Nestor García Canclini. *A globalização imaginada*. São Paulo, Iluminuras, 2003, p. 187.

This model sees, in museological communication, possibilities of establishing a close relationship between museums and their publics – possibly a dialogic relationship. This model also brings greater clarity to the roles that team members could come to perform in the communicational process. These are roles that will demand attitudes to construct attitudes, and a methodology that will encourage cooperation and creativity, since the ritualistic and performative model experience oversteps the limits, even though artificial, between expography and education in museums, a view that fragmentizes the experience of the public and of the professional teams.

Final comments

The exhibition and educational action – preferably integrated and constitutive of the public's experience – are the prime places of occurrence of the museological fact, object of the study of museology. They therefore constitute “methodological places” essential to the development of museological research. One of the lines of research is reception, studies of which contribute to the construction of knowledge in the museum-society relationship.

Basically, these studies contribute on three fronts: (1) to collaborate in the construction of knowledge necessary to the construction of museological discourse; (2) to the construction of museological theory in that which concerns the theory of communication in the museum; and (3) to inform the museum as to its institutional scope and the forms of public participation in the process of (re)signification of the material culture²².

We must understand that the museum presents an empiric reality in which the public takes part – to be unveiled. This challenge allows the convergence of the fields of communication, reception research, museology, anthropology, sociology and others, with a view to broadening the limits of these fields for the construction of an interpretive framework for museological reality. The interpretive framework must be created to supply, as pointed out by García Canclini²³, a combined set of cross-cutting theoretical and methodological principles as yet inexistent in cultural studies in order to foster our understanding of the dialogic museum and the visitor experience, or, as pointed out by Immacolata Lopes²⁴, to supply a comprehensive theory of reception studies applied to museology.

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²² Marília Xavier Cury. *Comunicação museológica. Uma perspectiva teórica e metodológica de recepção*. Tese (Doutorado em Ciências da Comunicação) – Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2005, p. 94.

²³ Nestor García Canclini (coord.) *El consumo cultural en México*, México: Pensar la Cultura, 1993, p. 33.

²⁴ Maria Immacolata Vassalo de Lopes. “Estratégias metodológicas da pesquisa de recepção”, *Revista Brasileira de Comunicação*, São Paulo: INTERCOM, v. 16, n. 2, p. 78-86, jul./dez. 1993, p. 85.

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L'EXPERIENCE DU VISITEUR DANS LES MUSEES DE LA GRANDE GUERRE : QUELQUES PISTES POUR LE DIALOGISME

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RÉSUMÉ

Parce que de nombreux soldats et travailleurs étrangers y sont décédés, beaucoup de touristes britanniques, mais aussi anglo-saxons, viennent visiter les sites de mémoire du Nord de la France. Deux musées importants exposent, avec des partis pris muséographiques différents, la Première Guerre mondiale. Quelle expérience les visiteurs vivent-ils quand ils découvrent ce type de musée? que viennent-ils y chercher ? le récit de la Grande Guerre grâce à une approche historique ? de l'émotion, une immersion étonnante, ou quelque chose d'autre qu'ils pourraient ressentir dans un lieu de mémoire, un Mémorial ? Quel rôle jouent les objets, témoins matériels et originaux, traces et restes souvent récoltés sur les sols des champs de bataille ? Comment accueillir à la fois des visiteurs britanniques, français, mais aussi allemands, qui n'ont pas la même vision et culture du premier conflit mondial ? L'analyse de musées de taille plus réduite montre l'existence d'autres formes de médiation possibles avec le public et renouvelle éventuellement les relations à construire entre les musées, peut-être devenus dialogiques, et leurs publics.

ABSTRACT

Visitor experience in World War I museums: new paths for dialogism

Many soldiers and overseas military auxiliaries died during the First World War, which is one of the reasons why many British and Commonwealth citizens visit sites in the north of France. Two large museums display the First World War, but with different museography. What is the visitor experience in these different museums? What are they looking for? the history of the Great War? for emotion, complete immersion, or something else that they could feel in a place of remembrance, a Memorial? What role is played by objects, authentic materials, traces and remains often collected from the soils of the battle fields? How to receive together British, French, and also German visitors who have not the same culture about WWI? Analysing examples of the smallest museums shows the existence of other forms of mediation with the audience. It opens a new form of relation between museums, potentially dialogic, and their public.

RESUMEN

La experiencia de los visitantes y los museos de la primera guerra mundial. Algunas pistas para el dialogismo

Los sitios de memoria del norte de Francia son visitados por muchos ciudadanos británicos y anglosajones porque numerosos soldados y trabajadores extranjeros murieron durante la primera guerra mundial. Dos importantes museos, mediante recursos museográficos diferentes, exponen la Primera Guerra Mundial. ¿Qué experiencia viven los visitantes cuando

descubren este tipo de museo? ¿qué vienen a buscar? ¿el relato histórico de la Primera Gran Guerra? ¿la emoción, cualquier cosa que los haga sentir que están inmersos en un sitio de memoria, en un memorial? ¿qué rol juegan los objetos, testimonios materiales y originales, huellas y restos a menudo recogidos en los campos de batalla? ¿Cómo recibimos al mismo tiempo a los visitantes ingleses, franceses y también a los alemanes que posiblemente tengan una visión diferente del Primer Gran Conflicto Mundial? El análisis de los ejemplos de museos más pequeños muestra otras formas de mediación posible con los públicos y renueva eventualmente la relación a construir entre los museos, que pueden devenir dialógicos, y sus públicos.

摘要

一次大戰博物館之訪客經驗:對話理論之新路徑

第一次世界大戰期間有許多軍人與海外軍方服務人員喪生，因此許多英國與大英國協的人民都會到法國北部參訪大戰遺跡。法國有兩間展示第一次世界大戰的大型博物館，分別有不同的展示方式。訪客在這兩間博物館內有什麼樣的經驗呢？他們有什麼期望？想了解大戰的歷史？想在紀念館中回想或體驗當時人民的感覺或完全沈浸在當時的氛圍？我們從戰場收集而來的展示品、大戰時期的物品或遺跡又扮演什麼樣的角色？英國、法國及德國來的訪客對一次大戰有不同的文化背景，博物館要如何接待這些訪客？藉由分析小型博物館的案例，我們發現我們可以用不同的媒介與觀眾互動。這些媒介也改變了博物館間可能的對話關係，也讓博物館與民眾之間有不同的關係。

* * *

Le concept de « musée dialogique » est peu utilisé par la muséologie francophone et rejoint la démonstration d'Annette Viel sur les « nouvelles interactions fonctionnelles » où le public du musée tend à devenir son acteur « culturel, social et économique »¹ : le visiteur n'est plus en situation de réception des choix des responsables du musée, mais participe à sa définition et à son développement car lié à son territoire, doté d'une mémoire propre et pouvant en devenir le mécène ou le promoteur. Si ce modèle correspond notamment à celui de l'écomuséologie, il semble plus lointain des musées de Beaux-Arts où les Nouvelles Technologies de l'Information (NTIC) au sein des parcours muséographiques sont plus souvent qu'un prétexte d'interactivité avec les visiteurs qu'une véritable plus-value de contenu.

Au-delà d'une vision « ludique-interactive » du dialogue possible entre le musée et ses publics, le cas précis des interprétations sur la guerre, dans la perspective du centenaire de la Grande Guerre (2014-2018), semble apporter de nouveaux jalons à la réflexion autour du musée dialogique : elles donnent un nouvel éclairage à la relation que les visiteurs entretiennent avec les parcours muséographiques, mais aussi avec leurs propres histoires individuelles et collectives. En effet, des visiteurs de toutes nationalités, qui ne cherchent pas forcément une relation culturelle et touristique au territoire, mais souvent mémorielle, reviennent sur les traces de leurs aïeux. Quels discours muséographiques leur proposer alors qu'un anglo-saxon du Commonwealth (britannique, australien, néo-zélandais ou canadien), un allemand et un français n'ont pas la même vision et perception du conflit ? Quels place et rôle ont les objets dans ces musées ? Quels dialogues et interactions possibles entre ces musées et leurs visiteurs, avant, pendant et après la visite ?

¹ Annette Viel, « L'objet dans tous ses états » in: *L'objet de la muséologie*, Neuchâtel, Institut d'histoire de l'art, 2005, p. 57-58.

Sur l'ancien front occidental entre Ypres et la Somme, les cimetières de Tyne Cot (près d'Ypres) et de Notre Dame-de-Lorette (près d'Arras) accueillent chacun environ 200 000 visiteurs par an. Depuis plusieurs décennies, le « tourisme de mémoire »² devient un enjeu de développement local dans le Nord de la France³. Les contemporains vivent donc une période de transition, de passage de la mémoire du premier conflit mondial à son histoire : si le 90^e anniversaire de l'armistice a permis de nombreuses publications et l'émergence de manifestations autres que commémoratives, le décès du dernier poilu marque symboliquement la fin du recours aux témoins directs⁴. Commencent à être inventoriés les « paysages de mémoire »⁵ tandis que les objets en lien avec la Grande Guerre se raréfient. Ce contexte est favorable à la montée en qualification et au renouvellement de l'ensemble des sites, et donc des espaces muséographiques⁶.

Les musées qui traitent de la Grande Guerre proposent des muséographies variées : quelle expérience les visiteurs viennent-ils chercher dans ce type de musée ? qu'apporte le musée au visiteur par rapport à un cimetière, un site de guerre ou un mémorial ? Si a fortiori la distance (temporelle, spatiale, sociale et culturelle) entre le visiteur (et son vécu) et les protagonistes de la Grande Guerre (militaires et civils) est importante, qu'y trouve-t-il ? des connaissances sur une période historique qui lui semble de plus en plus lointaine ? une expérience de la réalité de guerre via la catharsis ? un lieu de souvenir moins solennel qu'un mémorial ou un cimetière ? Y a-t-il donc des formes d'appropriation spécifiques à ces musées ?

Cette étude n'a pas vocation à tendre à l'exhaustivité car « [p]lusieurs vies ne suffiraient pas pour visiter l'ensemble des lieux de mémoire de la Grande Guerre »⁷ mais la méthodologie proposée vise à comparer les différents parcours muséographiques offerts aux visiteurs, souvent « touristes de mémoire » et étrangers, tout en essayant de comprendre leurs attentes, et se positionne dans le cadre d'une « recherche-action »⁸. La comparaison des deux équipements muséographiques les plus importants du territoire transfrontalier (l'Historial de Péronne et In Flanders Fields Museum à Ypres) révèle les modalités d'accueil spécifiques de musées de taille plus réduite, présents sur le territoire du département du Nord, et leurs propositions de découvertes et d'expériences inédites ou originales.

I Distancier ou impliquer le visiteur ? quelle réception et quel dialogue possibles entre le parcours muséographique et ses publics ?

Le parcours muséographique proposé au visiteur est un dispositif de médiation dans lequel le fond et la forme interagissent : la réception du visiteur dépend de son état

² François Goliard, « Le tourisme de mémoire », *Tourisme et droit*, no. 114, novembre 2009, p. 14-18.

³ Si les sites mémoriels français relatifs aux conflits contemporains accueillent 6,2 millions de visite par an, leur mise en tourisme est « relativement récente, avec 80% des sites ayant ouvert après 1980, dont 25% dans les années 2000 » (Évaluation du poids économique de la filière du « tourisme de mémoire ». *Enquête en France Métropolitaine*, Paris, 1^{res} Assises du Tourisme de Mémoire, mai 2011, 5 p.).

⁴ Dernier vétéran connu, le britannique Claude Choules est décédé à 110 ans en Australie le 5 mai dernier.

⁵ Dans le cadre du projet européen transfrontalier *TransMusSites 1914-1945. Développement d'un réseau transfrontalier de musées et de sites des deux Guerres Mondiales* (TMS 14-45), une méthodologie d'inventaire est partagée entre la Province de Flandre occidentale et les Départements du Nord et du Pas-de-Calais.

⁶ Pour une carte avec la majorité des sites : <http://www.somme-tourisme.org/Vos-Reseaux-et-Labels/Les-filieres/Tourisme-de-Memoire/Carte-Memoire-de-la-Grande-Guerre> (06/2011).

⁷ J. Winter, *Entre deuil et mémoire : la Grande Guerre dans l'histoire culturelle de l'Europe*, Paris, A. Colin, 2008, p. 21.

⁸ Ce positionnement méthodologique est celui notamment de la Fédération des Écomusées et des Musées de Société (FEMS).

d'esprit personnel (culture, envie de découverte, temps disponible, etc.) mais aussi de la qualité et des partis pris du dispositif muséographique. Si le « rapport au corps n'est que trop sommairement abordé par les spécialistes »⁹, en revanche l'opposition traditionnelle de la connaissance à l'émotion (raison versus passion, cognitif versus affectif) semble être aujourd'hui dépassée¹⁰. Sur un sujet comme la Grande Guerre, le dialogue bilatéral, voire en sens unique, du parcours muséographique vers le visiteur nécessite des partis pris spécifiques, ou distanciés pour permettre une réception multinationale, ou au contraire impliqués qui proposent alors aux visiteurs une expérience la plus individualisée possible.

En comparant l'Historial de Péronne à In Flanders Fields Museum (Ypres), créés respectivement en 1992 et 1998, il n'y a pas lieu d'opposer une muséographie d'objets à une muséographie d'interprétation puisque ces deux équipements proposent des parcours ponctués d'objets contemporains de la Grande Guerre malgré leurs partis pris interprétatifs éloignés. Intégrés à des bâtiments patrimoniaux et récompensés par des prix européens en 1994 et en 2000, les deux musées ont d'autres points communs. Situés à proximité de lieux de bataille importants et de nombreux cimetières, traitant uniquement du premier conflit mondial, ils ont bénéficié d'une expertise historique précise¹¹. Si les visiteurs allemands font encore partie des publics potentiels, les deux musées, dont la majorité des publications sont au moins trilingues, jouissent d'une importante fréquentation (environ 200 000 visiteurs par an). De plus, le Centre d'Interprétation du Mémorial de Tiepval est géré par l'Historial, intégré aux Battlefields partners (coordonnés par le Comité Départemental de Tourisme de la Somme), tandis que In Flanders Fields participe à un réseau des sites et de musées de la Province de Flandre occidentale : « Guerre et paix dans le Westhoek » (avec le centre d'interprétation du cimetière de Tyne Cot).

Pour l'« Historial », le choix du nom montre la volonté de ses concepteurs d'être à la frontière de l'histoire et de la mémoire¹², même s'il est labellisé « musée de France ». Le Centre de recherche historique a conçu un scénario visant à mettre « l'homme au centre de toutes les préoccupations, en comparant systématiquement les trois sociétés belligérantes – Allemagne, France, Royaume-Uni »¹³, résultat d'un consensus entre les historiographies des différents pays¹⁴. La démarche semble déductive avec une muséographie linéaire et une scénographie recherchant l'horizontalité : les différents contextes de production des objets, témoins originaux sur des supports variés, y sont alors respectés¹⁵. En revanche, comme dans beaucoup de musées d'histoire, au In Flanders Fields, l'objet, qui n'est pas systématiquement associé à un cartel, n'est

⁹ Ghislaine Chabert et Daniel Bouillot proposent un rapide état des lieux des recherches sur la réception des publics (« Du réel au virtuel : une expérience de visite dans l'exposition », *Culture et Musées*, no. 15, 2010, p. 121-122).

¹⁰ David Sander, Carole Varone, « L'émotion a sa place dans toutes les expositions », *La Lettre de l'OCIM*, no. 134, mars-avril 2011, p. 25.

¹¹ Le Centre de recherche historique de l'Historial réunissant des chercheurs français, anglo-saxons et allemands est aujourd'hui une association loi 1901 (Guillaume de Fonclare, « L'Historial de Péronne : l'Historial de la Grande Guerre », in: « Historial, musées et mémoriaux de la Grande Guerre », *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, no. 235, 2009, p. 21-31).

¹² Sophie Deshayes, « Les sciences humaines et sociales s'exposent à l'Historial de Péronne », *Culture et Musées*, no. 10, 2007, p. 79-95.

¹³ G. de Fonclare, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

¹⁴ Sophie Wahnich et Antonin Tisseron, « 'Disposer des corps' ou mettre la guerre au musée. L'Historial de Péronne, un musée d'histoire européenne de la guerre de 1914-1918 », in: Gueissaz Mireille, Wahnich Sophie (dirs), « Les musées des guerres du XX^e siècle : lieux du politique ? », in: *Tumultes*, no. 16, 2001/1, p. 55-81.

¹⁵ L'historien Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, parmi les « experts » appelés à élaborer le discours muséal, écrit que sa participation lui a permis la « découverte de ce territoire immense des objets et des images » (« Musée d'histoire et recherche. Le cas de l'Historial de la Grande Guerre », in: Joly Marie-Hélène, Compère-Morel Thomas (eds), *Des musées d'histoire pour l'avenir*, Paris, Noësis, 1998, p. 230-231)

exposé que pour illustrer un propos, qui se veut être une expérience à vivre : « Vous y participerez même, en tant que soldat ou infirmière, habitant d'Ypres ou réfugié »¹⁶. En effet, des bornes interactives, disséminées dans le vaste parcours muséographique, permettent au visiteur de suivre la vie d'un personnage pendant les événements, grâce à son ticket individuel doté d'un code barre. Souhaitant favoriser une immersion totale, la muséographie est foisonnante, voire « débordante » : les différents niveaux de lecture laissent à chaque visiteur une approche et une expérience potentiellement différenciée et donc inductive, participant au dialogue plus que le recevant.

Ces deux muséographies reflèteraient-elles deux traditions historiographiques différentes ? Si les deux parcours sont chronologiques, le premier donnerait à voir au visiteur l'histoire sociale et culturelle de la Grande Guerre tandis que le second privilégierait la valorisation de plusieurs parcours individuels tout en laissant le visiteur construire le sien propre. L'historiographie anglo-saxonne travaille depuis longtemps sur l'histoire individuelle des soldats tandis que le monde francophone semble la découvrir depuis plus récemment : le 90^e anniversaire de l'armistice en 2008 a fait émerger beaucoup de sources inédites, conservées encore souvent par les descendants des combattants, et plusieurs institutions culturelles, comme les Archives Départementales du Nord¹⁷ ou le Musée royal de Mariemont¹⁸, se sont emparées de ce positionnement historiographique, devenu alors muséographique. L'objet se pose comme témoin incontournable de la « culture matérielle » de la Grande Guerre où l'approche transdisciplinaire (histoire, anthropologie, archéologie, muséologie, etc.) s'impose¹⁹. Si In Flanders Fields emprunte régulièrement à des collectionneurs, valorisés à l'occasion d'une exposition (17/04-24/05/2009)²⁰, ce « retour des objets », et peut-être de leur force muséographique intrinsèque, sera-t-il aussi perceptible dans le projet du Musée de la Grande Guerre du Pays de Meaux.

Ces exemples posent la question de l'importance du statut des objets, de leur provenance et du choix de leur valorisation auprès des visiteurs : quelle est la place de la perception des objets dans l'expérience des visiteurs ? la muséographie d'un musée de guerre doit-elle faire le choix entre « récit(s) de guerre » et « expérience(s) de guerre » ? une muséographie « homogène » ne participerait-elle pas à un « lissage ou nivellement » des objets exposés²¹ ? ne faudrait-il pas conceptualiser la continuité et la discontinuité potentielle du discours muséographique en l'ouvrant davantage à l'expérience que le visiteur peut vivre à l'extérieur du musée ? Si ces deux importants équipements muséographiques, l'Historial et In Flanders Fields²², sont intégrés à la mise en tourisme de leurs territoires (la Somme et le Westhoek), le Nord-Pas de Calais est un « non-musée », mais « territoire de mémoire »²³, pour lequel le Ministère de la

¹⁶ Le livret *Témoins de la Grande Guerre. Guide des citations* est distribué à tout visiteur avec, au dos, un plan du parcours (40 p.).

¹⁷ A l'occasion de l'accueil des archives de l'Office National des Anciens Combattants et victimes de guerre (ONAC) constituées de dossiers individuels, les AD59 ont organisé une exposition *Le Nord en guerre, 1914-1918* illustrée par des documents privés. Un *Guide des sources de la guerre 1914-1918* a été aussi publié (Villeneuve d'Ascq, Septentrion, 606 p.).

¹⁸ L'exposition (26/02-30/08/2009) valorisait des carnets et des photographies d'un soldat belge, Gustave Groleau (Jacques Liébin (textes choisis par), *Une vie de soldat. La Grande Guerre au jour le jour*, 2009, Musée royal de Mariemont, 160 p.).

¹⁹ Nicholas J. Saunders, Paul Cornish (eds), *Contested objects. Material memories of the Great War*, 2009, London, New York, Routledge, p. p. 2.

²⁰ Cette exposition a été organisée à l'occasion de la conférence internationale *Collecting War. Trench art and souvenirs. Manufacture and representation* du 17 au 19 avril 2009 (*The Great War Collection*, 2009, Ypres, In Flanders Fields Museum, [24] p.).

²¹ Ce questionnement a émergé lors du séminaire « Culture matérielle et visuelle » de Gil Bartoleyns (« Images du passé, images du futur : les expériences visuelles du temps », Ecole doctorale SHS-Lille Nord de France, Lille 3, 25/05/2011).

²² Il proposera un nouveau parcours muséographique en juin 2012 en valorisant notamment les traces de la guerre dans le paysage du littoral (Nieuport) à la Lys (Armentières).

²³ S. Barcellini, « Introduction », in : « Historial, musées... », *op. cit.*, p. 2-5.

Défense puis la Région ont souhaité structurer l'offre touristique grâce à des Chemins de mémoire. Sans être exclusivement des musées de militaria, des espaces muséographiques de taille moins importante participent aussi à leurs animations²⁴.

II. Au delà du parcours muséographique, quelle place pour l'interaction avec le site dans l'expérience dialogique du visiteur ?

Si l'offre est de plus en plus dense, y a-t-il un risque de saturation ou ne faudrait-il pas que les espaces muséographiques continuent à développer leur complémentarité en produisant de « nouveaux concepts »²⁵ ? Si le parcours muséographique reste un lieu de visite relativement figé, qu'il est nécessaire de renouveler régulièrement, n'est-ce pas dans la complémentarité des espaces muséographiques qu'il faudrait décliner le concept de dialogisme ? Si les limites physiques du musée sont souvent repoussées (agrandissement, développement du site internet, etc.), quel ancrage territorial garder en cas de développement d'un musée virtuel de plus en plus participatif, où le public, davantage internaute que visiteur, chercherait toujours un dialogue privilégié ? Quelle « expérience » faut-il revivre pour pouvoir partager²⁶ ? Quelles sont les attentes et la demande de « qualité » des touristes de mémoire ? et comment des espaces muséographiques plus réduits peuvent aussi y répondre ?

Les attentes de visiteurs des musées et sites de mémoire sont mieux connues depuis une étude de l'Observatoire du Comité Régional de Tourisme Nord-Pas de Calais en 2007²⁷. Mais le visiteur français ou étranger peut difficilement entrer dans un « stéréotype » car l'accueil humain au sein d'un même équipement peut être très hétérogène (agent d'accueil et de surveillance, guide-conférencier, médiateur, animateur, etc.). Les résultats de cette enquête à la fois quantitative et qualitative montrent que, les publics des sites de tourisme de mémoire, « [d]ans leur très grande majorité, ce ne sont pas des personnes visitant régulièrement des musées », et que les attentes des Français et des Britanniques en individuel ou en groupes sont différenciées. Les Britanniques, majoritairement primo-visiteurs, « lié[s] historiquement aux combattants ou intéressés par les deux guerres mondiales », sont très sensibles au confort de visite (audioguides, espaces conviviaux, boutiques), mais aussi à l'authenticité et à l'atmosphère historique²⁸. Comme les tours opérateurs britanniques souhaitent diversifier l'offre proposée en recherchant de nouveaux sites à visiter, une typologie des sites et des musées a donc été élaborée en lien avec la « notoriété et l'importance des animations et médiations » : ceux « d'intérêt national », « régional », « local » et des « sites témoins », définis comme « un groupe de sites connus localement dont les bâtiments ont un lien direct avec les guerres mondiales, [qui] regorgent de témoignages »²⁹.

En dépassant l'historiocentrisme d'une muséographie qui lierait l'intérêt du visiteur à la seule véracité historique³⁰, quelles sont les spécificités de l'expérience du visiteur dans de « petits » musées, si ce n'est une relation humaine plus directe ? Le « médiateur-

²⁴ ils n'appartiennent à aucune catégorie décrite par Serge Barcellini et sont partiellement mentionnés par Yves Le Maner en 2009 (« Historial, musées... », *op. cit.*, p. 2-5 et p. 79-80).

²⁵ Serge Barcellini, « Souvenir, mémoire et marché », *Le Monde*, 12 novembre 2008, p. 15.

²⁶ Michèle Gellereau, « Mémoire du travail, mémoire des conflits », *Communication et langages*, no. 149, septembre 2006, p. 70.

²⁷ *Étude des sites de tourisme de mémoire et analyse de leurs clientèle*, 2007, Lille, CRT Nord-Pas de Calais, 83 p. (phases 1 et 2 : désormais I.) et 49 p. (phase 3 : II.) : voir la synthèse <http://www.tourisme-nordpasdecals.fr/pageseditos/les-syntheses-d-etudes.html> (06/2011).

²⁸ « un besoin de compréhension en 'vrai' : l'émotion passe par le site lui-même » ; « les sites les plus modernisés ne sont pas forcément ceux qui attirent le plus, ce qui prime est la qualité authentique du produit » ; « un lien fort entre le contenant et le contenu (les visiteurs sont très critiques si le discours ou les aménagements ne respectent pas le lieu et sa mémoire) ».

²⁹ I. p. 39, I. p. 43, 46 et 58, I. p. 57-61, II. p. 8-9.

³⁰ C'est néanmoins une condition *sine qua non* à la notoriété du lieu.

témoin » aux côtés du « médiateur-acteur local » et du « médiateur professionnel »³¹, est d'ailleurs placé par Hugues de Varine au centre d'un projet d'interprétation du patrimoine, « car tout patrimoine est un produit de culture vivante donc évolutif », et critique ainsi « une logique institutionnelle » qui veut souvent « traiter du contenant avant de se préoccuper du contenu »³². Un musée de guerre dialogique ne serait-il alors pas un site où la parole et l'échange auraient une place privilégiée ? Deux musées, le musée de la Cité d'Ercan à Erquinghem-Lys, inauguré en 2005, et le Fort Leveau à Feignies (classé dans les « sites d'intérêt régional »)³³, aux fréquentations encourageantes (environ 1000 visiteurs, majoritairement anglo-saxons, et 8000 visiteurs par an), privilégient l'accueil du visiteur par une médiation directe « sincère » et « incarnée »³⁴. Le médiateur est en effet aussi témoin par sa participation à la création du musée et à la constitution de ses collections : son histoire personnelle interagit avec la construction du discours interprétatif. Dans des bâtiments mis à disposition par la commune, les deux musées sont associatifs : le premier n'est animé que par des bénévoles, tandis que le second bénéficie des compétences d'un professionnel de musée. Des efforts sont faits pour accueillir un public étranger : cartels quadrilingues à Erquinghem-Lys et brochures de communication multilingues pour les deux. L'entrée du musée de la Cité d'Ercan est situé en face d'un cimetière de la Commonwealth War Graves Commission lieu d'accueil naturel des visiteurs anglo-saxons, comportant aussi des tombes de soldats allemands³⁵ : c'est un travail de recherche sur les soldats enterrés ou ayant combattu dans les environs que propose aussi le musée. Les modalités d'appropriation du visiteur sont renouvelées lorsque se crée un lien avec son histoire personnelle, voire avec ses préoccupations généalogiques³⁶ : de fait, l'émotion épistémologique provoquée par l'intérêt faciliterait l'envie de comprendre et d'apprendre³⁷. Cette démarche est assez similaire à Feignies puisque c'est l'histoire tragique de soldats français du fort Leveau qui a enclenché le développement du musée à partir de 1993. La première salle présente le contexte historique et des objets ayant appartenu aux soldats, trouvés ou donnés par les familles. Si grâce à des chantiers d'insertion, le fort est entretenu et peu à peu restauré, le parcours muséographique se développe pour y contextualiser la vie des soldats, mais est susceptible d'accueillir d'autres objets témoins, comme les restes d'un avion américain écrasé en 1945 à proximité³⁸. Cette volonté du musée de transmettre une histoire « découverte » est intrinsèquement liée à l'ampleur du site, à la fois patrimonial et paysager. Le succès de la manifestation annuelle, le Rata du poilu en mai (environ 2000 personnes), animée notamment par plusieurs associations de reconstitution,

³¹ Il est à noter que des musées Beaux-Arts, comme le Louvre ou le Palais-des-Beaux-Arts de Lille, intègrent désormais, au sein de leurs visio-guides, la parole du conservateur ou du chercheur comme complémentaire aux commentaires traditionnels d'œuvres d'art.

³² Hugues de Varine, « Le Centre d'interprétation du patrimoine au sein du développement d'un territoire », in: Chaumier Serge, Jacobi Daniel (dirs), *Exposer des idées, du musée au centre d'interprétation*, Paris, Éd. Complicités, 2009, p. 173-179.

³³ <http://www.erquinghem-lys.com/france/assoc/hlocale/musee.php?lg=fr> et <http://fortdeleveau.voila.net/> (06/2011).

³⁴ Le contrat de recherches TEMUSE liant le Département du Nord et le laboratoire GERiCO (Lille3) a pour objectif de « valoriser la mémoire des témoins et des collectionneurs d'objets des deux Guerres mondiales » en proposant à terme aux musées du matériel (sonore, visuel) pouvant nourrir leurs outils de médiation.

³⁵ Valmai Holt, Tonie Holt, *Major & Mrs Holt's Concise Illustrated Battlefield Guide. The Western Front-North*, 2004, Barnsley, Pen & Sword, 2^e édition, p. 172-173.

³⁶ Si la base du Ministère de la Défense *Mémoire des hommes* permet de retrouver tous les morts pour la France, une autre association « Alloeu terre de batailles » travaille à reconstituer les biographies des soldats originaires de communes de l'agglomération Flandre-Lys et constitue peu à peu un fonds d'objets et de documents donnés par les descendants : <http://latb1418.free.fr/> (06/2011).

³⁷ D. Sander, C. Varone, *loc. cit.*, p. 25.

³⁸ L'aviateur, William W. Patton, toujours « porté disparu » en 2001, fait l'objet d'un Mémorial au sein du musée, inauguré en 2003 en présence des autorités américaines (*Le Fort de Leveau de 1874 à nos jours*, 2008, Feignies, Association Sauvegarde du Fort de Leveau, 40 p.).

permet de questionner l'existence ou non d'une « communauté »³⁹ autour de tels musées-sites, et d'une certaine manière, la découverte d'usages contemporains de la Grande Guerre⁴⁰ rendue possible par cette relation particulière que le musée propose et entretient avec ses visiteurs.

Ce rapport à l'objet, parfois presque « objet-relique », impose au public une autre forme de visite⁴¹ car elle l'ouvre sur une histoire de la Grande Guerre plus individuelle, plus émotionnelle, en construction. En effet, les visiteurs ont probablement un rapport différent avec des objets de guerre, fabriqués en très grande quantité pour tuer l'ennemi, durant une période très courte, mais que leurs aïeux, soldats, ont eu entre les mains. Une fosse commune de soldats anglo-saxons à Fromelles dans les Weppes a ainsi été redécouverte et a permis l'inauguration d'un nouveau cimetière, le 19 juillet 2010⁴². Sans les plaques matricules, il ne restait plus qu'aux archéologues de la Glasgow University les objets trouvés et les restes d'ADN pour identifier les 250 soldats : d'abord rendus aux familles, ces objets rejoindront peut-être le futur musée de Fromelles en 2013. Cet archéocentrisme anglo-saxon permet de positionner le souvenir de la Bataille de Fromelles (1916) comme étape incontournable d'un chemin de mémoire australien dans le Nord de la France⁴³. Visibles dans le grenier de la mairie depuis 1990, les collections de ce musée ont été constituées depuis plusieurs décennies par les bénévoles de l'« Association pour le Souvenir de la Bataille de Fromelles »⁴⁴ (700 visiteurs par an⁴⁵) : beaucoup d'objets, notamment archéologiques, mais aussi techniques et documentaires, proviennent du territoire ou d'échanges avec les descendants de soldats, mais leur valeur, souvent liée à leur rareté et à leur authenticité, ne peut être en partie définie que par leurs découvreurs⁴⁶. La réflexion autour de la muséographie du futur lieu in progress n'est pas aisée⁴⁷ puisqu'il faut anticiper les attentes d'un visiteur anglo-saxon, notamment australien, français, voire allemand. Ce futur musée sera néanmoins à la frontière d'un lieu interprétatif, où l'objet garde une place de témoin incontournable, et d'un lieu d'accueil. L'entrée et la sortie du parcours (excavations, parcours individuels des soldats identifiés) seront conçus en effet pour ouvrir vers l'extérieur : un circuit de randonnée est déjà matérialisé⁴⁸ (églises, casemates, ossuaire, cimetières, etc.). Au delà de l'expérience muséale, le visiteur mesurera l'importance du temps passé sur le lieu arpenté, chargé d'histoire ou, plus exactement, de passé. L'imbrication et la proximité du dispositif muséographique, du lieu patrimonial et mémoriel, ne participent-elles alors à l'épaisseur de l'expérience, notamment émotionnelle, vécue par le visiteur⁴⁹ ? C'est au visiteur de poursuivre son dialogue avec le passé. Le lieu reste le témoin du présent, les objets, du passé. Le dialogue avec chacun des visiteurs, initié par le parcours muséographique, se poursuit, s'enrichit et se complète avec d'autres aspects du même passé - la bataille de Fromelles - évoqué sous différentes formes, historique, mémorielle, écrite, orale, intellectuelle, physique, à l'intérieur ou à l'extérieur. Le public devient acteur de sa

³⁹ La « communauté » (habitants, visiteurs réguliers) est un terme notamment employé par les écomusées et les musées de société.

⁴⁰ Voir l'éclairante analyse pour la France de N. Offenstadt (*op. cit.*, chap. I).

⁴¹ Voir M.-H. Joly, « Les musées d'histoire », in : *Des musées d'histoire...*, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

⁴² L'événement a été couvert par les médias, notamment australiens, britanniques et français.

⁴³ Le gouvernement australien participe à la mise en valeur des sites de Villers-Bretonneux (Somme), Bullecourt (Pas-de-Calais) et Fromelles.

⁴⁴ <http://www.asbf14-18.org> (06/2011).

⁴⁵ Les inscriptions du livre d'or sont presque exclusivement anglophones.

⁴⁶ TEMUSE, cité plus haut, intègre aussi la récolte de leur mémoire orale, même si un inventaire des collections a été effectué en 2010.

⁴⁷ Nous avons participé à cette réflexion commanditée par la Communauté de Communes de Weppes en 2010.

⁴⁸ http://www.rando-nature.eu/fr/randonnees_detail.asp?idDisc=1&sX_Menu_selectedID=mHaut_49E9F764&id=55010 (06/2010).

⁴⁹ Voir à ce sujet, M. Gellereau, *loc. cit.*, p. 74.

visite, non plus seulement muséale, mais peut aussi entamer un dialogue a priori ou a posteriori avec des médiateurs d'une mémoire sans cesse (re)composée.

« Partager le silence des chemins » parfois devient plus essentiel que de tenter de raconter une histoire qui serait déconnectée de la force et de l'esprit qui émergent des objets et paysages⁵⁰.

S'« [i]l n'y a pas d'objectivité ni de neutralité dans l'acte muséographique »⁵¹, satisfaire les attentes de potentiels visiteurs et susciter le dialogue devient une gageure pour le concepteur. Mais la conception n'est qu'une étape muséographique qui conditionne la médiation (écrite et orale) et l'ensemble de la politique culturelle du musée. Si, pour les musées de guerre, l'« esprit du lieu » doit être pris en compte, la complémentarité entre la muséographie et la médiation est questionnée, notamment dans l'objectif d'accueillir des publics étrangers aux points de vue différenciés sur la Grande Guerre. Le musée dans sa forme dialogique, par essence moins figé et évocateur, peut-il ainsi réussir à parler à chacun quand il ne parvient pas à parler à tous ? En effet, les Allemands ne fréquentent quasiment pas ces lieux et aucun musée allemand ne traite exclusivement de la Grande Guerre, souvent intégrée historiographiquement dans l'analyse plus globale des deux conflits mondiaux - ce qui rejoint les préoccupations des musées d'Erquingham-Lys, de Feignies et de Fromelles.

Pour prolonger la relation humaine vécue au sein du musée dans le temps, le web 3.0 ne permettrait-il pas de renouveler la notion de « musée virtuel » en lui donnant une consonance « dialogique » ? Comme le « Mémorial virtuel de guerre du Canada »⁵², les musées ne pourraient-ils pas « augmenter » leurs sites d'espaces collaboratifs de co-construction de contenu en facilitant l'interactivité avec d'anciens visiteurs continuant leurs expériences mémorielles, de potentiels visiteurs, voire avec des internautes cherchant des informations sur leurs aïeux ? Le musée ne serait plus seulement diffuseur de contenus mais aussi « réceptacle » ou lieu de dépôt d'archives, de documents, d'objets inédits, ayant tous un lien intrinsèque avec son objet, tandis que son site internet, serait un lieu potentiel de partages d'expériences de visiteurs indiens ou chinois, encore absents bien qu'impliqués⁵³.

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⁵¹ M.-H. Joly, op. cit., p. 74.

⁵² En plus d'un accès en ligne aux informations sur les soldats morts lors de conflits, les internautes peuvent « déposer » leurs documents pour compléter la collection virtuelle.

⁵³ Une paire de chiens Fu, à l'entrée du cimetière chinois de la Commonwealth War Graves Commission de Nolette (Noyelle-sur-mer, Somme), ont été offerts par Tung kang, village jumelé taïwanais, en l'honneur des travailleurs chinois décédés à l'arrière du front.

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DIALOGISM: THE IDEAL AND REALITY FOR MUSEUM VISITORS

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ABSTRACT

Dialogism has been embraced implicitly by museums as a social movement despite its appearance in literary criticism as a group of connected theories, by Mikhail Bakhtin, about the formation of the self through dialogue. This paper analyses an experience of visiting *The Lower East Side Tenement Museum* in New York which offers an intense dialogue experience for visitors. The museum incorporates round table discussion with a small group of visitors as part of every guided tour to an old slum dwelling. Visitors are invited to reflect on the historic and social links between immigration to the USA in the nineteenth century and contemporary debates about immigration. This paper argues that dialogism has been changed into an ideal of communication during its transference to the museum institution, and that such an ideal is very difficult to achieve. Effectively, the museum produces a monologic visitor experience despite its ideals of heteroglossia. The final meaning effects of this museum seem to be about social reform and conformity to left wing politics despite its textual attempts at allowing many voices to be heard.

RÉSUMÉ

Dialogisme : l'idéal opposé à la réalité pour les visiteurs de musées

Le dialogisme a été implicitement adopté par les musées comme mouvement social, malgré le fait qu'il ait fait son apparition en critique littéraire avec Mikhail Bakhtin, sous forme d'un ensemble de théories reliées, concernant la formation du Soi par le dialogue. L'article qui suit analyse l'expérience d'une visite dans *The Lower East Side Tenement Museum* à New-York, qui offre au visiteur une intense expérience dialogique. Le musée inclut des groupes de discussion dans sa visite guidée d'un vieux bidonville, avec un groupe délibérément réduit de visiteurs. Les visiteurs sont invités à réfléchir sur les liens historiques et sociaux entre l'immigration aux Etats-Unis au dix-neuvième siècle et le débat contemporain concernant l'immigration. L'argument de cet article est que le dialogisme a été transformé en un idéal de communication lorsqu'il a été transféré au musée, et qu'un tel idéal est extrêmement difficile à atteindre. De fait, c'est une expérience monologique que le musée offre au visiteur, en dépit de ses idéaux d'hétéroglossie. Pour le musée, les effets du sens implicite semblent être la réforme sociale et la conformité aux politiques de gauche, malgré ses tentatives textuelles de donner à de multiples voix l'opportunité de se faire entendre.

RESUMEN

El Dialogismo : El ideal como opuesto a la realidad por los visitantes de museos

El dialogismo ha sido implícitamente adoptado por los museos como movimiento social, a pesar de que su aparición en la crítica literaria con

Mikhail Bakhtin, bajo la forma de una colección de teorías sobre la formación de uno mismo por el diálogo. Este artículo analiza la experiencia de una visita a *The Lower East Side Tenement Museum* en New-York, que ofrece la visitante una intensa experiencia dialógica. El museo incluye grupos de discusión en su visita guiada a un viejo suburbio, con un grupo deliberadamente reducido de visitantes. Los visitantes son invitados a reflexionar sobre los lazos históricos y sociales entre la inmigración a los Estados Unidos en el siglo diecinueve y el debate contemporáneo concerniente a la inmigración. Lo que este documento defiende es que el dialogismo ha sido transformado en un ideal de comunicación al transferirse al museo como institución, y que ese ideal es bastante difícil de alcanzar. De hecho, lo que este museo ofrece la visitante es una experiencia monológica, a pesar de sus ideales de heterogeneidad. Para ese museo, el sentido implícito de los efectos, parece ser la reforma social y la conformidad con las políticas de izquierda, a pesar de sus tentativas textuales de dar a las múltiples voces la oportunidad de hacerse entender.

摘要

對話理論：博物館訪客的理想與現實

由巴赫汀(Mikhail Bakhtin)提出的對話主義在文學批評中討論人們如何透過對話建構自我的相關理論，但博物館悄悄地採用對話主義，使其成為一種社會運動。本文分析參訪紐約下東城廢棄建築博物館的經驗。這個博物館為其訪客提供非常豐富的對話經驗。博物館每次帶著訪客參觀古老的貧民區住房時，都會讓一小群訪客參與圓桌討論。博物館邀請訪客思考十九世紀來到美國的移民和現在人們對移民的不同觀點之間，有哪些歷史與社會的關聯。本文主張，對話主義在進入博物館機構後已經轉變成為一種溝通的理想，但這樣的理想很難實現。儘管博物館希望提供意涵豐富的訪客經驗，卻往往只能提供單一的訪客經驗。案例中的博物館最終似乎只能讓訪客了解社會革命與左翼政治的影響，儘管它原先試圖創造的氛圍是想讓訪客聽到各種不同的心聲。

* * *

The steady erosion of monumental museum authority has been achieved through major textual changes, notably the demise of the primacy of the artefact as central to museum language. Accompanying changes to the status of the artefact has been a fundamental alteration in the implied relationship embodied in the museum institution's address to visitors. Throughout the nineteenth century and most of the twentieth century the museum spoke with authority, presumed objectivity and as an educator of an assumed passive visitor. Massive social upheaval associated with the civil rights movement, feminism, decolonisation and mass participation in higher education in many countries has made untenable the maintenance of what had seemed an entrenched authority.

Attempts over several decades to reduce museum authority and rethink the philosophic stance of the museum have often drawn on some form of dialogism, the word now used to encapsulate the bundle of connected issues that were the focus of the Russian philosopher, Mikhail Bakhtin (1981; Holquist, 1990). His theorising of the construction of the self through endless dialogue with others has had a powerful effect on the humanities, especially in literary criticism, a field that he critiqued himself. He theorised multiplicities of utterances and responses as the *reality* of human existence.

Nevertheless, in museums this theoretical description of reality has been reinterpreted implicitly as an ideal of communication.

There are several outstanding examples of museums founded in the last few decades on advanced dialogic principles, for example, *Te Papa*, the national museum of New Zealand which adopts a multi-voiced conflicting authorship as it invites its visitors to participate in a variety of museum experiences from the *Disneyland* dark ride style of participatory exhibit, to theatre, hands-on activities and classical housing of artefacts in glass cases for silent contemplation. As startlingly dialogic as is *Te Papa*, the development of *The Lower East Side Tenement Museum (The Tenement Museum)* in New York City is much more advanced in its conception of the visitor as the key to museum dialogic practice and the unfolding idea of the museum itself.

Curators of *The Tenement Museum* seem to have thought through the idea of dialogism to a sophisticated expression of apparently multiple speech utterances and responses within the museum framework. This paper analyses the dialogic ideals of *The Tenement Museum* as they emerge in the visitor experience. It argues that dialogism, idealised as communication by museums, is one of the most difficult textual elements for a museum to achieve and that, in this example, the museum unwittingly undermines its own dialogic ideals. *The Tenement Museum* struggles in good faith to be an idealistic agent of social change through the experiences and discussions it makes available to its visitors. By not reflecting sufficiently on its own voice and practices, however, it has produced itself as a place in which a visitor might be improved or reformed - an old museum concept that is very familiar from nineteenth century and early to mid-twentieth century museums. Reforming zeal is the unacknowledged heart of this museum which seems on its surface to be dedicated to dialogism. Reform of a citizenry was argued by Bennett (1995) as a core impulse in the development of the modern museum. This paper argues that despite sophisticated dialogic practices, *The Tenement Museum* seems unable to break out of a monoglossic, didactic voice which reveals that it is the direct heir of the reforming mode of the mid-nineteenth century museum and that, therefore, its dialogic ambitions are in direct, but unwitting, conflict with this over-arching aim. If a museum that prioritises dialogue is unable to achieve a space of manifold voices, then what hope is there for museums that are still reliant on unilateral messages of information tempered by unsophisticated interactive technology?

Dialogism and museums

Bakhtin identified the novel as a premier site for understanding dialogism because it contains multiple voices and multiple spaces which interact with each other (Bakhtin, 1981). Similarly, most museums offer multiple topics, analysed through multiple voices, with reference to multiple spaces. The museum, therefore, is an ideal space in which to consider dialogism, described by Bakhtin as the reality of human interaction and the bedrock of understanding the self. To explain the link between self and other, Bakhtin's principal interpreter and translator, Holquist (1990: 25) says "Being is a simultaneity; it is always co-being." The self is known fundamentally through the other, hence a state of existence of co-beingness.

In contrast to Bakhtin's theories, museums reveal that they have their own interpretation of what he conceptualised as the reality of human interaction and self formation. They understand dialogism as a social movement realised through communication. Many museums have thought implicitly that social reform could be fostered by cultural institutions if dialogue with their audiences were prioritised. The adoption of elements of Bakhtin's thought by museums can be seen often to result in an impoverished response to his complex work and the unwitting, but implied,

continuance of the concept of the passive state of the visitor. It is no surprise that Bakhtin's work, emerging as it does from the tumultuous world of revolutionary and totalitarian Russia, should appeal to those wishing to pull down museum authority. Not only is it the specific historical circumstances of his writing that seem to give theoretical legitimacy to dramatic museum change, his theory of a construction of the self through others, via multiple endless dialogues grounded in experience, seems to give museums a way to open up conversations. Such dialogues, logically, ought to have changed the previous constructions of museums as unilateral conveyers of information via material culture.

Unfortunately, the immensely rich and complicated work of Bakhtin has often been utilised in the museum institution as the impetus for the development of simple interactive exhibition devices which in most instances simply give the visitor a slight change from the usual artefact-focused experience. Interactives typically ask a visitor to push a button, lift a flap or move a computer cursor for several possible answers to a puzzle set by the museum curator; the museum, of course, reserving to itself the right of declaring which is the correct answer. More advanced interactive technologies, often referred to as dialogic aspects of the museum have seen the visitor given the opportunity to talk back to the museum, and to other visitors, either by leaving statements on a computer that can be read later by others or by writing notes and attaching them to walls or notice boards which likewise can be read later by other visitors. Yet more advanced interactive audience experiences have been achieved through the New Museology where the museum as a cultural leader, rather than a cultural authority, goes into the wider community seeking information, advice and direction from various groups, often from those who are marginalised (see for example Karp and Lavine, 1992).

Heteroglossia (Holquist, 1990: 79), the great experience of language described by Bakhtin as the clashing of voices and positions of understanding, has been all but impossible, however, for museums to achieve. This is so partly because museums are framed by focused mission statements which are not permitted to be chaotic. Indeed, if they were, they would soon cease to be mission statements. Effectively, museums have reduced the complexity of Bakhtin's thought from a conception of manifold voices to dyadic dialogue: the museum speaks to its audience and listens to the answer. This is the usual reality of the transference of these complex literary ideas to the museum space. The implementation of dialogism in museums has, therefore, not only resulted in a conceptual shift from dialogism as a theorised reality of existence to a new concept - dialogism as social movement through communication - but also from manifold to dyadic communication. *The Tenement Museum* provides an excellent example of first, the reduction and, secondly, the contradiction of dialogism.

A museum of dialogue?

A visit to *The Tenement Museum* begins with the visitor selecting some stories to hear. On booking in, the visitor is offered a variety of immigrant family lives to get to know. The visitor is soon sitting around a kitchen table in the company of a group of up to 15 people in the dim, grey light filtering through the narrow windows from Orchard Street in the old slum district of the Lower East Side in Manhattan.¹ Many buildings in the Lower East Side have now been gentrified, but 97 Orchard Street remains a tenement time capsule of extreme poverty because it was closed and all tenants evicted in 1935 when the landlord chose not to improve the building to meet the city's housing

¹ The general heritage movement away from an emphasis on wealth and power can be seen in the appearance of slum museum experiences, for example, it is tackled in tours of the East End of London, UK and in *Susannah Place* in The Rocks, Sydney, Australia. Like *The Tenement Museum*, *Susannah Place* is a preserved slum dwelling in which the stories of many tenants are told.

regulations (*The Lower East Side Tenement Museum*, 2004: 7). The preserving qualities of poverty and neglect led finally to the founding of *The Tenement Museum* in 1988 by Ruth J. Abram. The museum was intended to “stand as a vibrant beacon for tolerance” (*The Lower East Side Tenement Museum*, 2004: 11). Abram also identified the tenement as a key site of American identity saying “for a nation of immigrants, there is no single site more historically significant than the tenement” (*Lower East Side Tenement Museum*, 2004: 11). In 1992, 97 Orchard Street was placed on the National Register of Historic Places (*The Lower East Side Tenement Museum*, 2004: 17).

During my visit in February 2011 a museum guide accompanied the tour group; she greeted visitors and outlined the history of the museum which is discussed also in museum publications. “Nearly 7,000 people from over 20 countries lived here between 1863 and 1935. The... museum, therefore, represents the masses, whose stories are at once personal and universal. And these tales are integral to understanding the development of America.” (*The Lower East Side Tenement Museum*, 2004: 11) The guide began to talk about some of the key families which would feature during the day’s visit, but quickly moved away from talking about the history of the house, turning instead to focus on the visitors themselves. The visitors were told that their views were valued and that discussion between them was one of the main aims of this museum experience which is so unlike others. Visitors were told that at the end of the tour they would return to this room for tea and cookies and an opportunity to exchange views. A hand written poster on the wall set out the principles for polite exchange of views, for example, taking turns to speak.

The guide told stories of the Gumpertz family and the missing father and husband, Julius Gumpertz - was he the victim of foul play or did he abandon his family leaving his seamstress wife, Nathalie, to support the family of four young children? *Getting By: The Gumpertz Family, The Panic of the 1870s* has a twist. After nine years as a sole parent, Nathalie had Julius declared legally dead thus clearing the way for her to inherit from his father. Nathalie went on to escape the Lower East Side, settling in the prosperous Upper East Side. The story is also told by Granfield and Alda (2001: 4). Guiding the visitors through the grimy, dank rooms of stained wall paper and meagre furnishings, the guide related narratives of some of the families so that visitors began to have a sense of rounded characters living very difficult lives. She described an immigrant experience which was often idealistically imagined before arrival in Manhattan only to become quite depressing when families found themselves crushed into the teeming streets of the Lower East Side where hygiene, privacy and opportunity were very limited. Brutally long hours of work in sweat shop conditions and high infant mortality were the reality for many immigrants.

Visitors were free to ask questions of the guide during the tour, for example, “how many people would have slept in this room?”, “what sort of food might have been cooked?” but when I asked a question about religious practices, prompted by seeing the image of a saint propped in one of the rooms, my dialogue was effectively dismissed. The guide told me that a specialist in religious iconography had recently visited and said that this was an image of the Virgin Mary. I explained that this was not the Virgin Mary, but an image of the very famous French saint, St Thérèse of Lisieux, devotion to whom remains very widespread in the Catholic world today, although not as pervasive as it was in the early twentieth century.² I was told that I was wrong and all attempts at discussing the religious practices of immigrants were halted. Startlingly, the guide clearly did not have deep knowledge of the artefacts around her, indeed, knowledge of the artefacts was regarded implicitly as unimportant in relation to the

² The everyday importance of St Thérèse of Lisieux can be measured partly by noting the presence of her image in the background of one of the early scenes in *The Godfather II* (1974) where the image of the saint can be seen in one of the Lower East Side backgrounds.

wider questions pondered by the museum. This appears to have been the case, although it is possible that devotion to St Thérèse was central to some of the immigrants' lives and not merely supplemental as implied by the guide.

Although religious tolerance is a significant issue in US history, further questions about this religious image were not permitted; simpler questions about indoor summer temperatures, food and work practices continued to be welcomed, no doubt because they supported the main thrust of the narratives about material deprivation and difficulties of settling in a new country. Questions of this type lead clearly to consideration of the practical difficulties of living in the tenement. Through these sorts of questions the visitor is directed to contemplate the discomfort and physical suffering experienced by nineteenth and early twentieth century immigrants. The story of Nathalie Gumpertz which is ultimately one of escaping the slums, thus can be seen to be a key narrative in understanding an appropriate immigrant trajectory, that is from poverty to prosperity. By contrast, my question about a Catholic saint opened up the immigrant experience to discussion of religious differences that have not been resolved in contemporary America, indeed that have been sharpened by the 9.11 attacks which left the place of Islam in the USA under suspicion by many.

At the conclusion of the tenement tour, we returned to the front parlour and had our tea and cookies and talked about the contemporary immigrant experience. One of the people in the group that day was an American citizen who had gone in the other direction, he had lived abroad for ten years and was then on holiday visiting his homeland. He was the only person in the group who had ever been an immigrant, albeit not one in America, but from America. Although he stated this clearly, neither the guide nor anyone in the group was interested to hear of his experiences, instead the guide continued to direct all conversation towards the physical suffering of the people who had lived in the tenement and the need to link these experiences to contemporary immigrant experiences in America. She advised us to think about issues of tolerance and acceptance.

A New Museum Model?

The great varieties of life encompassed by the novel meant that the novel for Bakhtin, as noted above, was an ideal place from which to discuss dialogism. The narratives presented by *The Tenement Museum* have the potential to offer the richness of the novel to visitors. 97 Orchard Street encapsulates the histories of Irish, Jewish and Italian families over many time periods; it has the voices of seamstresses, of shopkeepers and of rent collectors. The narratives appear to hold all of the voices in a dialogic ideal. The museum brochure entitled "Your Rent Is Due" asks us to support the museum mission "of promoting tolerance and historical perspective", it says that the museum is "dedicated to encouraging visitors to participate in shaping social issues", it is "a dynamic site of learning and dialogue" which emphasises diversity. The museum describes itself as producing "a new model for museums and the preserving professions" (*The Lower East Side Tenement Museum*, 2004: 5)

The museum is devoted to bringing together people with divergent views. It is a response to those who argue that strong ethnic and religious identities interfere with assimilation and must be abandoned, as well as those who believe Old World ties are essential to survival. "The tenement building allows us to enter that debate," Abram says. (*The Lower East Side Tenement Museum*, 2004: 11)

The model is clearly developed from a concept of dialogue based on Bakhtin's dialogism. Crucially, this dialogue is directed to consideration of contemporary immigrant issues, but in such a way that dissent from the museum's agenda is not permitted. Bakhtin's theorising of language emphasises the intense and clashing multiplicity of voices that make up our experience of our selves. Holquist explains the many factors that contribute to a manifold dialogue that is always in process and never completed.

At a very basic level, then, dialogism is the name not just for a dualism, but for a necessary *multiplicity* in human perception. This multiplicity manifests itself as a series of distinctions between categories appropriate to the perceiver on the one hand and categories appropriate to whatever is being perceived on the other. This way of conceiving things is not, as it might first appeared to be, one more binarism, for in addition to these poles, dialogism enlists the additional factors of situation and relation that make any specific instance of them more than a mere opposition of categories. (Holquist, 1990: 22)

The museum's ideal of divergent voices is clearly drawn from the bedrock of Bakhtin's writing, but it is not developed within his theories which crucially are about knowing the self through others.

In dialogism this sharedness is indeed the nature of fate for us all. For in order to see our selves (sic), we must appropriate the vision of the others. .. it is only the other's categories that will let me be an object for my own perception. I see my self (sic) as I concede others might see it. In order to forge a self, I must do so from *outside*. In other words, *I author myself*. (Holquist, 1990: 28)

Analysis of *The Tenement Museum* shows that its mission statement overrides its intention to be a space of dialogue, although ironically a space of dialogue is a key value of the museum. The web site includes "Be An Agent For Change!" It describes several protests that have led to better living and working conditions for vulnerable people. It includes this recent story.

Holly Yasui was following family tradition when she filed the legal brief in 2007 that protested the indefinite detention of citizens after 9.11. In the 1940s, her father went before the Supreme Court to challenge the detention of Japanese Americans.
(www.tenementmuseum.org/sitemap.html, accessed 30 May 2011)

This section of the web site includes these rousing comments: "Let Your Ideas Fly! How Can You Make A Difference?" It is clear that the museum holds the moral high ground within a left wing agenda, obviously Holly Yasui's protest was a defence of American values. Within the context of dialogism, however, the unreflective posting of this story raises questions about the museum's understanding of itself. The wider context of 9.11 with its grief, fear and massive loss of life helps to explain why some basic elements of US justice appear to have been suspended. It is not the intention of this paper to defend indefinite detention of citizens in any circumstances, but within a discussion of dialogism the broader social and political contexts which produced the detention are crucial for fully understanding the opposing voice. The historically situated impulse of the legal actions must be understood. The website implies that there was no particular complexity to this situation, just another example of citizens needing to be alert in order to protect their rights. A fully comprehended dialogic approach would have tempered the museum's enthusiastic endorsement of Holly

Yasui's actions by noting that some people obviously approved the indefinite detention of citizens in a moment of national crisis. The dialogic capacity of the museum would have been somewhat realised if the seemingly unpleasant, opposing voices were noted and given web space. The mission statement of the museum appears to endorse hearing many voices in its desire to promote "historical perspective":

To promote tolerance and historical perspective through the presentation and interpretation of the variety of immigrant and migrant experiences on Manhattan's Lower East Side, a gateway to America.
(www.tenement.org/about.html, accessed 30 May 2011)

The story about Holly Yasui includes a photograph of Japanese people in the 1940s possibly being grouped together for detention. Through this photograph and story the museum fulfils its ambition to link past and present stories. Its stated mission, however, is undermined because it does not include the voices of those who support indefinite detention following a national crisis of the magnitude of 9.11. As quoted above, in dialogism "we must appropriate the vision of the others" (Holquist, 1990: 28). The "dialogic imagination" insists that we see ourselves through the eyes of others, this is the only way we can understand ourselves and our world.

All institutions, especially cultural institutions, should reflect on themselves, their history and political positions. Tate (2005) synthesises the work of Foucault and Bakhtin on reflexivity arguing for the central importance of reflexivity in grasping social reality.

Although different, these approaches focus on the role of reflexivity in talk as simultaneously describing and making realities, the multiplicity of social realities, and language in the social construction of realities. (Tate, 2005: 24)

A progressive museum of the high social and political moral standing of *The Tenement Museum* appears to be a site of social reflexivity because of its strong engagement with historical and contemporary issues. Its admirable approach to museum work, that is, its insistence on the visitor experience embodying the right to speak, appears to place it in a moral museum category of its own. It describes itself as "a museum with a conscience, a place that uses history to promote citizenship, community spirit, and tolerance" (Granfield and Alda, 2001: 50). Its very advanced museology places *The Tenement Museum* museologically higher than most institutions with their focus on artefacts and very limited opportunity for visitor engagement. Unfortunately, the contemporary importance of the issues with which *The Tenement Museum* engages, plus the centrality it gives to the visitor function, mask its failure to reflect on its own work. It seems incapable of allowing a philosophy that opposes its own to be heard. This museum functions in the context of vibrant debate regarding legal and illegal immigration to the U.S. and other western countries. It also has links to terrorism, notably in the UK where some second generation Islamic migrants have been associated with terrorism.

The concept of "betweenness" is a logical aspect of dialogism (Baxter, 2007: 261). The betweenness or third way of seeing something, that is the space between two different voices, is a rich, but gray world, of non-binarism. It is, therefore, vitally important that these other voices are heard, but it is very difficult for museums to allow opposite philosophies to be spoken - they can seem too unpalatable. What of extreme right and left wing positions? It seems likely that although the museum conceptually regards itself as a heteroglossic space, that, in fact, it tends towards monologism. Holquist (1990: 75) notes "dialogism conceives history as a constant contest between monologue and dialogue, with the possibility of reversion always present". Is it possible

that *The Tenement Museum* with its ideal of dialogue has inadvertently created a space that inhibits dialogue? And that its central aim has become its central problem?

The reforming museum

Analysis of some aspects of *The Tenement Museum* shows the great difficulties of implementing a full dialogic textual base to the museum visitor experience. The museum has many ideals about its subject matter and visitor participation, but it is clear that is very difficult to implement dialogism, perhaps it is even unwise. How should we imagine a space of such unruly competition of voices? What sort of mission statement would a museum write that allowed such a clash of voices?

The visitor experience at *The Tenement Museum* is dominated not by dialogism, but by a reforming agenda. As noted at the beginning of this paper, the work of Bennett many years ago helps us to understand the reality of this museum as discursively recognisable to a nineteenth century visitor. Bennett describes a shift in the way institutions understood the idea of “the people” in the nineteenth century.

They [the institutions] sought not to map the social body in order to know the populace by rendering it visible to power. Instead, through the provision of object lessons in power - the power to command and arrange things and bodies for public display - they sought to allow the people, and *en masse* rather than individually, to know rather than be known, to become the subjects rather than the objects of knowledge. Yet, ideally, they sought also to allow the people to know and thence to regulate themselves. (Bennett, 1995: 63)

In the nineteenth century the museum institution evolved into a civilising space where people educated themselves in order better to participate appropriately and lawfully in their societies - “to regulate themselves”. The museum was, therefore, an agent of embourgeoisement and has continued to be so. The space of *The Tenement Museum* appears not to be a place for dissenting voices, or if it does so, it appears to be within an overall intention of reforming the speaker in order to conform to its version of social justice. It is not the intention of this paper to say that this vision of the museum is not a good one, most people would agree that tackling injustices associated with mass migration and continuing to debate the issues is well worthwhile, but it is important to understand the implicit framework in which this takes place.

Conclusion

Vogel (2010) describes the subtle shift in *The Tenement Museum’s* focus away from social justice towards interrogation of American identity.

In the larger scheme of things, these two interpretive frames stand as late-in-the-day riffs on the theme of American identity. Both can be understood as fitting with the civil rights consensus of the post-World War II era. (Vogel, 2010)

It seems that a very long term debate is the current focus of the museum. Looking at early comments by Abrams, as noted above, it can be seen that an interest in American identity was always there. Even the tenement is described as a “gateway to America”. Granfield and Alda set a lyrical and historic tone:

Turn the doorknob and enter the darkened hall of 97 Orchard Street.
Its stairways echo with the voices, sobs, and laughter of the thousands

of immigrants who made the long journey from their past into their future. Here are some of their stories - our stories. (Granfield and Alda, 2001: 3).

“Our stories” - a possible interpretation is that “the melting pot” is still a viable metaphor at *The Tenement Museum*. Certainly the story of Nathalie Gumpertz conforms to a key aspect of the migrant story with its upward mobility and moving out of the Lower East Side thus confirming a key theme of American identity history. The emphasis in the museum is keeping up with contemporary debates, especially as triggered by 9.11, and in finding the “correct” answers. Understanding the museum as a space of reform, as outlined by Bennett (1995), is consistent with the museum’s engagement with the American identity debate.

This paper argues that although aspects of dialogism are very attractive in the context of contemporary museums with their ideals of cultural leadership and visitor participation, it might simply be too difficult to implement. Dialogism can be seen to be in conflict with mission statements. Museum enthusiasts can end up denying the rights of people to speak even when this is the stated aim of the museum.

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DIALOGIC MUSEUM AND SOCIAL COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

Dialogic learning has been emphasized as a way of using social and communicative resources, in which meaning is tightly linked to human interaction and communicative dynamics. Based on principles from dialogic societies of a globalized world, this approach tries to reach beyond traditional approaches and offer an interdisciplinary response in which communicative, pedagogical, psychological, sociological and epistemological factors are stressed and developed. Museums are not unaffected by these new pedagogical currents and are aware of the importance of pedagogical, communicative and sociological knowledge that educators of museal and artistic heritage must have in order to convey the humanizing value that this heritage contains. It is, thus, necessary a dynamic communication process between museum and society. This can be achieved through interpretation as a learning tool of possible conflicts we need to bear in mind if we wish to convey heritage knowledge to society.

The developing trend whereby museums are trying to be present in modern societies through dialogic approaches shows us that the cultural policies of the past are outdated because they are unable to convey a critique of realities that different powers have held through time. On the other hand, the existence of a dialogic descriptive scenario includes a consideration of the architecture of museums themselves as an essential element in planning how the building becomes a communicative space capable of capturing the interest of a public wishing to experience new sensations and open to novel dynamics of communication with artistic pieces as well as with the building sheltering them.

Key Words: Dialogic learning, education in museums, discursive spaces, museum architecture, dialogic museum, visitors, social communication.

RÉSUMÉ

Musée dialogique et communication sociale

Le dialogisme a pris de l'importance comme un moyen d'utiliser les ressources sociales et de communication, dans lesquelles le sens a un lien étroit avec l'interaction humaine et les dynamiques communicationnelles. Ayant pour base des principes provenant des sociétés dialogiques d'un monde globalisé, cette approche essaye de dépasser les approches traditionnelles et d'offrir une réponse interdisciplinaire dans laquelle sont soulignés et développés les facteurs de communication, de pédagogie, de psychologie, de sociologie et d'épistémologie. Les musées ne restent pas sans être affectés par ces nouveaux courants pédagogiques et sont conscients de l'importance de la connaissance pédagogique, communicationnelle et sociologique que les éducateurs de musée et du patrimoine artistique doivent avoir pour but de transmettre les valeurs humaines que ce patrimoine contient. Il est ainsi nécessaire qu'une communication dynamique se développe entre le musée et la société. On peut l'atteindre au moyen de l'interprétation en tant qu'outil pour connaître les contradictions possibles que nous devons avoir à l'esprit si nous voulons transmettre la connaissance du patrimoine à la société. Les tendances

qui se développent, là où les musées essaient d'être présents dans les sociétés modernes par des approches dialogiques, nous montrent que les politiques culturelles d'hier sont dépassées parce qu'elles sont incapables de transmettre une critique des réalités que les différents pouvoirs ont tenu au cours des temps. D'un autre côté, l'existence d'un scénario dialogique descriptif implique une prise en compte de l'architecture des musées eux-mêmes comme un élément essentiel pour planifier la manière dont la construction devient un espace de communication capable de captiver l'intérêt d'un public qui désire faire l'expérience de nouvelles sensations et ouvrir à de nouvelles dynamiques de communication avec les objets d'art, aussi bien qu'avec le bâtiment qui les abrite.

Mots clés : dialogisme, éducation muséale, espace discursif, architecture muséale, musée dialogique, visiteurs, communication sociale.

摘要

對話博物館與社會溝通

有人強調對話學習是應用社會與溝通資源的一種方式，並且與人類互動與溝通方式緊密相關。依據全球化下對話社會的原則，這種方式試圖超越傳統方法，提供跨學科的回應，並且強調發展溝通、教學、心理、社會與認識論。這股新教學風潮也影響到博物館，而博物館也了解教學、溝通、社會學知識的重要性，教導博物館與藝術遺產的教育者也必須傳達這些遺產隱涵的人性價值。因此，博物館與社會間必須有一個靈活的溝通過程。我們可以透過不同的詮釋把可能的衝突變成學習的工具。畢竟如果我們要把文化遺產的知識傳播到社會，我們就必須了解可能會有哪些衝突。

在現代社會，博物館大量採取對話方式的趨勢顯示以往的文化政策已經過時，因為過去的作法無法以批判的方式呈現不同當權者當時掌控的現實情況。另一方面，對話式的述情境在籌備時便把博物館的建築也納入考量。建築本體也變成溝通空間。希望獲得新體驗，且喜歡以創新方式與藝術品以及建築本體互動的民眾便會因此受到吸引。

關鍵字：對話學習、博物館教育、開放空間、博物館建築、可對話的博物館、參訪者、社會溝通

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1. Teaching, dialogic learning and education in museums

Among educational practices, there is a psycho-socioeducational approach based on the pedagogical humanism of Paulo Freire (1970, 1997a, 1997b), and on the theory of communicative action of Jürgen Habermas (1987a, 1987b, 1989), which has done its best to promote dialogic learning as a means of utilizing social and communicative resources whose meanings are tightly linked to human interaction and communicative constructs. On the basis of the principles of the dialogic societies in today's globalized world, they aim to move beyond traditional approaches and offer an interdisciplinary model that will take communicative, pedagogical, psychological, sociological and epistemological factors into account. Today's educational approach springs from a set of philosophical principles which regard dialogue and cooperation among individuals as fundamental for enabling communication and active collaboration, so leading to mutual understanding, respect for difference, solidarity and, in a word, social transformation.

Every person is in a learning situation, and consequently is able to learn and teach others in a situation of equality. What is needed is to encourage those processes whereby shared ideas and projects are reflected upon, criticized, analyzed, organized and reorganized, enabling the formation of self-generated thought, giving individuals the capacity to review the attitudes and values that will best help them to work together, foster altruism and eschew all forms of competition. Fragments of dialogues thus emerge, clear exponents of the interaction of different meanings, which have the ability to enrich communication. When it is not only the students who are involved in education but also their families, their communities and educational professionals, the conditions are created for significant learning, which depends not only on the student's interactions in the classroom and the prior knowledge he or she possesses but also, and above all, on the interactions experienced in person and shared with others (Flecha, 1987).

If what has been said so far is valid for education in general, it can be applied particularly to education in the fields of art and museums. Today, any educational approach to art and museums has to take a global and integrating proposal, and at the same time has to make clear its commitment to attitudes, values and conceptual knowledge (Efland, 2002). People have always felt curiosity for art, museums, galleries and art exhibitions, and have tried to learn and obtain all the information they need to understand their significance, while studying the objects has at the same time helped them to advance in the material and symbolic learning they offer in themselves.

If we adopt a ludic attitude when standing before the objects, under no obligation to any social or institutional conditioning, we come to learn their meaning by employing our own capacity for discovery. When we go to museums, we find they hold a great potential for learning that goes beyond the objects on display and the museum itself to enter the domain of the symbolic, of feelings and emotions. Although we have a large capacity for personal learning, we must nevertheless remain amenable to an education in museums that will enable us to comprehend their meaning better. And whilst it is true, as Eisner and Dobbs (1986) point out, that education has never been a priority concern of museum curators and directors in the past, nobody today doubts the importance of the pedagogical, communicative and sociological knowledge required of educators whose task is to transmit the artistic and humanizing value of our heritage.

It is necessary to enhance the value of museums as exceptional educational resources while bearing in mind that they are not centres of formal curricular education. They belong to an informal sphere of learning, and so the way the museum's resources are used should be very different from that employed in a scholarly or academic context. Every teacher should have specific training in how to become an educator in the field of art and museums (Talboys, 2000), but this will only be possible if such training makes them see that museums can become a didactic and pedagogical instrument with the ability to open the minds of students to creativity, originality and fantasy. This is the spontaneous learning which arises from personal interests and experiences, without any specific previous teaching to condition or neutralize the original vision experienced on first contact with the work of art. Nor should we fail to notice that knowledge can in principle be acquired through the answers given to the questions that arise when certain art works are contemplated, and through the discrepancies that may emerge when it comes to interpreting them (Feldman, 1987).

Often appended today to the concept of dialogic learning is that of inclusive education, which uses conflict resolution techniques to try to achieve new forms of communication in which divergences are regarded merely as multiple voices (Schnitman, 2000) that manifest a diversity of languages and cultural experiences, making dialogue more real and significant rather than impeding it. For while it is important for museums to have an

educational policy, it is just as urgent to devise a communicative policy which would specify the type of relation they want to establish with society, whether by addressing visitors through advertising and marketing, fulfilling their expectations through research and assessment, or responding to the public's intellectual and ludic needs through education and leisure (Hooper-Greenhill, 1991).

If dialogic learning is necessary, however, so too is a dynamic process of communication between museum and society brought about by interpretation as learning from possible conflicts (Terradellas, 2009), a factor to bear in mind when it comes to defining the focus of what is to be communicated to society. Even so, dialogic learning has to be attentive to the sociocultural, personal, physical and even virtual context in which it unfolds. In the same way, it has to be determined whether the objects in the museum are displayed in a precise context or are decontextualized, in which case interconnections will have to be provided by textual or other means to make it easier to grasp their meaning and *raison d'être*.

2. Museums as discursive spaces

According to Ducan (1995), museums have been regarded since the Enlightenment as repositories of civilization where an exclusively Eurocentrist culture has given rise to a series of dominant discourses favouring paternalist and protectionist practices, scarcely leaving any room for other modes of thought within the museum's cordoned space. Since then, museums have preserved an elitist and exclusive mentality in their discourses and practices which has denied access to other voices, sensibilities and cultural policies more in tune with the postmodern and globalized mentality of today's world. Such a mentality has helped to turn museums into polyvalent discursive spaces that will admit all kinds of cultural manifestations and events, including populist and paternalist ones. At the same time, however, they are open to spaces of resistance and new forms of internal subversion that allow museums to accomplish their practices in ways different to those imposed by cultural policies based on the criteria of power/knowledge, of which Foucault (1984) speaks in his post-structuralist analysis.

The fact that museums constitute a field propitious for contradictions, negations, contaminations, varying identities and subjectivities encourages us, as Rodrigo (2007a) affirms, to focus on the "blind spots" they give rise to. For it is the small forgotten stories and the narratives accentuated by silence, reminding us of what remains to be said, that allow us to discover the value of dialogic practices, which can and must occur on the inside of museums. The museum has to be ready to accept that there is room in its cultural policies for plurality, singularity and difference of opinion, for nothing can justify its enshrining a "totalizing consensus" that stifles any possibility of novelty or renewal.

However, to be able to change the totalizing mechanisms of monolithic and exclusive cultural policies, there has to be an awareness that museums and the cultural heritage are not the sole property of politicians and curators, but also belong to the citizens who receive this heritage, contemplate it and share in its singularity, for the citizens surely have the right to take part in the process of the production and development of culture rather than contenting themselves with its mere contemplation.

When museums try to make their presence felt in society through dialogic practices, they are telling us that the cultural policies of the past are outdated because they make no provision for the manifestation of all those realities which for one reason or another are left unspoken, placed in doubt or considered inappropriate because they raise questions about many of the constant values preserved over the years by the powers dominating museums and cultural centres. By opposition with official languages, which

repeatedly proclaim the excellence of the systems and mechanisms of power, and which lie at the most basic level of any cultural institution or museum, it is necessary to open our eyes and ears to the sounds of those who make reference to a different concept and experience of the reality of museums. To this end, the discursive spaces of museums have to be altered to make room for all types of resistance, no matter how strange this may seem. For what is definitively at stake is the acceptance or otherwise of those mechanisms which facilitate access to or exclusion from cultural reality.

As Miller and Yúdice (2004) point out, culture cannot be enclosed within single and easily controlled schemes. On the contrary, there are many different ways of experiencing it, applying it and even fighting it. It does not possess a single symbolic value but depends largely upon scenarios, and on the various ways it fits into the specific contexts where it is found. For this reason, there is no longer any use for the hegemonic models encountered in institutional discourses, since the reality of society is polyphonic and ever-changing, and museums remain the reflection of that society. Room is always left open for discursive spaces to be situated within an ambience of dialogue, giving rise all at once to the institutional critique of museological discourse proper to critical museology, and to the dissident political culture that aims to transform reality through education, as proposed by critical pedagogy (Rodrigo, 2007a).

Depending on the pedagogy that is used, there are various ways of working in museums on the basis of critical museology, which offers the possibility of programming rooms in museums differently by constructing small narratives, disruptions and discourses which give shape to and make a reality of jointly formed ideas. At the same time, it is necessary to be aware that spaces of conflict and difference must always emerge, that they must be taken into account when working in museums, and that it is therefore essential to know how to negotiate agreements with other professionals to suit the needs of the projects in hand.

3. The architecture of the museum as dialogic narrative scenario

Throughout history, mankind has felt a need to collect and gather those objects whose singularity, rarity or artistic value made them worthy of being preserved and handed down to future generations. The evolution of collecting shows us how human beings have made great efforts to amass objects and narrate their history in such a way that it is possible to understand their meaning and the value they acquire as necessary elements for interpreting the past and bolstering the future. On the other hand, it must be stressed that from the very moment collecting becomes an accepted goal, the need arises for a building where the collections can be organized, protected and exhibited, making use in time of narratives capable of transmitting a particular message to all those who visit the museum. The museum as a building never ceases to be perceived as the container of something more fundamental, the content, in which it is possible to contemplate the vestiges of human memory.

It can be said that the building, regarded as the architectural element of the museum, becomes a privileged scenario where it is possible to narrate a story with the objects making up the collection it houses. When an artist creates a work of art, this is in response to an inner force that incites him or her to express an interior store of originality and creativity in a tangible fashion. Through their work, artists try to manifest the inner richness which overflows from them. In the same way, the architecture of the museum is intended to facilitate the contemplation of works of art, in an attempt to respond to the cultural needs of a society that is showing greater and greater interest in discovering, contemplating and enjoying its vast and enriching cultural heritage.

No wonder, then, that some scholars have attempted to carry out detailed analyses of the relationship that should hold between the architecture of the museum and the dialogic narrative that ought to be produced inside it on the basis of the objects it houses. One of the most suggestive theses on this subject is that published by Roberta Krahe Edelweiss in 2008 under the eloquent title of “Dialogics in the Architecture of Brazilian Museums after the Modern Movement”. Here, on the basis of the writings of Paul Ricoeur, she endeavours to divide narrative into three different phases: prefiguration, configuration and refiguration. During prefiguration, narrativization occurs in complete freedom as a consequence of the exchange of various experiences. In the case of a writer like Cervantes, the author is always present in the creation of the narrative. During configuration, narrative assumes a textual form and the various characters start to become identifiable. Finally, refiguration is the materialization of the final phase of narrative, when the story is read and re-read by the reader.

If we transpose Ricoeur’s analytical model to the field of art and particularly that of museums, we might identify the three phases of narrative described above with the three basic functions of the museum, which are the collection, exhibition and contemplation of works of art. In the architecture of the museum, these functions take material form in the plans, the construction and the interior arrangement of the museum building. This narrative model applied to the content of the museum and the architecture of the container leads us, according to the author, to focus on the analysis of the context in which the two operate and the task they are to carry out together in close collaboration. Both the content (art works) and the container (museum) are destined to come to a mutual understanding and establish a dialogic relationship that will enable them to present works of art to the visiting public in a significant and didactic manner. On the basis of the establishment of this dialogic relationship, we could classify museums in three distinct categories: identical, neutral and dialogic. Evidently, if we bear in mind the different contexts in which the container and the content may be integrated, as well as the dialogic relationship that holds between them, various strategies can be implemented to manifest the plurality of ways in which museums can be conceived. It can be said that the dialogic relations between the museum and the art work are potentially very diverse because both are open realities, not enclosed within themselves, and are therefore able to reinvent themselves continually.

The ‘identical’ museum is the result of a situation created by an ideal correspondence of historical and social contexts, establishing a relationship of identity between the museum and the work. The building and the art work belong to the same contexts, no matter whether these are modern or ancient. Such identity may not always be chronotopic, but in such cases it is possible to resort to a copy. The object on display generally belongs to an ancient context, and the modern building strives to reflect that period. An example can be seen at the Museum of the Jesuit Missions, built in 1940 in San Miguel de las Misiones, where the houses of the Indians have been reproduced with rubble from the ruins themselves. The result, a new building, is a copy of the old.

The ‘neutral’ museum adopts a neutral position with respect to the work of art, regardless of the historical period to which the content belongs. The building is understood as itself, with no need to refer to its contents. In the case of collectionism, when an old building houses modern art works because importance is given to collecting, and in that of antiquarianism, when a building of whatever historic context houses works of ancient art, the museum is a mere container for the conservation of art works that have nothing to do with the building’s characteristics. The relationship between container and content thus becomes an impersonal one. The São Paulo Museum of Arts is an example of a museum regarded as a space able to house any work of art, independently of context.

The 'dialogic' museum tries to establish a dialogue with the work of art to be displayed in full awareness that the museum and the work belong to different historic contexts. For such a dialogic relationship to form between museums and their contents, it is necessary to resort to abstraction. Among the strategies followed, the preferred one tends to be the refurbishment of an old building and its adaptation as a museum. Another is the interpretation of the context of the content with the purpose of situating it as an object within the architecture of the museum. The container in this case tends to be more modern than the content, a fact which enables a re-reading of the architecture. The eclectic museum is generally an example of an interpretive museum, and it always tries to create forms from the past through a variety of re-readings. The São Paulo State Art Gallery of 1998, an example of rehabilitation, is a dialogic museum. Another strategy of interpretation tends to arise when there is a dialogue involving a walk through a landscape, when the narrative between container and content incorporates as many contextual elements as possible, and so enriches the discourse.

From this it might be concluded that the existence of a dialogic narrative scenario leads to the consideration of the architecture of the museum as fundamental for any project to make the museum space into a space of communication. The building too has become a work of art capable of arousing admiration, surprise and gratitude for the beauty and meaning it brings us.

4. The visitor to the dialogic museum

If we want museums to address the concerns of 21st century visitors, their methods of presenting and exhibiting their collections need to be made more open, interactive and inclusive. There is no longer any use for the old 19th century model, whereby museums showed their work in a monolithic fashion to a public that had nothing to say or contribute since its role was a purely receptive one. Any dialogic model that tries to create confrontation between the museum and the visitor is destined for failure, as what is called for today is an attitude of inclusive dialogue where each participant is accorded due attention (Sandell and Dodd, 2001; Bodo, 2003). It would be a grave mistake to propose that museums retain their discourses while failing to make allowances for the interests and preoccupations of the visitors, for this would not only put excessive and unnecessary strain on the museums but would also prevent dialogue and communication with the cultural diversity those visitors represent, with their different cultures and ways of viewing life.

If the cultural range of visitors is plural and diverse, the museum is obliged to alter its patterns and search for different and differentiated ways to address them, creating new meanings that can be understood by each and every visitor. The challenges presented by our globalized world make it necessary for museums to confront the need to open up to new forms of learning and dialogue, where the individual is important because he or she lives in society and is called upon to reach an understanding with others, no matter how different they may be. This makes it necessary to strengthen our own identities, becoming conscious of them in readiness for a dialogic relationship with "others" belonging to different cultures and with visions of reality different to our own.

This leads to the democratization of cultural spaces, heritage and museums, making them accessible to all kinds of public with no exclusions of any kind. Museums are called upon to disseminate democratic values and to encourage the social inclusion of all citizens, allowing them at the same time to follow their own itineraries, interpret the contents for themselves and establish an effective dialogue with the management of the museums. It is no longer possible to uphold an elitist model, but it is time to turn instead to the new proposals of critical museology, which are concerned with plurality, interactivity and multidisciplinary. In the meantime, colonialist attitudes to the cultural

heritage have lost all validity, and questions are being raised about the ethical need to return or restore the heritage that was removed in many different ways from the colonized nations.

The planning of any display strategy must involve the collaboration not only of the museum's specialized personnel but also of its diverse visitors, making it possible for their voices to be heard. Museums must therefore devote all their energies to developing creativity, reformulating the new functions they are destined to perform in what has come to be called the 'post-museum' era (Maceira, 2009). If the museum is considered a space of communication (Hernández, 1998), then it needs to be equipped with different codes that are able to transmit an intelligible message to its different publics, one which will arouse in them the desire to become personally involved in the exhibitions. The more a visitor is able to experience surprise, astonishment and spontaneous emotion, the readier he or she will be to join in with a dialogic discourse whose purpose is not to make value judgements on what is being viewed, but to achieve personal involvement in the specific context of the exhibition. Only in this way is it possible to

set up a type of communication that makes it possible to share different experiences capable of reflecting the creative imagination, emotions, desires, joys and anxieties of all those seeking to bestow meaning on what they are viewing. This is accomplished from within the space provided by the museum, always open to the sociocultural plurality of the people visiting it and of the contents displayed inside it. However, how are we to establish a dialogue with the museum that would allow visitors to take part in the process of organizing, designing and mounting a particular exhibition, whether real or virtual? How can the dialogue between the museum and the visitor be made to favour the creation of spaces resistant to any inclination towards intolerance, exclusion and marginalization that might arise within the sociocultural context in which both move?

From the viewpoint of the dialogic museum, there is no room for any educational discourse that allows itself to be subjected to the demands and fantasies of exhibitions that are often designed more to boost the prestige of the organizing institutions than to create the atmosphere necessary for questions to be asked and critiques formulated on the basis of the visitors' own experience.

It is therefore time that visitors ceased to be mere passive spectators and began to be the protagonists of their own visits to exhibitions, for these contain multiple readings waiting to be discovered outside the models established beforehand by cultural institutions. Today, more than ever, it is necessary to question any discourse that is proposed to us, whether of an ideological, functional or technical nature, and to create a disruption in those discourses whose authoritarian and elitist connotations prevent the possibility of raising doubts and offering critiques of any aspect of museography that may be required. Fortunately, we know today that discourses are plural, that there are many ways of approaching objects, exhibiting them and interpreting them, and that they do not always have to coincide with the monolithic discourse presented to us by some museums.

When visitors enter the museum, they should not only look for presences but should also be encouraged to discover absences, construct metaphors, listen to silences and lend their ear to what is said and whispered in the corridors, so that they too, when the time comes, can construct their own narrative out of what each has to say, without its having to be a mere repetition of something already heard. For as Giroux (1997) suggests, there is always a place for a "pedagogy of possibility" that makes us see that control and domination must always be accompanied by opposition and resistance within the frame of the exhibition. The last word has not yet been said about everything, nor does everything turn out to be as we were told. This makes it paramount to

reconstruct the symbolic schemes proposed by traditional museology, and to create new ones with the ability to contribute views that are not necessarily in agreement with or uncritical of previously held ones.

We should not go to the dialogic museum in search of solutions, but rather asking questions, questioning assumptions and formulating critiques, because there is no justification for a cultural experience without close ties to the reality around us. For who says that only the narratives proposed to us by museums are valid? Why should we believe that all visitors contemplate, understand and assume aesthetic experiences in the same way? Why should we accept an obligation to assume certain ideologies and patterns of thought simply because they happen to be in vogue at a particular moment? Why should we not envisage modifying certain contents, making use of constructive dialogue to reconcile different standpoints? When it comes down to it, what museology are we proposing for the future, to be understood, accepted and embraced by the new generations, without falling into the colonialist, elitist and monolithic excesses that disfigure the true meaning of a plural, open, critical and constructive museum?

There is certainly no use for a museology that strengthens the role of the educator as a mere transmitter of data from the museum to the visitor in a mechanical and neutral fashion, leaving no room for response or confrontation, but permitting only the unconditional and submissive acceptance of the visitor, who is regarded as someone completely passive who can be easily moulded. Rather, we need a dialogic museology that applies a critical pedagogy, which makes us perceive the existence of multiple differences and helps us analyze the spaces of resistance that are produced wherever a set of cultural values is imposed, as in museums of a colonialist nature, to create new spaces for participation and negotiation from a post-colonial museological perspective (Rodrigo, 2007b). This implies the acceptance that discourses can be constructed from various perspectives, though always bearing in mind that it is impossible to relinquish the critical and transforming participation of the visitors, for they are indispensable in the production of a truly dialogic museum, one able to articulate the various spaces which configure it as an area for dialogue, critique and the transformation of existing reality.

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MUSEO DIALÓGICO Y COMUNICACIÓN SOCIAL

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RESUMEN

Dentro del mundo de la enseñanza se ha puesto todo el empeño en potenciar el aprendizaje dialógico como una forma de utilizar las competencias sociales y comunicativas, en las que los significados están estrechamente relacionados con las interacciones humanas y los constructos comunicativos. Basándose en los principios de las sociedades dialógicas del mundo globalizado, pretende ir más allá de los enfoques tradicionales y ofrecer una propuesta de carácter interdisciplinar donde se tengan en cuenta los aspectos comunicacionales, pedagógicos, psicológicos, sociológicos y epistemológicos. Los museos no son ajenos a estas nuevas corrientes pedagógicas y son conscientes de la importancia que tiene la formación pedagógica, comunicativa y sociológica que han de poseer los educadores del patrimonio artístico y museístico para poder transmitir el valor humanizador que ambos contienen. Por eso es necesario que se dé un proceso dinámico de comunicación entre el museo y la sociedad, que tenga lugar a través de la interpretación como aprendizaje de posibles conflictos que, es necesario tener presentes a la hora de definir qué deseamos potenciar para comunicarlo a la sociedad. El hecho de que los museos intenten hacerse presentes a la sociedad a través de las prácticas dialógicas, está demostrándonos que las políticas culturales del pasado ya no sirven porque en ellas no se da lugar a que se manifiesten aquellas realidades que, por diferentes motivos, se dejan de pronunciar, quedan en entredicho o se consideran inapropiadas al poner en tela de juicio muchas de las constantes que los diferentes poderes han conservado a lo largo del tiempo, dentro del campo de los museos y centros culturales. Por otra parte, la existencia de un escenario narrativo dialógico hace que la misma arquitectura de los museos sea considerada como un elemento fundamental a la hora de plantearse cómo hacer para que el edificio de los museos se convierta en un espacio de comunicación, capaz de atraer por sí mismo las miradas y el interés de un público que está deseoso de experimentar nuevas sensaciones y al que no le resulta extraño adentrarse en dinámicas totalmente novedosas, que le hagan experimentar la posibilidad de entablar un diálogo abierto no solo con las obras de arte, sino también con el mismo edificio que las alberga.

Palabras Clave: Aprendizaje dialógico, educación en museos, espacios discursivos, arquitectura del museo, museo dialógico, visitantes, comunicación social

1. Enseñanza, aprendizaje dialógico y educación en museos

Dentro de las prácticas educativas existe un enfoque psicosocioeducativo, basado en el humanismo pedagógico de Paulo Freire (1970, 1997a, 1997b) y en la teoría de la acción comunicativa de Jürgen Habermas (1987a, 1987b, 1989), que ha puesto todo su empeño en potenciar el aprendizaje dialógico como una forma de utilizar las competencias sociales y comunicativas en las que los significados están estrechamente relacionados con las interacciones humanas y los constructos comunicativos. Basándose en los principios de las sociedades dialógicas del mundo globalizado pretenden ir más allá de los enfoques tradicionales y ofrecer una propuesta de carácter interdisciplinar donde se tengan en cuenta los aspectos

comunicacionales, pedagógicos, psicológicos, sociológicos y epistemológicos. Hoy el enfoque educativo parte de unos principios filosóficos en los que el diálogo y la cooperación entre las personas son fundamentales para hacer posible la comunicación y la colaboración activa que lleve al entendimiento mutuo, al respeto de las diferencias, a la solidaridad y, en definitiva, a la transformación social.

Toda persona está en situación de aprendizaje y, en consecuencia, puede aprender y enseñar a otros en situación de igualdad. Se trata de favorecer aquellos procesos de reflexión, crítica, análisis, organización y reorganización de las ideas y proyectos compartidos, que hagan posible la elaboración del pensamiento propio, capacitando para revisar aquellas actitudes y valores que mejor les ayuden a trabajar juntos, siendo solidarios y desechando toda clase de competitividad. Surgen, así, fragmentos de diálogos que son el exponente claro de la interacción de diferentes significados, que pueden enriquecer la comunicación. Cuando en la educación se involucran no sólo los alumnos, sino también las familias, las comunidades y los profesionales de la educación, se hace realidad el aprendizaje significativo, que ya no depende sólo de las interacciones que el alumno recibe en el aula o de los conocimientos previos que posee, sino también y, sobre todo, de las interacciones que él mismo experimenta y comparte con los demás (Flecha, 1997).

Si lo dicho hasta ahora vale para la educación en general, también puede aplicarse a la educación artística y museística. Cualquier enfoque que se pretenda dar hoy a la educación del arte y de los museos ha de ser global e integrador y, al mismo tiempo, ha de poner de manifiesto su implicación en las actitudes, los valores y los conocimientos conceptuales (Efland, 2002). Desde siempre las personas han sentido curiosidad por el arte, los museos, las galerías y las exposiciones artísticas, y han tratado de aprender y de conseguir toda la información necesaria para comprender su significado, al tiempo que el estudio de los objetos ha servido para profundizar en el aprendizaje material y simbólico que ofrecen en sí mismos.

Situándonos ante los objetos en una actitud lúdica, no obligados por ningún condicionamiento social o institucional, llegamos a aprender su significado sirviéndonos de nuestra propia capacidad de descubrimiento. Cuando nos acercamos a los museos descubrimos en ellos un gran potencial de aprendizaje que va más allá de los objetos y del propio museo, para adentrarnos en el ámbito de lo simbólico, de los sentimientos y de las emociones. Sin embargo, aunque nuestra capacidad de aprendizaje personal es grande, es necesario estar abiertos a la recepción de una educación en museos que nos capacite para una mejor comprensión de su significado. Y, si es verdad, como señalan Eisner y Dobbs (1986), que dentro del ámbito de los conservadores y directores de museos, la tarea educativa no gozó de una preocupación prioritaria en tiempos pasados, hoy nadie pone en duda la importancia que tiene la formación pedagógica, comunicativa y sociológica que han de poseer los educadores del patrimonio para poder transmitir el valor artístico y humanizador del mismo.

Para ello, han de potenciar el valor de los museos como recursos educativos excepcionales, al tiempo que se ha de tener presente que no son centros de enseñanza formal y reglada, sino que pertenecen a un estado de formación no formal y, por tanto, la manera de trabajar los recursos museísticos deben de ser muy distintos a los que se utilizan dentro del contexto escolar y académico. Todo profesor debería contar con una formación específica que le permitiera convertirse en educador de arte y de museos (Talboys, 2000). Pero esto no será posible, si antes no han recibido dicha preparación y se les ha hecho ver que los museos pueden convertirse en un instrumento didáctico y pedagógico, capaz de abrir la mente de los alumnos a la creatividad, originalidad y fantasía. Se trata del aprendizaje espontáneo que surge de

las propias inquietudes y experiencias personales, sin que se haya dado previamente una formación específica que condicione o neutralice la visión original experimentada en el primer contacto con la obra de arte. Si bien no debe descartarse, por principio, que pueda adquirirse el conocimiento a través de las respuestas que se dan a los interrogantes que surgen cuando se contemplan determinadas obras de arte y de las discrepancias que puedan aflorar a la hora de interpretarlas (Feldman, 1987).

Hoy, al aprendizaje dialógico se le añade la educación inclusiva que pretende conseguir, mediante la técnica de resolución de conflictos, nuevas formas de comunicación donde las divergencias sean consideradas tan sólo como múltiples voces (Schnitman, 2000) que ponen de manifiesto la diversidad de lenguajes y experiencias culturales y que, más que impedir el diálogo, lo hacen más real y significativo. Porque, si importante es para el museo contar con una política educativa, no deja de ser menos urgente elaborar una política comunicativa que especifique qué clase de relación desea entablar con la sociedad, ya sea teniendo en cuenta a los visitantes mediante la publicidad y el marketing, sus expectativas a través de la investigación y evaluación o sus necesidades intelectuales y lúdicas apostando por la educación y el ocio (Hooper-Greenhill, 1991).

Pero si es necesario un aprendizaje dialógico, también lo es contar con un proceso dinámico de comunicación entre el museo y la sociedad que tenga lugar a través de la interpretación como aprendizaje de posibles conflictos (Terradellas, 2009), que es preciso tener presentes a la hora de definir qué deseamos potenciar para comunicarlo a la sociedad. Ahora bien, el aprendizaje dialógico ha de estar atento al contexto sociocultural, personal y físico, e incluso virtual, en el que ha de desenvolverse. Del mismo modo, se ha de considerar si los objetos dentro del museo poseen un contexto preciso o, por el contrario, se encuentran descontextualizados y necesitan contar con interconexiones que, a través de textos u otros elementos, faciliten la comprensión de su significado y de su razón de ser.

2. Los museos como espacios discursivos

Según Ducan (1995), los museos, ya desde la modernidad ilustrada, han sido considerados como espacios de civilización, donde una cultura exclusivamente eurocentrista dio paso a una serie de discursos de dominación que favorecían prácticas paternalistas y proteccionistas, que apenas dejaban opción a que otras formas de pensar tuvieran cabida en el acotado espacio museístico. Desde ese momento, los museos han conservado en sus discursos y prácticas una mentalidad elitista y exclusiva que impedía la apertura a otras voces, sensibilidades y políticas culturales, más acordes con la mentalidad posmoderna y globalizada que nos toca vivir. Dicha mentalidad ha contribuido a que los museos se conviertan en espacios discursivos polivalentes, donde tienen cabida toda clase de manifestaciones y eventos culturales, incluidos los populistas y paternalistas. Pero, al mismo tiempo, están abiertos a espacios de resistencia y a nuevas formas de subversión interna, donde los museos pueden realizar sus prácticas de manera distinta a las impuestas por las políticas culturales basadas en los criterios del poder-saber, de que nos habla Foucault (1984) en su análisis posestructuralista.

Que los museos constituyen un campo propicio para que en ellos se den contradicciones, negaciones, contaminaciones, conflictos, variedad de identidades y subjetividades nos da pie para, según afirma Rodrigo (2007a), fijarnos en los “puntos ciegos” a que dan lugar. Porque son las pequeñas historias olvidadas y las narrativas que acentúan los silencios, recordándonos lo que aún queda por decir, las que nos permiten descubrir el valor de las prácticas dialógicas, que pueden y deben darse dentro de los museos. El museo debe estar dispuesto a aceptar que dentro de sus

políticas culturales tenga cabida la aceptación de la pluralidad, singularidad y diferencia de opiniones porque no es deseable que, dentro de él, se dé un “consenso totalizador” que imposibilite la afloración de posibilidades siempre nuevas y renovadoras.

Sin embargo, para poder cambiar los mecanismos totalizantes de unas políticas culturales monolíticas y excluyentes es preciso tomar conciencia de que el patrimonio cultural y los museos no son propiedad exclusiva de los políticos y conservadores, sino también de los ciudadanos que lo reciben, lo contemplan y participan de su singularidad. Porque, ¿quién ha dicho que los ciudadanos no tienen derecho a participar en el proceso de producción y desarrollo de la cultura y contentarse con la simple contemplación de la misma?

Cuando el museo intenta hacerse presente a la sociedad, a través de las prácticas dialógicas, está diciéndonos que las políticas culturales del pasado ya no sirven. En ellas no se da lugar a que se pongan de manifiesto todas aquellas realidades que, por diferentes motivos, se dejan de pronunciar, quedan en entredicho o se consideran inapropiadas al poner en tela de juicio muchas de las constantes que los diferentes poderes han conservado dentro de los museos. Frente a los lenguajes oficiales que nos proponen las excelencias de los sistemas y mecanismos de poder, que están en la base del funcionamiento de cualquier institución cultural o museística, es preciso prestar oídos a los rumores de aquellas que hacen referencia a otra manera de concebir y experimentar la realidad de los museos. Será preciso cambiar los espacios discursivos de los museos, dando paso a cualquier clase de resistencia, por muy extraña que nos parezca. Porque, en definitiva, lo que está en juego es la aceptación o no de aquellos mecanismos que facilitan el acceso o la exclusión a la realidad cultural.

Como señalan Miller y Yúdice (2004), la cultura no puede encerrarse en unos esquemas únicos y fácilmente controlables, sino que se dan diferentes formas de vivirla, expresarla, aplicarla e incluso de combatirla. No posee un único valor simbólico, sino que éste depende en gran medida de los escenarios y las distintas formas de situarse en los contextos concretos donde se encuentra. Ya no nos sirven los modelos hegemónicos que se dan en los discursos institucionales, porque la realidad de la sociedad es cambiante y polifónica, y los museos no dejan de ser el reflejo de dicha sociedad. Siempre queda un espacio abierto para situar los espacios discursivos dentro de un ámbito de diálogo donde tenga lugar, al mismo tiempo, la crítica institucional al discurso museológico, propio de la museología crítica, y la política cultural disidente que pretende la transformación de la realidad a través de la educación, tal como propone la pedagogía crítica (Rodrigo, 2007a).

Existen diferentes formas de trabajar dentro de los museos según la pedagogía utilizada, sirviéndose de la museología crítica que ofrece la posibilidad de programar las salas de los museos de manera diferente mediante la elaboración de pequeños relatos, interrupciones y discursos que den forma y hagan realidad las ideas que conjuntamente se vayan elaborando. Pero se ha de ser conscientes de que siempre han de surgir espacios de conflicto y diferencia, que habrá que tener presentes a la hora de trabajar en los museos, y la necesidad de saber negociar con el resto de profesionales los acuerdos que mejor se adecuen a las necesidades de los proyectos planteados.

3. La arquitectura del museo como escenario narrativo dialógico

A lo largo de la historia de la humanidad se ha sentido la necesidad de recoger y coleccionar aquellos objetos que, por su singularidad, rareza o valor artístico merecían ser conservados para ser transmitidos a las generaciones futuras. La evolución del

coleccionismo nos muestra cómo el ser humano se ha esforzado por coleccionar objetos y narrar su historia, de manera que pueda comprenderse su significado y el valor que aquellos adquieren como elementos necesarios para interpretar el pasado y potenciar el futuro. Por otra parte, hemos de resaltar el hecho de que, desde el mismo instante en que se apuesta por el coleccionismo, surge la necesidad de contar con un edificio donde poder ordenar, proteger y exponer las colecciones que, con el tiempo, se servirán de narrativas capaces de transmitir un determinado mensaje. El museo como edificio no deja de ser percibido como el contenedor de un elemento fundamental que es el contenido, donde se pueden contemplar los vestigios de la memoria de la humanidad.

Podemos afirmar que el edificio, considerado como elemento arquitectónico del museo, se convierte en el escenario privilegiado donde es posible narrar una historia que es contada, sirviéndose de los objetos que forman la colección, que el edificio alberga. Cuando el artista crea una obra de arte, lo hace impelido por una fuerza interior que le incita a expresar de manera tangible la originalidad y creatividad que lleva dentro. A través de su obra, el artista trata de manifestar la riqueza interior que le desborda. Del mismo modo, la arquitectura del museo pretende facilitar la contemplación de las obras de arte, en un intento de dar respuesta a las necesidades culturales de una sociedad que cada vez se muestra más interesada en conocer, contemplar y disfrutar de su amplio y enriquecedor patrimonio cultural.

No es de extrañar que existan estudios que tratan de analizar cómo ha de ser la relación entre la arquitectura del museo y la narrativa dialógica que ha de darse dentro de él, sirviéndose de los objetos que alberga en su interior. Una de las tesis más sugestivas sobre este tema es la presentada por Roberta Krahe Edelweiss en 2008, con el elocuente título de *La Dialogía en la Arquitectura de los Museos Brasileños después del Movimiento Moderno*. En ella, basándose en los estudios de Paul Ricoeur, trata de dividir la narrativa en tres etapas diferentes: la prefiguración, la configuración y la refiguración. En la prefiguración, el relato se lleva a cabo de manera totalmente libre como consecuencia del intercambio de experiencias diversas que, en el caso de un autor como Cervantes, éste siempre está presente en la creación de la narrativa. En la configuración el relato asume una forma textual y en él se van identificando los diferentes personajes. Finalmente, en la refiguración se materializa la última etapa de la narrativa donde tiene lugar la lectura y relectura del relato por parte del lector.

Traspassando el esquema analítico de Ricoeur al campo del arte y, en concreto, al museo, identificamos las tres etapas arriba mencionadas de la narrativa, con las tres funciones fundamentales del museo que son coleccionar, exponer y contemplar las obras de arte. Funciones que en la arquitectura del museo se materializan en el proyecto, la construcción y la habitación del edificio museístico. Este esquema narrativo aplicado al contenido del museo y a la arquitectura del continente nos lleva, según la autora, a detenernos en el análisis del contexto en que ambos se mueven y en la tarea que han de llevar a cabo conjuntamente. Ambos, contenido (obras de arte) y continente (museo), están llamados a entenderse y a entablar una relación dialógica en la que sean capaces de presentar al público visitante las obras de arte de manera significativa y didáctica. Y según tenga lugar dicha relación dialógica entre ambos, podremos clasificar los museos en tres categorías distintas: museos idénticos, neutros y dialógicos. Es evidente que si tenemos en cuenta los diferentes contextos en los que están integrados el continente y el contenido y la relación dialógica que se da entre ellos, pueden darse distintas estrategias proyectuales que ponen de manifiesto las formas plurales de concebir los museos. Podemos decir que las relaciones dialógicas entre el museo y la obra de arte pueden ser muy diversas porque ambos son realidades abiertas, capaces de reinventarse continuamente.

El museo idéntico se da cuando existe una situación ideal debido a la semejanza de contextos históricos y sociales, estableciéndose una relación de identidad entre museo y obra. En él, edificio y obra de arte pertenecen a contextos iguales, independientemente de que sean modernos o antiguos. No siempre es posible que se dé la identidad cronotópica, en cuyo caso se puede recurrir a la copia. El objeto a exponer suele pertenecer a un contexto antiguo y el edificio moderno se esfuerza por reflejar su época. Un ejemplo puede contemplarse en el Museo de las Misiones de los jesuitas, de 1940, creado en San Miguel de las Misiones, donde se ha reproducido la unidad de las casas de los indios con material de las propias ruinas, dando lugar a un nuevo edificio, copia del antiguo.

El museo neutro se sitúa en una posición neutral con respecto a la obra de arte, independientemente del período histórico al que pertenezca el contenido. El edificio es comprendido en sí mismo, sin necesidad de tener en cuenta su contenido. Tanto el coleccionismo, donde un edificio antiguo alberga obras modernas porque lo importante es coleccionar, como el anticuarismo donde un edificio, cuyo contexto histórico es indiferente, alberga obras de arte antiguo, son un mero contenedor donde se conservan obras de arte que nada tienen que ver con las características del edificio y se traduce en una relación impersonal entre continente-contenido. El Museo de Artes de São Paulo es un ejemplo de cómo el museo es considerado como un espacio capaz de albergar cualquier obra de arte independientemente de su contexto.

El museo dialógico trata de establecer una relación de diálogo con la obra de arte que se pretende exponer, consciente de que museo y obra pertenecen a contextos históricos distintos. Para que se dé esta relación dialógica entre los museos y su contenido se ha de recurrir a la abstracción. Y dentro de las estrategias que se siguen suele preferirse la rehabilitación de un edificio antiguo, adaptándolo para que se convierta en museo. También se recurre a la interpretación del contexto del contenido con el propósito de situarlo dentro de la arquitectura del museo como objeto. El contenedor, en este caso, suele ser más moderno que el contenido, hecho que hace posible que se dé una relectura de la arquitectura. El museo ecléctico suele ser un ejemplo de museo interpretativo y siempre trata de crear formas del pasado a través de relecturas diversas. La Pinacoteca del Estado de São Paulo, de 1998, es un ejemplo de rehabilitación y de museo dialógico. Otra estrategia de interpretación suele darse cuando existe un diálogo del paseo y del paisaje, que hacen que la narrativa entre contenedor y contenido incorpore todos los elementos contextuales posibles, de manera que enriquezcan el discurso.

De todo ello podemos concluir que la existencia de un escenario narrativo dialógico hace que la arquitectura del museo sea considerada como un elemento fundamental a la hora de plantearse cómo hacer para que el edificio del museo se convierta en un espacio de comunicación. Porque éste se ha convertido en una obra de arte más, capaz de suscitar admiración, sorpresa y gratitud por la belleza y el significado que nos aporta.

4. El visitante ante el museo dialógico

Si queremos que los museos digan algo a los visitantes del siglo XXI es necesario que su forma de presentar y de exponer cada una de sus colecciones sea más abierta, interactiva e inclusiva. Ya no sirven los viejos esquemas decimonónicos, donde los museos exponían sus obras de manera monolítica de cara a un público que nada tenía que decir o aportar porque era un mero receptor de las mismas. Cualquier esquema dialógico que trate de enfrentar al museo y al visitante está llamado al fracaso porque hoy se exige una actitud dialogante e inclusiva, donde a cada uno se le presta la atención que le corresponde (Sandell y Dodd, 2001; Bodo, 2003). Pretender

que el museo siga su discurso sin tener en cuenta los intereses y las preocupaciones de los visitantes sería un error grave, que supondría un desgaste excesivo e innecesario para el museo, y, al mismo tiempo, impediría que se diese un diálogo y una comunicación con la diversidad cultural que representan los visitantes, con sus diferentes culturas y formas de concebir la vida.

Cualquier estrategia expositiva que se desee llevar a cabo ha de contar con la colaboración no sólo del personal especializado del museo, sino también con los diferentes públicos que hagan posible oír sus voces. Para ello, los museos han de poner todo su esfuerzo en desarrollar la creatividad, reformulando las nuevas funciones que han de desempeñar en lo que ha venido en llamarse la era del posmuseo (Maceira, 2009). Si el museo es considerado como un espacio de comunicación (Hernández, 1998), es necesario contar con diferentes códigos capaces de hacer llegar un mensaje inteligible a los diferentes públicos, hasta el punto de que se suscite en ellos el deseo de involucrarse directamente en las exposiciones.

En la medida que el visitante sea capaz de llegar a una experiencia de asombro, de sorpresa y de emoción espontánea, estará más en disposición de adentrarse en un discurso dialógico, que no pretende tanto hacer juicios de valor sobre lo que contempla, cuanto involucrarse personalmente en el contexto concreto en el que tiene lugar la exposición. Solo así es posible entablar una comunicación donde se puedan compartir diferentes experiencias capaces de reflejar la imaginación creadora, las emociones, los deseos, los gozos y las preocupaciones de todos aquellos que buscan dar sentido a lo que están contemplando. Y lo hacen desde el espacio que el museo les proporciona, siempre abierto a la pluralidad socio-cultural de las personas que lo visitan y a los contenidos que se exponen en su interior. Pero, ¿cómo entablar una relación de diálogo con el museo que facilite la incorporación de los visitantes en el proceso de organización, diseño y montaje de una determinada exposición, ya sea real o virtual? ¿Cómo hacer posible que el diálogo entre museo y visitante favorezca la creación de espacios capaces de resistirse a cualquier tentación de intolerancia, exclusión y marginación que pueda surgir dentro del contexto socio-cultural en que ambos se mueven?

Desde una óptica del museo dialógico no tiene cabida ningún discurso educativo que consienta someterse, sin más, a las exigencias y fantasías de unas exposiciones que, en muchas ocasiones, han sido pensadas más para fomentar el prestigio de las instituciones organizadoras, que para crear el ambiente necesario, donde sea posible hacerse preguntas y formular críticas a partir de la propia experiencia de los visitantes.

Es hora, por tanto, de que los visitantes dejen de ser meros espectadores pasivos y comiencen a ser protagonistas de su propia visita a las exposiciones, porque éstas poseen dentro de sí múltiples lecturas que han de ser descubiertas, más allá de los esquemas prefijados de antemano por las instituciones culturales. Hoy, más que nunca, es preciso cuestionarse cualquier discurso que se nos proponga, ya sea éste de carácter ideológico, funcional o técnico, creando una disrupción en aquellos discursos que, por sus connotaciones autoritarias y elitistas, impidan la posibilidad de plantearse dudas y de hacer críticas sobre aquellos aspectos museográficos que nos parezcan necesarios. Afortunadamente, hoy sabemos que los discursos son plurales y que existen múltiples formas de acercarse a los objetos, de exponerlos y de interpretarlos, que no siempre tienen por qué coincidir con el discurso monolítico que nos presentan algunos museos.

Cuando el visitante entra en el museo no ha de buscar solo presencias, sino que también ha de descubrir ausencias, elaborar metáforas, escuchar silencios y prestar oídos a aquello que se dice y se comenta entre pasillos para, en su momento, elaborar

el propio relato sobre lo que uno tiene que decir, sin que tenga que ser mera repetición de lo ya escuchado. Porque, como sugiere Giroux (1997), siempre hay lugar para apostar por una “*pedagogía de la posibilidad*”, que nos hace ver que el control y la dominación han de ir siempre acompañadas de la oposición y la resistencia dentro del marco expositivo. No todo está dicho de una vez para siempre, ni todo resulta ser tal y como se nos ha contado. De ahí que sea necesario reconstruir los esquemas simbólicos que la museología tradicional nos propone para elaborar otros nuevos, capaces de aportar visiones no siempre concordantes ni acrílicas con las ya dadas.

Al museo dialógico no debemos ir buscando soluciones, sino haciendo preguntas, cuestionando planteamientos y elaborando críticas porque ninguna experiencia cultural debería tener lugar si no va estrechamente relacionada con la realidad que nos circunda. Porque, ¿quién ha dicho que solo sean válidas las narrativas que nos proponen los museos?, ¿por qué hemos de creer que todos los visitantes son iguales en su forma de contemplar, entender y asumir las experiencias estéticas?, ¿por qué vamos a aceptar que se nos obligue a asumir determinadas ideologías y formas de pensar, simplemente porque están en boga en un determinado momento?, ¿por qué no va a ser posible plantearse la modificación de determinados contenidos, sirviéndose del diálogo constructivo y del acercamiento de posturas diferentes? En el fondo, ¿qué museología estamos proponiendo de cara al futuro para que pueda ser entendida, aceptada y asumida por las nuevas generaciones, sin que se caiga en excesos colonialistas, elitistas y monolíticos que desfiguren el verdadero significado de una museología plural, abierta, crítica y constructiva?.

Ciertamente no nos sirve una museología que potencie la figura del educador como un mero transmisor de los datos del museo al visitante, de una manera mecánica y neutra, donde no hay lugar para la respuesta y la confrontación, sino solo para la aceptación incondicional y sumisa del visitante, considerado como alguien totalmente pasivo, y a quien se puede moldear con facilidad. Más bien, necesitamos una museología dialógica que aplique una pedagogía crítica que nos haga percibir la existencia de múltiples diferencias y nos ayude a analizar los espacios de resistencia que se dan dentro de los museos de carácter colonialista, donde se imponen una serie de valores culturales, para crear espacios nuevos de participación y negociación desde una perspectiva museística poscolonial (Rodrigo, 2007b). Eso implica la aceptación de que los discursos pueden elaborarse desde diferentes perspectivas, pero teniendo siempre presente que no se puede prescindir de la participación crítica y transformadora de los visitantes como elementos indispensables para que pueda darse, con todas las garantías, un auténtico museo dialógico, capaz de articular los diferentes espacios que lo configuran como un ámbito de diálogo, de crítica y de transformación de la realidad existente.

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THE DIALOGIC MUSEUM AND THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

As the museum is surrounded by rapid change and feeling displaced, it is seeking to find out what it is to become and how it will fit in with the new society. The discovery of the self is a dialogic process and museums have adopted forms of dialogue to assist them in understanding their new role. Since museums feel that they do not naturally fit in with the new societal mould, they are rediscovering their purpose by encountering the different issues that surround them. At the same time, the museum is pulling its visitors along the same exploratory path by engaging them in this quest for identity. This paper looks at types of dialogue and at strategies employed that have had an affect on museum direction and consequently on visitor perception and experience.

RÉSUMÉ

Le musée dialogique et l'expérience du visiteur

Alors que son environnement change rapidement et qu'il se sent quelque peu déplacé, le musée cherche à savoir ce qu'il va devenir et comment il va s'adapter à la nouvelle société. La découverte de soi-même est un processus *dialogique* ; les musées ont ainsi été amenés à adopter des types de dialogue leur permettant de mieux comprendre leur nouvelle fonction. Du fait qu'ils n'entrent pas naturellement dans le nouveau moule social, les musées redécouvrent leur but à mesure qu'ils rencontrent les problèmes d'ordres différents dans lesquels ils sont plongés. Du coup, le musée draine ses visiteurs le long d'une voie exploratoire identique en s'engageant dans cette quête d'une nouvelle identité. Cette contribution examine les types de dialogue et les stratégies qui ont été utilisées et qui ont eu une incidence sur la direction du musée et, par là, sur la perception et l'expérience des visiteurs.

RESUMEN

El museo dialógico y la experiencia del visitante

El medio en que se desenvuelve el museo ha sufrido cambios vertiginosos, lo que ha provocado que el museo se sienta desplazado, y que se interroge sobre su futuro, en qué se va a convertir y como « encaja » en el nuevo medio social. El descubrimiento de uno mismo es un proceso *dialógico*; y los museos han adoptado nuevas formas de diálogo para comprender mejor su nueva función. El hecho de que no “encajan” naturalmente en el nuevo molde social, ha forzado búsquedas de de nuevos propósitos a medida que enfrentan problemas y temas de orden diferente a aquellos en que estaban inmersos. Al mismo tiempo, el museo compele a sus visitantes a explorar caminos similares comprometiéndolos en su búsqueda de nuevas identidades. Este documento examina los diferentes tipos de diálogo y de estrategias que se utilizan y que inciden en las metas del museo y por lo tanto en la percepción y experiencia de los visitantes.

摘要

對話博物館與訪客經驗

博物館現在面對世界快速的轉變，自己的地位也在轉變，因此，博物館正努力找到自己未來的角色，以及要如何融入新社會。發掘自我是一種對話過程，而博物館採取對話形式幫助自己了解自己的新角色。由於博物館認為自己無法自然地融入新社會形態，他們正努力藉著面對周遭各種不同的議題重新界定自己的目的。博物館在尋找自身定位的同時也帶著訪客一起參與這相同的探索之旅。本文審視不同的對話以及博物館採用的策略，探討這些對話與策略如何影響博物館的方向，又如何因此影響訪客對博物館的觀點和訪客經驗。

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As an offshoot of modern socialism and in concert with other public social institutions, most of the current diverse definitions and conceptualizations of what is “museum” have incorporated the phrase, “in the service of society” or a variation there of, thus linking museums, and all the baggage that comes with the functioning of that entity, to society at large. Having done so, the museum-society connection has become firmly established and museums are endeavouring to fulfill their perceived obligations in this broader forum. Finding itself in a modern socialist society, the museum is attempting to ameliorate its former elitist, self-absorbed, authoritarian attitude, also a product of the dialogic process at an earlier time, and to reposition itself to be one with society, instead of seemingly being simply in or, as is still all too often the case, apart from society.

To make this quantum leap into their role as societal good neighbour, museums are on a continual quest to determine in which direction they should go to render themselves approachable to and contemporary with the needs and wants of the communities they serve. Through a dialogic process, museums constantly seek to find out what they are by gathering information to enable them to evolve within society. Given that the museum was created and is still being shaped by dialogic forces, any resultant alteration to its role, generates a change in what the museum is and how it is perceived. The museum moves from one identity to another in an ongoing continuum as the dialogic process progresses. In an effort to re-evaluate itself and to find out what it is, the museum pulls its visitors along down its exploratory path by engaging them in its search through different methods of dialogue, and while this methodology may not always appear to have significance, the fact that questions are being asked garners it credibility and value. The dialogic museum is involved in an ongoing process of reviewing and rediscovering itself, and through dialogue, it is in contact with others in order to shape or recreate its identity. While this dialogue was slow to happen throughout the early twentieth century, it has steadily gained momentum and now advances with an intensity just to try to keep pace with the rapid changes reflected in the social fabric. This paper looks at aspects of this dialogue and at some of the strategies employed that have had an affect on museum direction and consequently on visitor perception and experience.

Tactics that museums have utilized to engage in a dialogue with its visitors run the gamut from the formation of working partnerships, to the inclusion of interactive devices in exhibitions, to the provision of exhibition or museum exit visitor comment books which, to the museum, serve to gather public response to its presentations. In answer to the need for democratization, the museum believes itself to be in a communicative mode with its visitorship and thus thinks itself to be fully *au fait* with the contemporary societal mood. After all, in the process of its own rediscovery, dialogic

museums do take the public pulse by conducting surveys, through focus groups, by welcoming feedback, and by measuring levels of engagement with their exhibitions and programmes. Whether such initiatives are motivated by ideologically driven inventiveness, by a passionate desire, or simply by the realization of an expectation, museums are spending time and resources pursuing this area of endeavour. While surveys and focus groups have been all the rage at various stages, it seems that most of the products tend to be tossed onto a shelf where they just sit and acquire dust. While it is moot as to whether many of the findings are actually implemented into action, this really does not matter for the dialogic museum since the asking of the questions and the engagement of the visitor in the process is the primary objective. Nevertheless, the museum can proudly claim that it has sought to connect with its visitors' thoughts and desires as tabulated throughout the analysis and summarized in the conclusions. In fact, such undertakings become a valued part of the museum's *curriculum vitae*, especially when applying for grant monies and other fiscal or in-kind support.

In spite of its various efforts, museum's are still perceived as being rather standoffish, having a superior knowledge, and exercising control not only of didactic choice, but also of the amount of knowledge that is disseminated and the methodology by which such is presented. This perception extends to nearly all facets of the museum enterprise. In the past, few have questioned the museum's position in this regard, but this is changing remarkably with serious challenges being mounted, in particular, by indigenous and other minority populations who, through their apparent omission from the process, would not perceive the museum as being dialogic. While the museum has been regarded as the font of all knowledge relating to the collections within its walls, it is now being regularly questioned as to its sole, self-appointed claim to that prerogative. This is especially so where museums have presented, for example, chronological versions of history over other forms of memory, and by doing so, have ascribed an overwhelming preference to western forms of knowledge for preserving the past. By employing this tactic, museums have not only ordered, but also appropriated the experiences of peoples whose histories and cultures are being portrayed rather than seeking alternative points of view and methods of expression. Museums have been very reluctant to accept perspectives other than their own and a realignment in their thinking and action patterns is difficult to accept and thus to implement. Nevertheless, even if such dialogue never occurs, dialogic benefit can be accrued through such a failure by the simple fact of coming to know itself.

This, however, should not be confused with the 1990s trend aimed at "deconstructing expertise" which was seriously advocated by a number of museums. Deconstruction, which originated from the then current critical theories of language and meaning, served to challenge the museum's single authoritative voice. In support of the premise that there is no one answer, it was believed that objects should "speak for themselves", thus communicating their own authority and their own material presence, unencumbered by the presence of texts and labels.

So too, museum ethnological and archaeological collections are being viewed as materials having been illegally, or at the least questionably, appropriated away from their *in situ* cultures and from their original functioning. The words "stolen" and "theft" appear regularly in this context and for many museums, this has come as a sudden and unwelcome realization of conditions surrounding the acquisition of those objects which comprise the very foundation of their existence. While museums are trying to deal with the situation in the face of growing criticism, those peoples whose material culture is in question are not pleased with an ostensible lack of progress and are becoming more and more impatient to see the righting of past wrongs in a more timely fashion. In spite of their efforts, there remains a basic reluctance on the part of

museums to acknowledge their role in such matters or to recognize that they are perceived as being complicit in the perpetration of long-standing injustices.

Nevertheless, among the “general” population (however that may be defined), museums are still held in esteem, being perceived as places that hold interesting objects that bear direct relation to the human or natural condition and from which something new can be learned about one’s own self. While the museum knows this and endeavours to tailor its presentations and programmes accordingly, there is an obvious disconnect here. For the most part, the museum and its visitorship remain as two separate entities, very much at arm’s length, in a kind of producer – consumer relationship. Yet, the museum remains dialogic in that it feels that it is connecting to and is in a dialogue with its visitorship. While the benchmarks the museum uses to determine this are fairly wide ranging, its success in this field of endeavour is open to question. Museums have collections and accompanying didactic materials which they present. This is, however, unidirectional, with only the museum choosing themes, making illustrative and interactive selections, writing texts and labels, designing and marketing presentations, and providing other interpretive embellishments such as educational programming. In other words, for the most part, the museum is engaged in a running monologue with really no expectation of a true dialogue with its visitorship in spite of the fact that it continues to ask questions and seek answers for its own evolution.

In the process of product production, the museum repeatedly assesses its visitors and even categorizes their intellectual capacity from little or no knowledge to that which may be considerable, but never as much as or more than the museum knows itself to have. The museum’s purpose is buoyed by the belief that it has knowledge to offer its visitors by way of didactic exhibitions (knowledge feeding), interactive displays (knowledge discovering), and extra-curricular or associative educational and extension programming and publications (knowledge expanding). Subjects to satisfy any of these activities are almost always chosen by the museum to suit the penchant of the institution as a whole and/or that of individual curators, even though they are normally based on such mundane but limiting considerations as the availability of objects and other illustrative materials, the relevant research data for the preparation of texts and labels, and budgetary constraints. For the most part, texts and labels tend to be geared to the knowledge and comprehension level of a twelve year old to thus suit the “average” visitor. For the “above average”, however, the perception is often that the museum is talking down or “dumbing” down its message, and like the rest of a community’s art and culture facilities, the majority of the museum’s clientele tends to originate from this demographic.

The running monologue position of the dialogic museum provides little opportunity for it to gauge direct visitor response except from such information as may be collected, for example, in visitor comment books or by guides or roving exhibition attendants, when or if these are used. Other methods can include attendance records, press coverage, data acquired through surveys and focus group sessions, and levels of engagement in exhibitions and programmes. Much of this, however, is entirely superficial and certainly cannot be equated with the museum considering itself as being in an open dialogue with the public it serves. Take, for example, the survey process. The questions are almost never open-ended but are framed to direct the respondent to select answers from a range of options that have been carefully selected, and which, for the most part, are conducive to the answers for which the museum is seeking. One museum of my acquaintance asked those surveyed in one question to select which kind of exhibition they would like to see the museum present. While the choices, some 15 of them, were provided and ranged all over the spectrum within the museum’s purview to deliver, the results and what happened following were telling enough. The

results unequivocally showed that the top choice of those surveyed was an Egyptian blockbuster exhibition. Significantly trailing at the very bottom was an exhibition on toy soldiers. Some time following the release of the survey results, the museum mounted an exhibition on toy soldiers. It can be assumed that the survey was meant for the museum to poll the visitorship as to what they would like to see, or why would such a question be included at all. By so doing, it could also be assumed that the museum attempted to engage or dialogue with its patrons by gathering feedback to use in its planning processes. Needless to say, this survey, along with so many others, was shelved and nothing ever more was heard. Even so, since visitors were telling the museum who and what it is, there was a similar dialogic benefit to this exercise of knowing itself.

The primary communications method the museum uses to reach its audience is the exhibition. Secondary modes, normally in conjunction with an exhibition, include any accompanying spinoff activities or products such as educational programming, lectures or forums, publications (from information sheets to catalogues), special events, etc. For many museums, both great and small, exhibitions have evolved from private cabinets stuffed full of material culture objects or natural specimens for the private enjoyment of the privileged few, to public presentations for which objects and images have been carefully selected for illustration within a thematic context. Not all themes, however, attract all visitors and many are denied the pleasure of seeing the treasures known to be held by a museum, treasures which remain out of sight and inaccessible, except for those museums which have allowed, through the current technology, online access to these resources. Even though the thematic exhibition, developed to explore any subject relating to the human or natural world, near or far, has been, at least since the 1960s, the accepted norm for museums to pursue, there is, among many museum visitors, an overwhelming yearn to physically see objects buried deep in museum vaults and a feeling of dissatisfaction when not being able to do so. While museums feel they are communicating with their visitors, most are also denying access to the vast majority of their holdings, except for that small percentage which they chooses to show in a limited capacity. This is partly due to the museum's desire to provide an ongoing programme of continually offering new themes and new objects to attract renewed interest and re-visitation. The adage that "museums are only as good as their collections" is borne out by attendance statistics which show that the majority of the most prestigious museums (for example: Louvre, Paris; British Museum, London; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City; Prado, Madrid; Hermitage, St. Petersburg; National Palace Museum, Taipei; etc.) not only are among those which have the highest number of visitors, but also extensively display their most prominent collections for visitors to see. It is uncertain whether such museums consider the relationship between the showing of vast numbers of their permanent collections and high attendance levels as creating a kind of dialogue. It has even been suggested that perhaps it is time for museums to rethink the notion of the exhibition and whether it has become over curated, over designed, over interpreted, over promoted, and whether there is still room to accommodate old-fashioned curiosity.

It would seem, therefore, that there is a misunderstanding of what it means to dialogue and dialogue is what the museum feels inspired to do to define itself. Dialogue implies a two way communication, in this case, between the museum ↔ the visitor. It also supposes that the encounter between the two parties is relatively balanced. Museum exhibitions that are developed internally without any meaningful input from sources than from its own resources, are pure monologues whereby the museum is in sole control of all aspects and delivers the information through objects, texts, labels, images, etc. in one direction, museum → visitor. Again, it can be said that if the dialogue fails, there still can be a dialogic benefit. The visitor can become actively engaged in or with the exhibition by viewing, reading, manipulating interactive devices, connecting with

banks of computers, partaking of educational programming, buying a catalogue, or attending a lecture series or discussion forum. But whatever the visitor does in this regard, it is always after the fact and in reaction to whatever the museum has already provided. Nevertheless, the museum continues to drag the visitor through its process of re-discovery to try to satisfy itself with their responses.

It is true that many museums have gone to great lengths to engage their visitors in an effort to turn a private experience into one of public interaction, occasionally to the extent that “museumness” is overtaken and becomes lost in the experiential dynamics of the presentation. Through such a process, museums have tried to mount a competitive response to the lure of other kinds of entertainment with which they feel they are in direct competition. The desire for the lucrative monies associated with such enterprises has encouraged museums to seek a new niche by setting themselves up as one of the entertainment attractions. This has, in turn, led to expansions in the areas of entertainment provision very often to the detriment of knowledge seeking or knowledge supplying. Even though visitors may still wish a private museum experience where objects can be enjoyed and contemplated in an atmosphere free of the devices that promote entertainment and all of the trappings that can go with it (sound, visuals, movement, and so forth), the dialogic museum is driving towards the incorporation of more varying methods of audience engagement. The advent of the “technological age” has given the museum a powerful tool to use in this endeavour. Such a transference from passive to active visitors, is communicating to the museum that it is reaching its audience in a way that is its future. This still implies a unidirectional circumstance whereby the museum, however, is in the seat of control and exercises its authority over what eventuates. The visitor may feel drawn into the museum’s pre-programmed sphere and may be content with the experience, but it is questionable that this kind of action – reaction dynamic constitutes a meaningful dialogue.

Nevertheless, the only practical route for the dialogic museum is to set up stringent parameters for how it can accomplish a wide-reaching dialogue with its visitors. A binary dialogue is simply not realistic as the museum needs to communicate with as broad a spectrum as possible for its purpose. So, the museum provides its exhibitions, programmes, and associated activities in a way that it can gather as much information and input into its process of re-inventiveness as quickly and completely as possible. For most visitors, this is not a problem and the museum directs its messages to this target. For others, however, the museum needs to go further in its efforts. In particular, indigenous populations, most, if not all, of whose members rarely visit museums, take umbrage with the unidirectional, authoritative stance the museum continues to take. There is a very real and growing demand by virtually all indigenous (and certainly by many other minority) peoples for a voice in museum affairs and consequently, a communication model that divests the museum of its self-proclaimed sole control over its holdings originating from these communities. Here, dialogue needs to take on a whole new meaning between the museum and the peoples in question and this is one that is built on an open and face-to-face binary basis.

This demand for a voice that is not theirs, means that museums need to relinquish power and authority to the “other”. While the museum is use to consultation and even to collaboration in a limited capacity, an equal partnership is difficult for it to understand or to accept. Yet, it is such a partnership that is fundamental for a full dialogic process to take place. Contrary to the museum’s own corporate culture, some of these partnerships are even governed by Protocol Agreements which detail how the parties consent to work with each other. The partnership may cover anything and all things that the museum undertakes where any specific indigenous peoples are concerned, from the management of collections, to exhibitions and associated programming, to

administrative issues, and everything in between. Whether the museum is comfortable with this is not an issue, but the nature of the dialogue and who is in control, definitely is. For museum visitors, however, the result of such a partnership means that they will be taken outside of their expected comfort zone to an area where their experience is no longer pre-destined by the museum and may no longer fit their pre-conceived notions of what constitutes a museum as they know it.

During the 2005 ICOFOM symposium and meeting held in Calgary, Canada, delegates were treated to a visit to the Glenbow Museum. The most prominent, main floor exhibition was on the Blackfoot First Nations, an indigenous people who live on the Great Plains as far north as western Alberta, and with whom the Glenbow had worked (partnered?) in the development and execution of the presentation. A number of out-of-country delegates remarked that they could not understand the exhibition, did not know what was going on, and did not like it at all. They passed through the area rapidly and did not spend the time required to read and absorb the available textual materials. It can be assumed that their obvious discomfort was the result of the preponderance of Blackfoot input and the fact that what they saw was not in keeping with their expectations founded on a learned, European-based museum exhibition methodology and experience. This is unfortunate, but perhaps the Glenbow, on their part, could have implemented strategies or introduced aids which might have allowed the visitor to comprehend the way in which the Blackfoot express their history and culture. Nevertheless, such a reaction serves to fuel the museum's ongoing quest for its own evolving identity through the dialogic process.

These kinds of dialogues are extremely difficult and there are many hurdles over which museums still need to jump. An easy working partnership and an open dialogue with indigenous peoples based on trust will be some time in coming, but it is essential if the museum wants to incorporate the multiple voices of the "other" in the process of its own self-review and evolution. A disregard for these voices would mean that the museum cannot be fully dialogic since it would seek to exclude those stake-holders which have a long-standing and justifiable interest in the museum, how it defines itself and what it becomes.

The dialogic museum sets out to discover itself using different methods of dialogue to interface with its visitorship. The dialogue is driven by the museum's desire to find out what it is and this will guide it in its knowledge about itself. As a result of the dialogic process, the museum appears to be in evolutionary flight from one identity to another as a continuously changing and evolving entity within the social structure of the community. Visitors become drawn along into the process as the dialogic museum seeks to re-define and know itself through their experiences. Museums will continue to ask questions and engage in dialogue with their visitors who in turn will continue to be a sounding board for museum change. Whether the museum heeds what its visitors have to say is often irrelevant as the museum will continue to seek to know and define itself through others.

MUSEUM DIALOGUE BASED ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

“Ten Thousand Waves”, an exciting multi-media installation at the Brandhorst Museum in Munich, Germany – a museum for contemporary art opened in 2009 – is the starting point for this article. This type of presentation was created in 2010 by the artist Isaac Julien (born in 1960 in London). As a synthesis of the arts it is related to both aspects of our topic: the dialogic museum and the visitor experience. The basis for a creative philosophy of the arts is explained by the theories of important philosophers, poets and art historians: Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Friedrich von Schiller, Wilhelm von Humboldt, the American philosophers John Dewey and Howard Gardner, and finally by the art historian Alfred Lichtwark. Rudolf Seitz, former President of the Academy for the Fine Arts in Munich, Germany, developed another approach regarding different facets of art appreciation, as the sensitive, the creative and the rational methodology. The manifold aspects of “museum” language present an integrative model related to dialogue and visitor experience.

RÉSUMÉ

Le dialogue du musée sur la base de la philosophie du langage

« Les dix mille vagues » est une passionnante installation multimédia qui se trouve à Munich (Allemagne), au Brandhorst Museum, un musée d'Art contemporain ouvert en 2009. Elle est le point de départ de cet article. Ce type de présentation fut créé en 2010 par l'artiste Isaac Julien (né à Londres en 1960). En tant que synthèse des arts, elle est en relation avec les deux aspects de notre sujet : le musée dialogique et l'expérience du visiteur. La base d'une philosophie créative des arts est expliquée par les théories d'importants philosophes, poètes et historiens d'art : Georges Guillaume Frédéric Hegel, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Frédéric von Schiller, Guillaume von Humboldt, les philosophes américains John Dewey and Howard Gardner, et finalement par l'historien d'art Alfred Lichtwark. Rudolf Seitz, premier Président of l'Académie des Beaux-Arts de Munich développa une autre approche qui s'intéresse aux différentes façons d'apprécier l'art, en tant que méthode sensitive, créative ou rationnelle.

RESUMEN

Diálogo Museal basado en la filosofía del lenguaje

“Diez mil olas”, una excitante instalación multimedial en el Museo Brandhorst en Munich, Alemania – un museo de arte contemporáneo abierto en 2009 – es el punto de partida de este artículo. Este tipo de presentación fue creada en 2010 por el artista Isaac Julien (nacido en 1960 en Londres). Como síntesis de las artes relaciona los dos aspectos de nuestro tema de discusión: el museo dialógico y la experiencia del visitante. Las bases de una filosofía creativa

sobre las artes se explica a partir de las teorías de importantes filósofos, poetas e historiadores del arte: Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Friedrich von Schiller, Wilhelm von Humboldt, los filósofos (norte)americanos John Dewey y Howard Gardener, y finalmente por el historiador del arte Alfred Lichtwark. Rudolf Seitz, antiguo Presidente de la Academia de Bellas Artes en Munich, Alemania, desarrolló otra teoría relativa a las diferentes facetas de la apreciación del arte a partir de metodologías sensitivas, creativas y racionales. Los variados aspectos del lenguaje del “museo” presenta un modelo integrador que relaciona el diálogo con la experiencia del visitante.

摘要

以語言哲學為基礎之博物館對話

2009年開幕的現代藝術博物館--德國慕尼黑 Brandhorst 博物館曾取得一件讓人振奮的多媒體裝置藝術品—「浪」。本文之靈感便是來自於此藝術品。「浪」的是藝術家 Isaac Julien(1960 出生於倫敦)2010年的創作。這樣的藝術形式正巧符合我們此次主題的兩大方向：對話型博物館與訪客經驗。哲學家、詩人與藝術史學家都曾提出藝術的創作哲學，例如黑格爾(Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel)、歌德(Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)、席勒(Friedrich von Schiller)、洪堡(Wilhelm von Humboldt)，美國哲學家杜威(John Dewey)、迦納(Howard Gardener)，以及藝術史學家李奇法克(Alfred Lichtwark)。德國慕尼黑美術學院前校長 Rudolf Seitz 對藝術欣賞的不同角度也發展出另一個理論：從感性、創意與理論的角度來欣賞藝術。博物館語言的各種角度為對話與訪客經驗提供了一個整合的模型。

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“Ten Thousand Waves” – an exciting multi-media installation at the Brandhorst Museum of contemporary art in Munich – created by Isaac Julien, born in 1960 in London, the son of immigrants from the Caribbean Islands, is in my view an excellent example of dialogue and visitor experience in contemporary art. This 9-channel video-installation deals on the one hand with the legend about the traditional Goddess Mazu, and on the other hand with the present day problems of China: the thunderous public traffic in Shanghai, the death of illegally immigrated Chinese fishermen in England who under-estimated the dangers of the Atlantic Ocean, and a young lady with the difficulties of her everyday life in the atmosphere of the early decades of the twentieth century in China. This installation, a synthesis of the arts, recalls the history and shows the circumstances in both past and present China.

From the museological point of view, it is a model for the interrelationship between an artist and his contemporary work of art and the dialogue with the visitor. The visitor is individually integrated into the performance and learns a lot about political and social life in China.¹

In general, both museum professionals and visitors now pay much more attention to the international exchange and intercultural aspects – but also to the personal, individual needs of the visitors. They often observe and follow political events. Museums for contemporary art, such as the Brandhorst Museum opened in 2009 in

¹ www.museum-brandhorst.de/index.php?id=28 (accessed 06.06.2011)

Munich, Germany², are important institutions for education.³ The installation is cited as an example of progressive methods and use of language to reach and involve the audience.

My contribution will start with the theory of language in philosophy and psychology. It will also relate to the aesthetic and social experience, particularly in museums of contemporary art.⁴

In this regard Friedrich Hegel's discourses on art, Wilhelm von Humboldt's theories about the "musealisation" of art and Friedrich von Schiller's contemplations and reflections on aesthetic phenomena and the arts, play an important role. The multi-perspective approach to the language of museums and to the audience as an integral symbol concerning identity, diversity and variety will be specifically emphasised.

Museum language is pragmatically established in manifold ways: for example as spoken and written language, as dialogue, and as visitor activities such as a physical expression, methods used by modern media, and more.

On the one hand language is considered to be one of the most important characteristics for individual identity and cultural diversity, and on the other hand as a principle for museum presentation in direct and indirect communication. The methods of contemporary media enable a connection between presentation and visitor experience.

Language of the arts

Language in its symbolic meaning relates to a wide range of various fields. It means philosophy of language, direct and indirect language, verbal and non-verbal phenomena of language such as heritage, dialects, native language, but in a material sense it also means presentation, arrangements of objects in a certain context, language as an expression of exhibitions

Museum language is one of the most important basics of communication between the different curators and museum professionals and target-groups of visitors.

On the one hand, language has to be considered in the context of the time and period of art and on the other hand on a philosophical, historical and aesthetic, social and political basis. Exact ideas and creative inspiration can enrich relevant educational and visitor theories.

Creative philosophy of language and the arts — some of the philosophers

Philosophers have given us many very helpful theories; I refer to several outstanding personalities:

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) is one of the most important representatives of "Philosophical Museology", as a professor at the German University of Jena (from 1805) and from 1818 at Berlin University. His approach to museums is laid out in his lectures about the knowledge of "Aesthetics" (1835-1838) and the arts which he gave between the years 1817 and 1829. According to Hegel's position art is

² Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen (ed), *Museum Brandhorst. Ausgewählte Werke*, München/Berlin/London/New York Zweite Auflage. 2010.

³ Gerhard Bott, *Von den Aufgaben eines Kunstmuseums in der Gegenwart*, Heidelberg 1980. S. 8.

⁴ If I were to refer to other types of museums – such as museums of cultural history, techniques etc., I would have been obliged to consider many other points.

the spiritual and sensitive presentation of the pure idea.⁵ The work of art is, when we follow Hegel's ideas, at the same time the result of serious work of "language" and a "topic of philosophy".⁶

The history of thought and philosophical enthusiasm enable and support the view on and the understanding of art.

On the other hand, *Johann Wolfgang von Goethe* (1749-1832) in his "Theory of Colours" refers immediately to art museums. He particularly examines the manner of presentation, the relationship to and perspectives on opportunities for communication in a "modern" museum directed to the public.

Friedrich von Schiller (1759-1805) explains his position in "The Aesthetic Education of a Human Being" ("Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen in einer Reihe von Briefen") in a series of letters.⁷ In this regard a work of art does not need to be useful. From Schiller's point of view harmony in art seems to be a sensitive character in an ethical context. Thought and reflection on aesthetics and the arts⁸ allow us a multi-perspective approach for relating language to museums, too. His ideas explain enjoyment in aesthetics and "imaginative aesthetics".

Both *Wilhelm von Humboldt* (1767-1835) and Schiller described an "aesthetic typology" defined as a correspondence between sensitivity and logic, responsibility and artistic phenomena. This also refers to the interrelationship between reality and the various expressions of art. An innermost question in Schiller's reports is the association between heart and brain, feelings and the intellect, aesthetics and historical conceptions, cultural, social, aesthetic experiences from a successful presentation.

Usually we would ask whether or not those theoretical ideas finally were recognized in connection with museums, as for example, in presentation. Humboldt wrote in a specific way on the matter of dialogue and visitor experience. He expressed his position in a statement that I describe according to its wisdom: "The real purpose of an individual is the maximum development, proportional to her/his energy and potential, to reach the quality of educated perfection."

Humboldt was on the one hand the head of the Ministry of Culture in Prussia and responsible for museums and museum development. He was on the other hand a philosopher very much associated with the education of people in the cultural sector.

This means visitors of various social groups should be enabled to become involved in museological and cultural issues. Thoughtful consideration of Humboldt's basic ideas shows that the purpose and explanation of his philosophy of museums are related to anthropological, aesthetic, and linguistic principles. Besides, his ideas are also closely connected to interdisciplinary, intersocial and intercultural concepts of museum presentation.⁹ His original and creative documents and essays, and also his ideas on

⁵ www.uni-essen.de/literaturwissenschaft-aktiv/Vorlesungen/literaturge/vaesthetik

⁶ Annemarie Gethmann-Siefert, *Einführung in Hegels Ästhetik*. Munich 2005. p. 74.

⁷ Friedrich Schiller, "Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen in einer Reihe von Briefen". In: *Schriften zur Ästhetik* (sämtliche Werke, 5. Bd.) auf Grund der Originaldrucke hg. und kommentiert von Fricke, Gerhard und Göpfert, Herbert G., München 1984. p. 139-230.

⁸ Friedrich Schiller, "Über das Schöne und die Kunst", *Schriften zur Ästhetik*. München 1975.

⁹ Wilhelm von Humboldt's theory of education was explained by Eduard Spranger, Theodor Litt, H.H. Heydorn and Clemens Menze. Hermann Lübke's study was published at the occasion of the the 150th remembrance day of Humboldt's death in the issue: "Wilhelm von Humboldt und die Musealisierung der Kunst". Vgl. dazu auch: Schlerath, Bernfried (ed.), *Wilhelm von Humboldt. Vortragszyklus zum 150. Todestag*. Berlin 1986, pp. 169-183.

anthropology, theory of education, linguistics, philosophy and aesthetics confirm beyond any doubt Humboldt's unusual ideas on dialogue.

The individual, as Humboldt remarks, achieves intellectual fitness and awareness in fields related to herself/himself as a person, through issues the individual can identify with.¹⁴ Another significant criterion is Humboldt's demand for autonomy in education, teaching and *training* in museums. In this relation he emphasises the 'most autonomous *interaction*' of the individual's awareness and self-acting, between the individual and society, the human being and the macrocosm.¹⁰ By this interaction culture is not only preserved and protected, rather it is more promoted by individual effort. Humboldt's relationship to education is perceived as his most important feature: he stresses the status of education as being in harmony, concerning both a practical and a realistic objective.

Humboldt highlights an emotional and intentional education. He explains that the person individually needs a subject of training, a kind of "world except oneself". A museum is such a world outside the personal sphere. That means a museum concept that is understandable to every individual museum visitor and to various social and ethnic groups who can be included at their own level of education. Each visitor should be qualified to approach objects from his particular intellectual knowledge. As Humboldt says: by means of "projecting the shape of his own mind into these objects".¹¹

Humboldt's thoughts about museums in Paris and Berlin as well as his planning of progressive design raised him to an important rank in his profession.¹² Many of his publications provide insight into both basic ideas on museum theory and inspiration for museological structures.¹³

Humanistic and philosophical approach

Humboldt stresses the specific aim that a humanistic approach should be both on the one hand as independent as possible, and on the other hand intended to benefit the conditions of civilisation. That means definitely that *there isn't education without culture, and never culture without education*.¹⁴

Philosophy of Language and Ethics

Language is another significant phenomenon with Humboldt concerning the dialogic museum and its focus on visitor experience. In museums the linguistic structure of texts plays an important role for *information to the audience, understanding and familiarity* with objects. At the same time it is a major aim to use language in a museum in a multi-perspective and multi-functional way. Language serves as a key to acquaintance with the phenomena of culture. There could be various individual results: aesthetic enjoyment, both historical and artistic guidance, and, above that, education on beauty and art.

¹⁰ Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Gesammelte Werke I*, Abschnitt 7 (=GS I/7), Theorie der Bildung des Menschen. Bruchstück. See also Dirk Hülst, "Bildung - zur Problematik eines soziologischen Begriffs", In: Ellwein, Th./Groothoff, H.H./Rauschenberger, H./Roth, H. (Eds.): *Erziehungswissenschaftliches Handbuch*. Teil II. Bd.3: *Psychologie und Soziologie*. Berlin 1975. pp. 330-332.

¹¹ Wilhelm von Humboldt: *Gesammelte Werke I*, Abschnitt 7, p. 287.

¹² Wilhelm von Humboldt: *Gesammelte Schriften V/4* (GS V/4), "Über vier löwenköpfige Bildsäulen in den hiesigen königlichen Antikensammlungen" (1825). S. 134-157.

¹³ Wilhelm von Humboldt. GS XII, PD 3. Bd. LIV - LVII: *Über das Museum in Berlin*. p. 539-594. Hier: LIV. (1815-1834). "Bericht des Ministers Freiherrn v. Humboldt an den König", vom 21. August 1830, p. 539-566.

¹⁴ S. Dirk. "Bildung - zur Problematik eines soziologischen Begriffs". In: Ellwein, Theodor/Groothoff Hans-Hermann/Rauschenberger, H.I Roth, H. (ed.): *Erziehungswissenschaftliches Handbuch*. Teil 11. Bd. 3. Psychologie und Soziologie, p. 330-332.

Taking everything into account Humboldt assessed the design of a museum. The performance of objects should be directed to the given needs of the visitors. Rather the objects themselves contain dynamic terms. They embody history and intrinsic potential which symbolize the challenge of self-consideration of the universe, and the trial to transfer it to museums.

The *language* is also of importance as a museum-related intercourse. Therefore it seems indispensable to advance objects of the past as they relate to language, and to integrate a philosophical and ethical language in every museum conception. This is not only a theory but much more an approach to cultural-anthropology, the social sciences and interdisciplinarity.¹⁵ Humboldt's museum-philosophy in this concern is in correlation with aesthetics as well as education and pedagogy. Concerning aesthetics there is also a specific philosophical discourse about the senses, the aesthetics and the psychology of the arts.

Other proponents of museum language are John Dewey and Howard Gardener. *John Dewey* (1859-1952), an American philosopher, described Art as a kind of experience. His particular approach to the Arts means the continuity between the experiences of the everyday life and the other practises which are involved in both the production and the reception of art.¹⁶ According to the theory of experience created by Dewey the individual is permanently in contact to both the cognitive and the social environment. This is a reciprocal interrelationship.

John Dewey also refers to working as an experience. He characterises art as the most abstract form of an experiment. On the one hand artists use different materials, rocks, colours or sounds and words for their examination and study. On the other hand stones, colours, sounds and words overtake the function as a kind of surrounding or environment for works of art. Dewey pays more attention to the work in progress than to the finished artefact.

This theory is very interesting for art education in museums. Activities not necessary for survival such as painting, modelling, and music are have long been fundamentals of education. He also reveals the relationship between art and play.¹⁷ We have to communicate that all of the works of art are an interplay between perceptions, emotions, activities and thoughts.

Howard Gardner (born in 1943 in Scranton, Pennsylvania), Professor of Education and Psychology at Harvard University and Professor of Neurology at the Boston University School of Medicine, developed the theory of "multiple intelligences" and brainpower, and promoted the concept of "creative intelligence".¹⁸

The Russian expert *Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky* (1896-1934) was an encyclopaedically educated scientist in the areas of sociology, psychology, philosophy, linguistics, the sciences of art and literature. Vygotsky started as a young scientist studying the psychology of the arts. He intended to research how works of art influence the intensification of a psychological reaction – for example as an emotion. He explained that works of art included certain purposes in shared cultures which have a direct

¹⁵ Andreas Flitner, Klaus Giel (eds.), *Wilhelm von Humboldt. Werke in fünf Bänder*, Studienausgabe Stuttgart 1960/1988. "Theorie der Bildung des Menschen", p. 283.

¹⁶ http://www.denkart.org/html/body_literatur.html

¹⁷ John Dewey, *Art as Experience*, New York, Milton Balch and Co, 1934.

¹⁸ Howard Gardner, H. *Creating minds: An anatomy of creativity seen through the lives of Freud, Einstein, Picasso, Stravinsky, Eliot, Graham, and Gandhi*, New York, Basic Books, 1993.

relation to particular topics.¹⁹ In this regard he referred to a specific topic well known in the Christian west: the shepherds in the Christmas nativity scenes and the nativity play. They have a strong connotation with peace and tranquillity.

Those thoughts influenced his psychological research about human education and human thought. His basic idea was that those relationships would come into existence through a cultural context and by communication with other human beings.

Alfred Lichtwark (1852-1914), an excellent advocate for co-operation between Art-Museums and schools, developed brilliant ideas with regard to “exercises on the examination of and experience with works of art”²⁰.

The “Museum landscape” of Hamburg is a good example how already by the end of the 19th century contemporary problems between the museum and the public were considered. The expert Alfred Lichtwark (1852-1914), director of “Hamburger Kunsthalle”, put special emphasis on the education of people. The title of his book dealing with museum education of children and young people is “Exercises in Considering Works of Art” (*Übungen im Betrachten von Kunstwerken*, 1886)²¹ and for all of the target groups in addition to children “Museums as Places for Education” (*Museen als Volksbildungsstätten*).²²

An important aspect of Lichtwark’s ideas relates to the reform movement in pedagogy. This is also directed to a movement in art education. From this time on arose the idea to enter a dialogue with a work of art, to put questions and to discover the contents and manifold contexts. According to Lichtwark the museum should be a place for enjoyment and creativity – in a completely other way than traditional art education in schools, which in Germany in the past was often characterized by drawing and copying objects.

Lichtwark demonstrated with examples how the observation and reflection of art could be advanced when considering the capability visitors. He also reflected upon the interest of children in narrative pictures which enabled elementary observations.

One of his most important aims was to develop a stimulating atmosphere for the audience in museums of different types – particularly art museums. He developed and explained his ideas at the occasion of the 12th Conference for Workers in Welfare Institutions in Mannheim (1903) to a fascinated audience of teachers, educators and museum staff.

Those thoughts are explained in Lichtwark’s different programmatic essays.²³ Although they developed from the interrelationship between museums, schools and the public, they were often explained as the sources for the movement for art in general. They inspired to a high degree the nature and development of museums and museology as a whole. The deliberations of Alfred Lichtwark aimed particularly at the development of the capability to make a closer examination of works of art by using the methods of dialogue – instead of a subject only explained by a teacher, or a museum guide.

¹⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lev_Vygotsky (06.06.2011)

²⁰ Alfred Lichtwark, *Übungen im Betrachten von Kunstwerken. Nach Versuchen mit einer Schulklasse*, herausgegeben von der Lehrervereinigung zur Pflege künstlerischer Bildung, 15.-18. Aufl., Berlin 1922.

²¹ Alfred Lichtwark, *Übungen im Betrachten von Kunstwerken. Nach Versuchen mit einer Schulklasse*, herausgegeben von der Lehrervereinigung zur Pflege künstlerischer Bildung, 15.-18. Aufl., Berlin 1903.

²² Alfred Lichtwark, : “ Museen als Bildungsstätten” In: *Museen als Volksbildungsstätten. Ergebnisse der 12. Konferenz der Centralstelle für Arbeiter-Wohlfahrtseinrichtungen*. Berlin 1904. p. 6-13.

²³ Alfred Lichtwark, *Drei Programme*, Berlin, 1902.

His objective included much more: the idea to grasp a work of art, to express the expectations, the “reading” of questions, discovering significant points, and additionally finding out of details specifically by spirit, the senses and the feelings.²⁴ His aim was to attain an integral approach on aesthetic and cultural education²⁵ and to involve on the one hand the spirit and creativity and on the other hand all of the senses of human beings.

Possibilities of art experience - identification with the arts

Rudolf Seitz, the former president of the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, was very much engaged in the problems of language and individual experience in the arts. In his article about art appreciation that is of course valid for all target groups of a museum – he wrote about art appreciation in general.²⁶

Principally, Seitz relates in a more practical and hands-on way to the manifold methods of examining a picture. On his view it depends on the art museum and from the kind of painting or performance whether there should be elaborated mainly the material content, the creative appearance or the historical correlations and context.

Seitz distinguishes between three main points of art appreciation, that is, the dialogue between the museum presentation and the visitor experience: *sensitive* art appreciation, *creative* art appreciation and *rational art* appreciation. What does this mean?

Sensitive art appreciation

The most important and central task of art appreciation is to meet a work of art as an individual experience. That's more than only the analysis of details. There is also a significant basis for this sensitive art appreciation: the enthusiasm to observe, to look at and to pay attention, to internalize and to spiritualize. These are more contemplative aptitudes. This is especially very hard for people in our times. We cannot expect a work of art to have an effect by itself. Rather more it is necessary to move the audience into the right atmosphere. This may be by a short story, a musical creation or virtual performance that enables to go into the substance of the work of art and creates a sensitive context. Seitz is convinced that we usually remember those works of art which gave us very intensive feelings.

Creative art appreciation

After the art appreciation experience the children (or visitors as the case may be) are asked to “translate” and to transfer the picture into their own language, that is to say by a kind of hands-on-activities. Sometimes the interpretation of pictures may be prepared by a creative activity.

Rational art appreciation

Sometimes “rational” issues are a good basis for effective art appreciation. Those may be biographical notices about the artist, the relationship of a work of art to the environment and everyday life, but also stylistic characteristics or connections concerning the composition. If one is going to talk about a picture, the observer has firstly to know something about this work of art.²⁷ What impressions and feelings,

²⁴ Alfred Lichtwark, *Übungen im betrachten von Kunstwerken*. p. 21

²⁵ Dolf Sternberger, *Bilder und Bildung*, München, 1987.

²⁶ Rudolf Seitz, “Bildbetrachtung”, In: *Begegnung und Gespräch. Ökumenische Beiträge zu Erziehung und Unterricht. Verlagsbeilage “Bayerische Schule”*. März 1972. p. 102.

²⁷ Rudolf Seitz, “Bildbetrachtung”. In: *Begegnung und Gespräch. Ökumenische Beiträge zu Erziehung und Unterricht. Verlagsbeilage “Bayerische Schule”*, März 1972, p. 102.

which abilities, what content is a museum able to offer the audience?"²⁸ Experience by the senses – to be enthusiastic about museums – the world, my life, the museum and I.

What are accordingly elements of quality with regard to the audience – between dialogical skills and the museum?

- empirical knowledge that is familiar with the way of life of the audience and specific experiences of all target groups of the museum.
- knowledge about the interests of the audience as well as its social background.
- meeting the challenge of up-to-date and visitor-oriented attractive "mediation", in museum presentation as well as by professionals put in charge of the group.
- facing different individual expectations of the audience as well as using stimulating and interactive methods.
- focusing on chances of theories of action and the capability of a certain audience.
- offering fields of experimentation and examination for everybody who visits the museum.
- providing interrelationships between the museal, real and virtual world with regard to the circumstances of communication technologies.
- reaching the expectations of a multi-cultural society and enabling personality development by contact with museums.

Language as an Integrative structural model

Humboldt himself focuses on the thesis that knowledge may be supported by means of rhetoric. Additionally, he stresses that in general consciousness can act as a transfer from the individual view to a common insight. That means, on the one hand, that 'rhetoric rules' used by museum professionals (curators) can relate to the audience. On the other hand the museum is responsible for the capacity development of each group of society.

If we consider both the tangible and the intangible heritage, real artefacts are not the only ones which promote individual knowledge. Written sources, documents of literary value as for example an expressionistic poem, or a description or an illustration may support individual cognizance.

To conclude, it is not enough to show objects in the showcases of a museum, but on the contrary, and whenever possible, to mediate the earlier functions of the objects, not only by demonstrating but in the ideal case by experimenting by oneself. That concerns trial and experimentation in general. These are forms which clearly render the former functions and importance of objects. But we have conscientiously to aim at the connection to objects in museums; we have to go to the bottom of the meaning of objects. Afterward trial and experimentation – in museological terms– the meaning of objects will become assimilated in depth.

Finally, this review of museum dialogue based on the philosophy of language is personified in Isaac Julien's Media Art Work in the Brandhorst Museum: to integrate the visitors into the performance.

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**Concluding statement on deaccession and restitution
(November 2010)**

**Pour conclure sur l'aliénation et la restitution
(novembre 2010)**

**Conclusión final sobre alienación y restitución
(noviembre 2010)**

**藏品註銷與歸還的總結性說明
(2010年11月)**

TO WHOM BELONGS THE OBJECT?

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A provocative statement summarizing the dilemma of Deaccessioning and Return of Cultural Heritage, presented in Shanghai at the closing session of the ICOFOM symposium on 10 November 2010

At the first sight this looks like a very simple nearly stupid question that seems very easy to answer. But it will turn out as crucial and central for our discussion. Take the chair where I am sitting now. I possess it but I do not own it, it is the property of the congress company or maybe of the Government. I am only a kind of steward/holder like museums may be custodians for somebody else's objects. The difference between possession and ownership is very important. In French it corresponds to the terms "détention" and "propriété", in Spanish between "posesión" and "propiedad", in German between "Besitz" and "Eigentum". The main difference lies in the fact that the second terms are legal ones, the first ones not. This distinction is certainly not so clear-cut in all languages and even less in all cultures. Nevertheless it can be an interesting start for our discussion.

Let's go on with my chair! Before it came here it was in a wholesale store, before in factory and before in a test lab and in a pilot workshop. Its elements came from different raw materials. And even before, it was in the office of a designer who created among others this specific model. Indeed, a very long story! And it doesn't end today at all! Tomorrow there will be other people sitting on "my" chair: other possessors, but the owner remains the same. And quite for sure – in 15 years a chair collector will take it out of the hall, more or less secretly, as a typical congress chair of the first decade of the 21st century. And nearly at the end of the chain, let's say some 20 years later, the collector makes a donation of his collection to a famous furniture museum. As you know: Museums are like casinos, they always win! Sooner or later, all collections end in a museum. I said "nearly at the end" because at this moment museologists enter the scene and things get complicated: A simple every day object becomes real cultural heritage!

Let me first explain musealization theoretically! By the act of musealization we keep the attributed values of things as signs. This process changes things to museum objects, to musealia. As such they acquire a new quality: museality. It is very important to state that musealisation is a reversible process. By the process of demusealisation the object loses this quality and becomes again a simple everyday thing. Take as an example Marcel Duchamp's "readymades" which can be reintroduce into life without any problems.

Hence, on the pure material and museological side there is no problem to take an object out of a collection and reevaluate it, since the attributes values are not physically linked with it. But such a statement doesn't help a lot!

Let's now have a closer look to another specific museological feature: the man/thing relationship. We live in three different realities with respect to our material environment. I call them first the (primary) true reality comprising all things surrounding us. From the first primary reality, two other realities (both secondary) can be signalled out in parallel: the imaginary one and the personal one. The imaginary reality comprises things that are decontextualized from the initial context and recontextualized in a new (museum) context; and finally the personal reality comprises things that are decontextualized from one of the other two realities and recontextualized in a personal environment. By doing so we can say that it is only the personal sight that really creates the object.

All these relationships are determined by a utility function and attributes values, neither of them being ever totally absent, but sometimes tending to zero. Things may be kept to reuse them; that is not a topic for museology. Or they are kept because of attributed values. Besides a material value (which is neither a museological theme) I distinguish four idealistic values: aesthetic, remembrance, informative (heuristic) and symbolic.

Things are musealized because of such attributes values, the object being only a material support which remains physically unchanged by the transition to a museum object. And that's the main museological reason why deaccessioning is such a complicated matter.

Let me come back to the story of my chair. What is the specific man/thing relationship in the different phases of our story? Very often it is the utilitarian function. But as I said, attributed values are never absent. These two aspects represent the two sides of the same coin. Just some examples to elucidate this: I am sitting here and I am happy that I don't have to stand. But, maybe I'll remember this chair because it is not very comfortable or because I like/don't like the colour and the design or because I am nervous with respect of your acceptance of my speech.

The wholesaler sells chairs, of course, but he likes more or less the different types etc. The tester is enthusiastic with a new model or he dislikes it. And the designer invested a lot of energy, time and emotions to create this new model.

Such personal relationships are now overlapped by the possession/ ownership dichotomy. The legal aspect, the ownership, is at a first sight quite clear, but in reality it is more complicated: In the past of our story there were three legal owners: the factory, the store, the congress company. And the designer? Here we have to distinguish between material ownership and intellectual property. Normally, if he is employed by the factory, the intellectual property belongs to the factory; if he is self-employed he can keep it. But it remains a difficult question and the answers are not the same around the world. By the way: there is a similar problem with the creator of an exhibition. Who is the real owner?

But it is the future that makes our story a fascinating one! I said that the collector removed a chair secretly for his collection (here we can consider different degrees: He stole it really or the chairs were replaced and he gave a tip to the caretaker of the congress building to get one example; or the chairs were put to the garbage where he took one from). So it is questionable if he was really the legal owner or only the possessor.

And finally the museum: It was so overwhelmed by the generosity of the donator that it didn't ask to many questions concerning the origin of the objects. Is the museum now the real legal owner or only the possessor? Let's abandon this problem for a moment and let's consider a further question: the claim for returning of the chair (now a musealium).

Who could claim it? I don't enumerate every possibility and give just some examples. The designer: because this specific model turned out to be the best congress chair since World War II. And the only still existing example is our famous chair. He argued that he was the creator and that he has the right to claim this example. (On the other hand, the furniture museum should be interested in acquiring all the sketches and models for this chair type. In other words: to have the material and the intangible part of the item.)

The tester: because he broke an arm when testing the chair. He claimed a souvenir.

The factory may claim it for their own company museum.

And the shop for a permanent showcase with famous chairs that were sold.

There are even other persons not being directly involved in the manufacturing at large who could claim it:

The National History Museum, because a famous prime minister made his first important political speech sitting on this chair.

And finally, just for a laugh, a participant at a congress. He discovered a wonderful lady making a very intelligent speech sitting on this chair. They get to know each other, fell in love, married and want to have this chair as a souvenir in their living room.

Let's get serious again! I'll deal with the legal question anew, but very shortly and on a general level only, because it is not my core question: which legal system is applicable? The actual one or the one valid when the object changed ownership (or only possession)? From whom can it be claimed? From an owner only or also from a possessor? Imagine for instance an object owned by a total disinterested rich family but (legally) possessed by a museum for centuries!

And what about a legal system considered as illegal by one side like colonialist or war rules? Here moral and ethic consideration enter the scene. And another element has to be considered on the "legal side": who is the real legal owner, when there is no recognized legal entity: a group of "chair lovers" without association, a minority group such as the "mountain people", an indigenous ethic group that is not officially recognized etc. And very important, too: to whom must the object be given back? To the state, the nation or the people? Or does it belong to "humankind"? Is the invention of "global heritage" an idea for an issue claiming a common responsibility for the future by caring of the objects where the conditions are best? That means: Constancy and stability as a kind of value. Finally: are copies, substitutes or permanent loans a possible solution?

All the claims I mentioned beforehand with respect to my famous chair are not really legal ones (I left out a possible claim of the congress centre because the situation is confused and not important for our purpose.) They concern attributed values as I mentioned them before. But there is also another aspect with respect to symbolic values: Ownership and possession too, give power. As soon as "nations" enter the scene such consideration are crucial.

Are attributes values to be considered seriously when discussing the return of heritage (I don't mention deaccessioning)? Is there a moral/ethic duty to return musealia for attributed values given by people having a specific relationship with that specific object? Can an object belong "legally" and "emotionally" to different persons? How does the factual possession for many years, even for decades and centuries, affect ownership? To whom must the object be returned, if the legal situation is unclear and if there are many different "value claims"?

And another question: can we give back intangible heritage. I am not very pleased with this term since every object has a material and an intangible side (the physical thing

and the information). Only when both sides of the coin are present it's a real museum object being part of the heritage. And finally, immateriality alone without materiality is simply not possible: every knowledge, skill etc. needs a materialization to be communicated. But the question arises: songs, dances, handicraft expertise and so on: How can we "give them back"? What do we exactly have in our collections? Musical notes, descriptions, films, etc., hence only very material elements. There may exist also local dancing groups fond of ethnic dances from another continent. Ethnologists can go to the original group and teach them what they have lost for a kind of revival. In such a case the danger may occur that they convey their own image of the reality and not the original one. Can we also give back the soul of such intangible elements? The question remains open! It's an interesting case because we don't need to return original objects; films, books, notes etc. can simply be copied, since the material part is less important (with the exception, of course, when essential objects, for instance original hand written notes etc., are under discussion).

I am well aware that my chair is not the Elgin Marbles neither a sacred tribal object. But it allowed us to tackle, to discuss some crucial museological principles.

It is of course very important for me to keep always the legal aspects of the question in mind (with all the specifications I made), but to enrich it with a general cultural context embedded in the man/thing relationship. Such a concept needs a very dynamic attitude. Legal or pseudo-legal stubbornness has absolutely no room. What I ask for is openness for each specific situation and for the understanding that the question of restitution is a very complex texture of values. Or said in one sentence: that certain objects we have in our collections may be part of the heritage of other people who want to have back their genuine tradition.

I can imagine that such consideration are much easier to understand for museum people than for political entities, governing bodies of our museums etc., which tend to hide behind more or less valuable legal arguments only. We should never underestimate prestige and power! And the difficulty they may have to admit that an earlier acquisition of an object took place in a different legal (and of course cultural context). Such reflexions are of course not valuable with respect to actual theft and illegal exportation where the legal situation is very clear.

Museum curators have an important role to play in informing their administrative supervisors. We have to say again and again: take the cultural context into consideration, be flexible! It goes without saying that we cannot deliver museological lectures, but museological arguments are quite useful as background of our arguments. And I think also that ICOM as a powerful international organization (and its Ethics Committee) should really support us in such cases, not necessary always in a very official way, but with good arguments!

But be aware: Flexibility is also asked for the demanding entity. It is important for Europeans and Americans to have ethnographic museums which contribute to a better understanding of foreign civilizations. That's why individual solutions have to be found, such as copies, permanent loans and so on.

Our symposium has the word "global" in its title: "global ethics". It is disputable if global human rights, global ethics etc. really exist. Globalization is originally an economic term, affecting of course also culture and behaviour. Such an assessment makes our duty even more complicated, since we have to understand first and then to argue within other philosophical contexts as well.

“Museums for social harmony” is the general title of this ICOM General Conference. Wonderful! Let harmony become reality too in the very important question of restitution of heritage.

I know I leave you with a lot of questions. But if not why should I have made such a presentation?!

Should I finally come back to earth now, still sitting on the same chair that was at the origin of my reflections? I don't know! I simply hope that you will remember my chair for a long time – and of course not only the chair!

À QUI APPARTIENT L'OBJET?

Martin R. Schärer

Ancien Vice-président de l'ICOM, et ancien Président de l'ICOFOM

Une intervention provocatrice qui résume le dilemme de l'aliénation et de la restitution des biens culturels, présentée à Shanghai le 10 novembre 2010, à la clôture du symposium annuel de l'ICOFOM.

À première vue on dirait une question extrêmement simple et presque bête à laquelle la réponse est simple. Mais elle est incontournable et au cœur de notre discussion.

Prenez par exemple la chaise sur laquelle je suis assis. Je la possède, mais elle ne m'appartient pas ; c'est la propriété de la société qui organise notre congrès, ou peut-être bien du gouvernement. Je ne suis que celui qui la tient, le gardien en quelque sorte tout comme les musées peuvent être les gardiens des biens d'autrui. La différence entre la possession et la propriété est très importante. En français ceci correspond à la différence entre « détention » et « propriété », en anglais entre « possession » et « ownership », en espagnol entre « posesión » et « propiedad », et en allemand entre « Besitz » et « Eigentum ». L'essentiel de la différence réside dans le fait que les seconds sont des termes juridiques, alors que les premiers ne le sont pas nécessairement¹. Cette différenciation n'est pas si claire dans toutes les langues et encore moins dans toutes les cultures. Mais c'est un point de départ intéressant pour notre discussion.

Continuons avec ma chaise. Avant d'atterrir ici elle était chez un grossiste ; avant cela dans une usine et, avant cela, dans sur un banc d'essai ou bien un atelier pilote. Et même avant cela, elle était dans l'atelier d'un créateur qui avait réalisé ce modèle parmi d'autres. En fait, une très longue histoire ! Et ceci ne se termine pas du tout aujourd'hui ! Demain il y aura d'autres gens qui vont s'asseoir sur « ma » chaise ; les possesseurs seront autres, mais le propriétaire restera le même. Et très certainement, dans quinze ans un collectionneur de chaises va l'emporter de cette salle, plus ou moins en secret, comme un exemple type d'une chaise de congrès de la première décennie du XXI^{ème} siècle. Et à la fin ce cette chaîne, disons encore quelques vingt ans après, le collectionneur fera don de sa collection à un musée d'arts décoratifs célèbre. Vous savez, les musées sont comme des casinos : ils gagnent toujours. Tôt ou tard, toutes les collections se finissent dans des musées. Je dis plutôt « finissent presque » parce que juste à ce moment les muséologues entrent en scène et les choses se compliquent. Un simple objet de tous les jours devient un véritable patrimoine culturel !

Permettez-moi d'abord de vous expliquer ce qu'il en est de la musealisation en théorie. Par l'acte de musealisation nous gardons les valeurs attribuées aux choses en tant que signes. Ce processus transforme les objets usuels en objets de musée, en « musealia ». En tant que tels ils ont acquis une nouvelle qualité : la muséalité. Il est très important d'affirmer que la musealisation est un processus réversible. Par le processus de la dé-muséalisation l'objet perd sa qualité muséale et redevient un simple objet quotidien. Prenez par exemple les « readymades » de Marcel Duchamp que l'on pourrait réintroduire dans la vie sans problème.

¹ Ils le sont en France, où la détention est, juridiquement, le « fait d'avoir l'usage (d'une chose) sans en être ni s'en prétendre le possesseur ». (note de l'éditeur)

Ainsi, sous l'aspect purement matériel et muséologique, sortir un objet de la collection et lui accorder une autre valeur ne présente pas de problème car les valeurs qu'on lui a attribuées ne lui sont pas physiquement attachées. Mais une telle affirmation ne nous aide pas beaucoup.

Examinons maintenant de plus près une autre caractéristique spécifiquement muséologique: la relation homme/objet. Nous vivons parmi trois réalités différentes au regard de notre environnement matériel. Je les nomme la vraie réalité (primaire) qui comprend toutes les choses que nous entourent. À partir de la réalité primaire il en découle deux autres (secondaires) qui existent en parallèle : la réalité imaginaire et la réalité personnelle. La réalité imaginaire comprend les choses qui sont sorties de leur contexte initial et ainsi décontextualisées et mises dans un nouveau contexte (un musée) et ainsi recontextualisées ; et finalement la réalité personnelle comprend les choses qui sont décontextualisées de l'une ou de l'autre des deux réalités et recontextualisées dans un environnement personnel. Lorsque nous faisons cela, nous pouvons dire que ce n'est que le point de vue personnel qui crée vraiment l'objet.

Toutes ces relations sont déterminées à la fois par une fonction utilitaire et par des valeurs attribuées qui ne sont jamais totalement absentes, mais sont parfois presque nulles. Des choses peuvent être gardées afin d'être réutilisée, mais cela n'est pas un sujet pour la muséologie. Ou bien nous les gardons à cause des valeurs que nous leur avons accordées. Outre leur valeur matérielle (ce qui n'est pas non plus un sujet muséologique), je distingue quatre valeurs qui représentent des valeurs idéales : l'esthétique, le souvenir, l'information (heuristique), et le symbolique.

Les choses sont muséalisées à cause des valeurs qu'on leur accorde, l'objet n'étant que le support matériel qui reste physiquement inchangé par sa transformation en objet de musée. Et ceci est la raison majeure pour laquelle l'aliénation est un affaire si compliquée.

Laissez-moi revenir en arrière avec mon histoire de chaise ! Quelle est la relation spécifique homme/objet dans notre histoire ? Très souvent il s'agit de la fonction utilitaire. Mais les valeurs attribuées à cet objet ne sont jamais absentes. Ces deux aspects sont les deux faces de la même pièce. Quelques exemples : je suis assis ici et je suis content de ne pas être debout. Mais peut-être que je vais me souvenir de cette chaise parce qu'elle n'était pas très confortable, ou bien parce que j'aimais ou n'aimais pas sa couleur et son style, ou bien je suis inquiet de l'intérêt que vous allez accorder à mon intervention.

Le grossiste vend des chaises, naturellement, mais il aime plus ou moins les différents modèles, etc. L'essayeur est enthousiaste pour un nouveau modèle, ou bien il ne l'aime pas. Et le créateur a consacré beaucoup d'énergie, du temps et du cœur dans la création de ce nouveau modèle.

Toutes ces relations personnelles se chevauchent avec la dichotomie de possession/propriété. L'aspect juridique, la propriété, semble à première vue très clair, mais en réalité elle est beaucoup plus compliquée. Dans le passé de notre histoire il y avait trois propriétaires légitimes : l'usine, le magasin de vente, et la société qui organise ce congrès. Et le créateur ? Ici nous devons différencier entre la propriété matérielle et la propriété intellectuelle. Normalement, s'il est employé par l'usine, la propriété intellectuelle appartient à l'usine, mais s'il travaille à son compte il peut la garder. Néanmoins ceci reste une question difficile et les réponses ne sont pas les mêmes partout dans le monde. Et à propos il y a un problème similaire avec le créateur d'une exposition : quel est le véritable propriétaire ?

Mais c'est l'avenir qui rend notre histoire fascinante : J'ai dit que le collectionneur a prélevé secrètement une chaise afin de la mettre dans sa collection (ici nous pouvons considérer des degrés différents de l'acquisition : il l'a vraiment volée ; ou bien les chaises ont été remplacées et il a donné un pourboire au gardien du bâtiment du congrès pour en avoir un exemplaire, ou bien on a mis les chaises aux ordures, d'où il en a tiré une). Ainsi il n'est pas certain qu'il en soit vraiment le propriétaire légal ou simplement le détenteur.

Et enfin le musée. Celui-ci était tellement impressionné par la générosité du donateur qu'il n'a pas posé trop de questions concernant l'origine des objets. Le musée, est-il devenu le véritable propriétaire légal ou bien seulement le détenteur ? Laissons un instant ce problème et considérons une question qui viendra plus loin : la réclamation pour que cette chaise (actuellement un musealium) soit restituée.

Qui pourrait la réclamer ? Je ne saurais énumérer toutes les possibilités, mais je donne quelques exemples :

- Le créateur : parce que ce modèle est devenu la meilleure chaise de salle de réunion depuis la seconde guerre mondiale. Et le seul exemple qui existe encore est notre chaise. Il soutenait que c'était lui le créateur et qu'il a le droit d'exiger qu'on lui donne cet exemplaire. (Par ailleurs, le musée des arts décoratifs voudrait acquérir toutes les esquisses et maquettes des chaises de ce type. Autrement dit : avoir la part matérielle et immatérielle de cette pièce.)
- Le essayeur: il s'est cassé un bras au cours d'un essai et voudrait en avoir un souvenir.
- L'usine, pour sone musée d'entreprise.
- Enfin, le magasin pour garnir en permanence une vitrine avec les chaises les plus célèbres qu'il a vendues.

Il y a même d'autres personnes morales, qui ne sont pas directement impliquées dans la production et la distribution, qui pourraient la réclamer :

- Le musée national de l'histoire, car un célèbre premier ministre a prononcé son premier discours important assis sur cette même chaise
- Et enfin, simplement pour nous amuser, un participant à un congrès. Il avait aperçu une dame merveilleuse faisant un discours extrêmement intelligent alors qu'elle était assise sur cette chaise. Ils ont fait connaissance, sont tombés amoureux, et se sont mariés ; maintenant ils veulent avoir cette chaise dans leur salon comme souvenir.

Redevenons sérieux. Je veux traiter à nouveau la question juridique, mais très brièvement et à un niveau seulement général, car ce n'est pas la question centrale : [ce qu'il faut savoir est] quel système juridique est en vigueur ici ? Celui que nous avons à présent ou celui qui était en vigueur au moment où l'objet a changé de propriétaire (ou seulement changé de détenteur) ? À qui peut-on le réclamer ? Seulement à un propriétaire ou aussi bien à un détenteur ? Imaginez un instant que l'objet est la propriété d'une famille riche et désintéressée, et détenu (légalement) par un musée depuis des siècles !

Et que dire d'un système juridique qui est jugé illégal par une des parties considérée comme colonialiste ou ayant appliqué les lois de la guerre ? Ici, les considérations éthiques et morales entrent en scène. Un autre élément doit être pris en compte sous l'aspect « juridique » : quel est le véritable propriétaire quand il n'y a pas d'entité juridique reconnue ? Un groupe d'amateurs de chaises sans association, un groupe minoritaire tel que « les gens de la montagne », un groupe ethnique qui n'est pas reconnu officiellement, etc ? Et, très important aussi : à qui doit-on rendre l'objet ? À l'État, à la nation, ou au peuple ? Ou bien appartient-il à « l'humanité » ? Est-ce que

l'invention du « patrimoine mondial » est un concept faisant appel à une responsabilité commune pour l'avenir, afin de prendre en charge les objets là où les conditions sont les meilleures ? Ceci veut dire que la constance et la stabilité s'ajoutent aux valeurs. Et enfin, les copies, les substituts et les prêts permanents, sont-ils des solutions possibles ?

Toutes les revendications citées plus haut ayant trait à ma fameuse chaise ne sont pas vraiment légales (j'ai omis une revendication possible de la part du centre de congrès parce que la situation est confuse et elle n'est pas vraiment utile à notre objectif). Les réclamations s'appliquent aux valeurs attribuées à l'objet telles que déjà expliquées. Mais il y a aussi un autre aspect au regard des valeurs symboliques : la propriété et la détention donnent aussi le pouvoir. Dès que les « nations » entrent en scène de telles considérations jouent un rôle décisif.

Les valeurs attribuées aux objets sont-elles sérieusement prises en compte quand on discute du retour des biens culturels (et je ne parle pas de l'aliénation) ? Y a-t-il un devoir moral et éthique qui nous oblige à restituer les *musealia* possédant des valeurs attribuées par un peuple qu'il a une relation particulière avec cet objet particulier ? Un objet peut-il appartenir « légalement » et « sentimentalement » à des gens différents ? Comment la détention effective, pendant de nombreuses années, et même des décennies, sinon des siècles, peut-elle influencer le droit à la propriété ? À qui doit-on rendre l'objet si la situation juridique et légale n'est pas claire et s'il y a plusieurs « revendications de valeur » différentes ?

Encore une question : pouvons-nous restituer le patrimoine immatériel ? Ce terme ne m'enchant pas trop parce que chaque objet a un côté matériel et un côté immatériel (la chose physique et l'information). C'est seulement lorsque les deux aspects sont présents que c'est un vrai objet de musée et qu'il fait parti du patrimoine. Finalement, l'immatérialité seule sans la matérialité n'est tout simplement pas possible : chaque savoir, chaque compétence ont besoin d'être matérialisés afin d'être communiqués. Mais la question se pose : les chants, les danses, l'expertise en artisanat, comment pouvons nous les « restituer » ? Qu'avons-nous exactement dans nos collections ? Des partitions de musique, des descriptions, des films, etc. donc seulement des éléments parfaitement matériels. Il peut exister un fonds des groupes locaux interprétant des danses ethniques d'un autre continent. Les ethnologues peuvent se rendre au groupe d'origine et leur apprendre ce qu'ils ont perdu pour une sorte de renouveau. Dans ce cas on court le risque qu'ils transmettent leur propre image de la réalité patrimoniale et non pas l'image originale. Pouvons-nous restituer l'âme de tels éléments immatériels ? La question reste ouverte ! C'est un exemple intéressant parce que nous n'avons pas besoin de restituer les objets originaux : les films, les livres, les partitions peuvent simplement faire l'objet des copies, puisque la part matérielle est moins importante (à l'exception, bien entendu, de pièces essentielles, comme des originaux de manuscrits et partitions, etc.).

Je me rends bien compte que ma chaise n'est pas un marbre d'Elgin ni un objet tribal sacré. Mais ceci nous permet d'aborder et de discuter quelques principes muséologiques cruciaux.

Il est, bien entendu, très important pour moi de toujours garder à l'esprit les aspects juridiques de notre sujet (avec tous les caractéristiques dont j'ai parlé), mais aussi de l'enrichir en ajoutant le contexte culturel dans lequel est placé la relation homme/objet. Un tel concept nécessite une attitude dynamique. L'obstination sur la légalité, ou la pseudo-légalité, n'a aucun cours ici. Ce que je demande est une ouverture d'esprit pour chaque situation spécifique et une compréhension de que la question de la restitution est un tissage très complexe de valeurs. Ou bien on peut dire en une

phrase : certains objets que nous avons dans nos collections peuvent appartenir au patrimoine d'autres peuples qui veulent revenir à leur véritables traditions.

Je peux penser que de telles considérations sont beaucoup plus faciles à saisir pour les gens de musées que pour les entités politiques, les autorités de tutelle de nos musées, etc., qui auraient seulement tendance à se cacher derrière des arguments juridiques plus ou moins valables. Nous ne devons jamais sous-estimer le prestige et le pouvoir ! Ainsi que la difficulté qu'ils peuvent avoir à admettre que l'acquisition antérieure d'un objet s'est faite dans un tout autre contexte juridique (et bien entendu culturel). De telles réflexions ne sont pas, bien entendu, valables à l'égard d'un vrai vol ou de l'exportation illégale quand la situation juridique est parfaitement claire.

Les conservateurs de musée ont un rôle important à jouer lorsqu'il s'agit de d'éclairer leurs supérieurs administratifs. Nous devons répéter encore et encore : prenez le contexte culturel en considération et, soyez souples ! Cela va sans dire que nous ne pouvons pas leur donner des cours de muséologie, mais des arguments muséologiques sont très utiles pour situer nos propres arguments. Et je pense que l'ICOM (et son Comité pour la Déontologie), en tant qu'organisation internationale éminente, devrait nous soutenir vraiment en pareils cas, pas nécessairement par des voies officielles, mais toujours avec de bons arguments !

Il faut cependant faire attention : la souplesse est aussi demandée de la part du quémandeur. Il est important que les musées européens et américains aient des musées d'ethnographie qui favorisent une meilleure compréhension des civilisations d'autrui. C'est pourquoi il faut trouver des solutions spécifiques à chaque cas, tels que les copies, les prêts permanents, etc.

Dans le titre de notre colloque, « déontologie mondiale », nous avons le mot « mondial ». On peut tout à fait discuter du fait que les droits humains, la déontologie etc., existent vraiment mondialement. La globalisation est un terme d'origine économique, et bien entendu il a une influence sur la culture et le comportement. Une telle évaluation rend notre devoir encore plus compliqué, puisque nous devons d'abord comprendre et ensuite présenter nos arguments dans d'autres contextes philosophiques.

Le titre de notre conférence générale à Shanghai est « Les musées et l'harmonie sociale ». C'est merveilleux ! Permettons à l'harmonie de devenir également une réalité dans la question importante de la restitution du patrimoine culturel.

Je sais que je vous laisse avec beaucoup de questions. Si non, pourquoi faire une telle intervention ? Devrai-je revenir sur terre, toujours assis sur la même chaise qui était à l'origine de mes réflexions ? Je ne sais pas. Mais tout simplement j'espère que vous allez vous souvenir de ma chaise pendant longtemps – et bien entendu, pas seulement la chaise !

¿A quién pertenece el objeto?

Martin R. Schärer

Ex- Vicepresidente ICOM / Ex-Presidente ICOFOM

Declaración provocativa que resume el dilema de la alienación y la restitución del patrimonio cultural, presentada en Shanghai en el marco del Simposio del ICOFOM el 10 de noviembre de 2010

A primera vista, pareciera ser una cuestión extremadamente simple, casi estúpida y muy fácil de responder. Sin embargo, será crucial para nuestra discusión central. Tome como ejemplo la silla en la que estoy sentado. La poseo, pero no me pertenece porque es propiedad de la compañía organizadora de nuestro congreso o incluso del Gobierno. Yo soy sólo una especie de custodio, del mismo modo que los museos lo son de los bienes de otros. La diferencia entre la posesión y la propiedad es muy importante. En francés, corresponde a los términos “possession” y “propriété”, en español a “posesión” y “propiedad”, en alemán a “Besitz” y “Eigentum”. La principal diferencia reside en el hecho de que los segundos términos son legales y los primeros no. Evidentemente, la distinción no es tan clara en todas las lenguas y menos aún en todas las culturas. No obstante, constituye un punto de partida interesante para nuestra discusión.

¡Sigamos con mi silla! Antes de aterrizar aquí se encontraba en un depósito mayorista; antes de eso, en una fábrica y antes aún, en un laboratorio de pruebas o bien en un taller piloto. Incluso, anteriormente, estaba en la oficina del diseñador, quien había creado este modelo específico entre otros. Sus elementos constitutivos procedían también de diferentes materias primas. Sin lugar a dudas, es una larga historia que no termina hoy de ningún modo. Mañana, otras personas estarán sentadas en “mi” silla; otros serán los poseedores, pero el propietario seguirá siendo el mismo. Y den por sentado que en quince años un coleccionista de sillas la sacará de esta sala, más o menos en secreto, como un ejemplo típico de las sillas utilizadas en los congresos de la primera década del siglo XXI. Y casi al fin de la cadena, digamos unos 20 años más tarde, el coleccionista hará una donación de su colección a un afamado museo de artes decorativas. Como saben, los museos son como los casinos ¡siempre ganan! Tarde o temprano, todas las colecciones terminan en los museos. Digo más bien “casi terminan”, porque en este momento los museólogos entran en escena y la cosa se complica: ¡un simple objeto cotidiano se transforma en auténtico patrimonio cultural!

Permítanme explicarles primero en teoría lo que es la *musealización*. Por medio del acto de *musealización* conservamos como signos los valores atribuidos a las cosas. Este proceso transforma las cosas de uso en objetos de museo, en “*musealia*”. Como tales, adquieren una nueva cualidad: la *musealidad*. Es muy importante afirmar que la *musealización* es reversible. Por medio del proceso de *demusealización*, el objeto pierde su calidad museal y vuelve a ser una simple cosa cotidiana. Tome como ejemplo los “*ready-made*” de Marcel Duchamp, que pueden ser reintroducidos en la vida sin ningún problema. En consecuencia, desde lo puramente material y museológico, no hay ningún problema en sacar un objeto de la colección y acordarle otro valor, ya que los valores atribuidos no están ligados físicamente a dicho objeto. Pero tal afirmación no nos ayuda demasiado...

Examinemos ahora de cerca otro rasgo específicamente museológico: la relación hombre/objeto. Con respecto a nuestro entorno material, vivimos en tres realidades diferentes. Llamo *primaria* a la verdadera realidad que comprende todas las cosas que nos rodean. A partir de esta realidad *primaria*, se desprenden otras dos realidades *secundarias* que existen en paralelo: la *realidad imaginaria*, que comprende las cosas que han sido sacadas de su contexto inicial y recontextualizadas en uno nuevo (el contexto del museo) y la *realidad personal* que abarca las cosas que están descontextualizadas de alguna de las otras dos realidades y recontextualizadas en un entorno personal. Cuando hacemos esto, podemos decir que el punto de vista personal es el que crea verdaderamente al objeto.

Todas estas relaciones están determinadas por una función utilitaria y por los valores atribuidos, los cuales nunca están totalmente ausentes, aunque a veces tienden a ser casi nulos. Las cosas pueden ser guardadas para volver a ser utilizadas (pero éste no es un tema para la museología) o bien, guardadas por los valores que se les atribuyen. Además de su valor material (que tampoco es un tema museológico) distingo cuatro valores ideales: el estético, la reminiscencia, el informativo (heurístico) y el simbólico.

Las cosas son *musealizadas* en razón de los valores que se les atribuyen y el objeto es solamente un soporte material que permanece físicamente inalterable en su transición a objeto de museo. Y ésta es la principal razón por la cual la *alienación* es un asunto tan complicado.

¡Permítanme volver atrás a la historia de mi silla! ¿Cuál es la relación específica hombre/objeto en las diferentes fases de nuestra historia? A menudo, se trata de la función utilitaria. Pero los valores atribuidos al objeto nunca están ausentes. Estos dos aspectos representan las dos caras de la misma moneda. Sólo algunos ejemplos para dilucidarlo. Estoy sentado aquí, feliz porque no tengo que estar de pie. Pero a lo mejor recordaré esta silla porque no era muy confortable o porque me gustaba o no me gustaba el color y el diseño, o porque estaba nervioso con respecto a la aceptación de mi discurso por parte de ustedes.

El mayorista vende sillas pero, naturalmente, le agradan en mayor o menor grado los diferentes modelos. El que realiza las pruebas de laboratorio se entusiasma por un nuevo modelo o bien le desagrada. El diseñador ha invertido mucha energía, tiempo y emociones para crear el nuevo modelo. Tales interrelaciones se encuentran ahora superpuestas a causa de la dicotomía de la posesión/propiedad. El aspecto legal, la propiedad, a primera vista está bastante claro, pero en realidad es complicado. En el pasado de nuestra historia había tres dueños legales: la fábrica, la tienda y la compañía de congresos. ¿Y el diseñador? Aquí tenemos que hacer una distinción entre la posesión material y la propiedad intelectual. Normalmente, si es un empleado de la fábrica, la propiedad intelectual pertenece a la fábrica; si trabaja por cuenta propia, le pertenece a él. No obstante, surge una dificultad y las respuestas no son las mismas en todo el mundo. De paso ¿existe un problema similar con el creador de una exhibición? ¿Quién es el propietario real?

Pero es el porvenir el que hace fascinante nuestra historia. Dije que el coleccionista sacó una silla secretamente para su colección (aquí podemos considerar diferentes grados de adquisición: realmente la robó o las sillas habían sido reemplazadas y dio una propina al cuidador del edificio del congreso para obtener un ejemplar, o habían sido tiradas a la basura y sacó una de allí). Por lo tanto, es de cuestionar si el coleccionista resulta el verdadero propietario legal o simplemente el poseedor.

Y por fin, el museo. Se sentía tan abrumado por la generosidad del donante que no hizo muchas preguntas concernientes al origen del objeto. ¿Es ahora el museo el

verdadero propietario legal o solamente el poseedor? Abandonemos este problema por un instante y consideremos un problema ulterior: el reclamo para que la silla (actualmente un *musealium*), sea restituida.

¿Quién podría reclamarla? No enumeraré todas las posibilidades, pero daré a continuación algunos ejemplos.

El diseñador, porque este modelo específico resultó ser la mejor silla para salas de congresos desde la Segunda Guerra Mundial y el único ejemplar existente todavía es nuestra famosa silla. Argumentó además que fue el creador y que tiene el derecho de exigir que se la entreguen. (Por otra parte, el museo del mobiliario podría estar interesado en adquirir todos los bocetos y maquetas realizados para lograr este tipo de silla. En otras palabras, tener la parte material e inmaterial de esta pieza).

El que realiza las pruebas, porque se rompió un brazo probando la silla, y la reclama como un recuerdo.

La fábrica la quiere para el propio museo de la empresa; la tienda para adornar una vidriera permanente con las sillas célebres vendidas.

Hay también otras personas que no están directamente implicadas en la producción ni en la distribución que podrían reclamarla:

El Museo Nacional de Historia, porque un famoso Primer Ministro pronunció su primer discurso político importante sentado en la misma silla.

Y finalmente (sólo para divertirnos), un participante del congreso que descubrió a una maravillosa señora pronunciando un discurso muy inteligente y sentada en esa silla. Se conocieron, se enamoraron, se casaron y ahora desean tener la silla en el salón de su casa como un bello recuerdo.

¡Pongámonos serios de nuevo! Voy a volver a tratar el problema legal, pero lo haré muy brevemente y sólo a nivel general porque no es el tema central. Lo que hay que saber es cuál es el sistema jurídico que rige en esta situación: el que tenemos ahora o el que estaba en vigor en el momento en que el objeto cambió de propietario (¿o sólo de poseedor?) ¿A quién reclamar? ¿Solamente al propietarios o también al poseedor? Imagine por un instante qué sucede si el objeto es propiedad de una familia rica y desinteresada y el mismo se encuentra legalmente en posesión de un museo desde hace siglos...

Y ¿qué decir de un sistema jurídico legal, considerado ilegal por una de las partes como colonialista o por haber aplicado reglas de guerra? Aquí entran en escena las consideraciones éticas y morales. Hay otro elemento que también debe ser tenido en cuenta desde el aspecto legal: ¿quién es el verdadero propietario cuando no hay una entidad jurídica reconocida?: ¿un grupo de aficionados a las sillas?, ¿un grupo minoritario como “la gente de la montaña”, ¿un grupo étnico indígena no reconocido oficialmente? Y muy importante es preguntarse ¿a quién se debe devolver el objeto? ¿Al Estado, a la nación, al pueblo o pertenece a la “humanidad”? ¿Es la invención del “patrimonio global” un concepto que apela a lograr una responsabilidad común para el porvenir, a fin de tomar a cargo los objetos allí donde las condiciones son mejores? Esto significa que la constancia y la estabilidad se suman a los valores. Y las copias, los sustitutos y los préstamos permanentes, ¿son o no soluciones posibles?

Todos las reivindicaciones mencionadas en relación con mi famosa silla no son realmente legales (he omitido la posibilidad de una reivindicación por parte del centro de congresos porque la situación es confusa y poco útil para alcanzar nuestro objetivo). Los reclamos se aplican a los valores atribuidos al objeto tales como los mencionamos anteriormente. Pero hay también otro aspecto relacionado con los valores simbólicos.

La propiedad y la posesión también otorgan poder. Desde que las “naciones” entran en escena, tales consideraciones juegan un rol decisivo.

¿Son tenidos en cuenta seriamente los valores de los atributos cuando se discute el retorno del patrimonio? (y no estoy hablando de *alienación*) ¿Existe un deber ético y moral que nos obligue a restituir los *musealia* que posean valores atribuidos por un pueblo que tiene una relación específica con ese objeto en particular? ¿Puede un objeto “pertener” legalmente y “emocionalmente” a diferentes personas? De qué manera la posesión de hecho durante muchos años, incluso décadas y siglos, afecta el derecho de propiedad? ¿A quién debe ser devuelto el objeto cuando la situación legal y jurídica no está clara y hay diferentes “reclamos”?

Todavía otra pregunta ¿podemos devolver el patrimonio inmaterial? Este término no me seduce mucho porque todo objeto tiene un lado material y otro inmaterial (la cosa física y la información). Sólo cuando ambas caras de la misma moneda están presentes, el objeto de museo es real y forma parte del patrimonio. La inmaterialidad sola, sin materialidad, es simplemente imposible. Cada saber, cada habilidad necesita una materialización para poder ser comunicado. No obstante, aquí surge otra cuestión: los cantos, los bailes, las artesanías y mucho más ¿cómo se pueden “restituir”? ¿Qué tenemos exactamente en nuestras colecciones? Partituras de música, descripciones, films... En consecuencia, sólo elementos materiales. Pueden existir también grupos de danza locales enamorados de los bailes étnicos de otro continente. Los etnólogos pueden trasladarse al grupo de origen y explicarles lo que han perdido a causa de ese tipo de *revival*. En este caso, el peligro surge cuando transmiten su propia imagen de la realidad y no la imagen original. ¿Podemos también restituir el alma de esos elementos intangibles? ¡La pregunta permanece abierta! Es un ejemplo interesante, porque no tenemos necesidad de restituir objetos originales: las películas, los libros, las partituras, etc. pueden ser simplemente copias, ya que la parte material es la menos importante (excepto, por supuesto, cuando son piezas esenciales, como por ejemplo, las notas originales escritas a mano que suelen estar en discusión).

Soy consciente de que mi silla no es parte de los Mármoles de Elgin ni tampoco un objeto tribal sagrado. Pero nos permitió abordar y discutir algunos principios cruciales de la museología.

Es muy importante para mí tomar recaudo de los aspectos legales del problema que tenemos en mente (con todas las especificaciones que he hecho) para enriquecerlo en un contexto cultural general inserto en la relación hombre/cosa. Tal concepto necesita de una actitud muy dinámica. Legal o pseudo-legal, aquí la obstinación no tiene cabida. Lo que pido es apertura para cada situación específica y para comprender que el tema de la restitución constituye una urdimbre de valores muy compleja. O dicho en una sola frase: ciertos objetos que tenemos en nuestras colecciones deberían formar parte del patrimonio de otros pueblos que desean recuperar sus tradiciones más genuinas.

Puedo imaginar que tales consideraciones son mucho más fáciles de comprender para la gente de museos que para las entidades políticas que gobiernan los cuerpos de nuestras instituciones museales, los cuales procuran dejar atrás argumentos legales más o menos valiosos. ¡Nunca deberíamos subestimar el prestigio y el poder! Ni la dificultad que tienen de admitir que una anterior adquisición de un objeto tuvo lugar en un contexto jurídico/legal diferente (y por supuesto también cultural). Es evidente que tales reflexiones no son válidas para los robos actuales ni para la exportación ilegal del patrimonio cultural en los lugares donde la situación jurídica es muy clara.

Los curadores de museos tienen un importante rol a desempeñar al informar a sus superiores administrativos. Debemos repetir una y otra vez que tengan en

consideración el contexto cultural, ¡que sean flexibles! No es cuestión de dar conferencias de museología; basta con consideraciones museológicas que sean útiles como respaldo de nuestro razonamiento. Pienso también que ICOM es una organización internacional poderosa (con su Comité de Ética) que debería dar mayor apoyo en estos casos, no necesariamente de manera oficial, pero con buenos argumentos.

Pero ¡cuidado! Tengan en cuenta que la flexibilidad es requerida por la entidad demandante. Es importante tanto para los europeos como para los americanos tener museos etnográficos que contribuyan a una mejor comprensión de las civilizaciones foráneas. Es por eso que se deben encontrar soluciones individuales tales como reproducciones, préstamos permanentes y así sucesivamente.

Nuestro Simposio presenta en su título la palabra "global": "ética global". Es discutible si los derechos humanos globales, la ética global, etc. existen realmente. La globalización es, originariamente, un término económico que afecta el curso de la cultura y el comportamiento humano. Tales acotaciones hacen nuestro deber aún más complicado, ya que primero tenemos que entender y luego argumentar, incluso dentro de otros contextos filosóficos.

"Museos para la armonía social" es el título general de esta Conferencia Trienal del ICOM. ¡Maravilloso! Dejemos que la armonía se haga realidad también en la importante problemática de la restitución del patrimonio.

Sé que los dejo con una cantidad de interrogantes. Pero si no fuera así, ¿para qué hacer una presentación como ésta? ¿Debería volver a la tierra ahora, sentado aún en la misma silla que fue el origen de mis reflexiones? ¡No lo sé! Simplemente espero que recuerden mi silla por un largo tiempo... y por supuesto ¡no solo la silla!

文物的所有權屬於誰？

Martin R. Schärer

Former Vice President of ICOM, and former President of ICOFOM

2010年11月10日國際博物館學委員會(ICOFOM)於上海舉行大會，與會者在閉幕時將文化遺產的出售與歸還這個兩難的問題摘要成這個相當發人深省的論點：文物的所有權屬於誰。

乍看之下，這個問題簡單到近乎愚蠢，要回答也沒什麼難度。但這個問題會是我們討論的重要關鍵。就以我現在坐的椅子來看，我雖然坐在這個椅子上，但椅子的所有者不是我，所有權屬於大會主辦單位或甚至政府。我只是管理或持有人，就像博物館只是為他人保管文物。持有與所有之間的差別很重要。在法文，持有是“détention”，所有是“propriété”，在西班牙文持有是“posesión”，所有是“propiedad”，在德文，持有是“Besitz”，所有是“Eigentum”。二者最大的差別是「所有」是法律詞彙，而「持有」則不是。當然，並不是所有的語言都會如此清楚區分，會如此區分的文化更少。但這樣的區分可做為我們討論的開端。

讓我繼續談我這張椅子！在這張椅子來到這裡之前，它是放在大型量販店裡，再之前是在工廠裡，再之前是在測試實驗室裡，再之前是在試做工坊裡。它是由不同原料組合而成。再之前，它是在設計師的辦公室裡，這位設計師除了這個模型，也設計了其他不同模型的椅子。我可以把這個故事一直延續下去，但今天大概會講不完。明天就會有其他人坐在「我的」椅子上，其他的持有者，但所有者沒變。而且大概再過十五年，可能就會有椅子收藏家把這張椅子拿出這個禮堂，並且把它當作是 21 世紀初期典型的禮堂用椅。最後，或許再 20 年後收藏家會把他的藏品捐給知名的傢俱博物館。誠如各位所了解，博物館就像賭場，只會贏不會輸。總有一天，所有的收藏品幾乎都會送到博物館。我說幾乎，因為博物館學家會影響收藏的過程。到博物館後，一件很簡單的物品就成為真正的文化遺產。

讓我先從理論的角度來解釋「博物館化」的意思！透過博物館化，我們以符號保留物品的附屬價值。這個過程把物品變成博物館藏品，也就是博物館文物(musealia)。物品增加了博物館文物的新特質。我們要強調，博物館化是一個可逆的過程。某個文物若被去博物館化，它便失去博物館文物的特質，而再度變回簡單的物品。以 Marcel Duchamp 的「現成品」為例，這些藏品也可以變成一般物品。

因此，從純材料以及博物館學的角度來看，把藏品拿出來重新評估是沒有任何問題的，因為物品的附屬價值並不是與物品實際連結。但這樣的論點對我們並沒有實質幫助。

接下來，我們要來仔細地審視博物館學的另一個特色：人與物的關係。我們與物質環境之間存在三種不同的現實。第一種(也是主要的)現實包含了我們周遭的一切事物。從第一種主要的現實，另外兩種現實(次要)可以平行出現：一為想像的現實，另一則是個人的現實。想像現實包含脫離原本的環境，轉移到新(博物館)環境的事物。個人現實則是包含從前面兩種現實脫離，轉移到個人環境的事物。從這個現實來看，我們可以說個人的觀點是創造物品的關鍵。

這三種關係是由使用功能與附屬價值決定，任何時候這二者都會存在，只是有時使用功能與價值會近乎零。我們可能會保存一些物品想再重新使用，但博物館學並不是以此為主題。我們可能也會因為物品的附屬價值而保存一些物品。除了物質的價值外，(雖然物質的價值也不是博物館學關心的主題)，我認為物品還有四種理想價值：審美價值、回憶價值、資訊(解釋)價值與象徵價值。

物品會因為這些附屬價值而成為收藏品。在轉變成博物館藏品的過程，物品本身的特質並沒有任何改變。這也是為什麼以博物館學的角度來看，文物的出售會變得如此複雜的原因。

再回到我這張椅子的故事。在這個故事中有不同階段，各階段間有哪些人與物的關係？通常都是使用功能。但誠如我之前所說，附屬價值也一直存在。這是一體兩面。再舉幾個例子來說明：我坐在這裡，我很高興我不需要站著。但也許我會記住這張椅子，因為它不是很舒服，或者因為我喜歡或不喜歡它的顏色或設計，或者因為我很緊張，因為主辦單位接受了我的投稿，讓我來演講。

量販商販售椅子，但他可能喜歡或不喜歡其他設計的椅子。測試者會因為新模型而感到雀躍或不滿。設計者則是花了很多精力、時間與感情來設計這個新模型。

這樣的個人關係與持有/所有的關係重疊。在法律上，所有者乍看之下很明確，但事實上卻相當複雜：在我們的故事中，過去只有三個法定所有者：工廠、商店、主辦單位。那設計者呢？在此我們就必須區分物質所有權與智慧財產權。一般而言，如果設計者是受雇於工廠，智慧財產權屬於工廠。如果設計者為自營商，智慧財產權屬於他。但這個問題還是很難回答，而且全球各地可能有不同的答案。另外，展覽的創造者也會面臨類似的問題，到是誰才是某個展覽真正的所有者？

但這個故事之所以迷人，是因為未來！我說有收藏家悄悄地把椅子納入收藏(我們可以想想悄悄有幾種不同方式：他可能把椅子偷走，或椅子替換後，他給了負責人或禮堂管理人一點錢，讓他可以把椅子搬走，或者椅子被丟到垃圾場，他去撿了一張)。所以我們很難確認到底收藏家是這張椅子的法定所有者或只是個持有者。

最後是博物館的角色。這位捐贈者如此慷慨，讓博物館雀躍不已，所以也沒有多問物品的來源。博物館現在是物品真正的法定所有者或只是持有者？我們先把這個問題放在一邊，考慮另一個問題：有人要求把椅子(現在已是博物館藏品)給他。

誰會要求要得到這張椅子？我沒辦法列出各種可能性，只能給幾個例子。

設計者：因為這個模型成為二次大戰後最好的禮堂用椅。而且這張椅子是碩果僅存的一張。他說是他設計創造了這張椅子，因此有權要求把椅子給他。(另一方面，傢俱博物館可能也很想取得這類椅子所有的設計草圖與模型。換言之，博物館不只要物品本身，也想要與物品相關的無形知識。)

測試者：因為他在測試這張椅子弄斷手臂。他要把它當成紀念品。

工廠可能會要求得到這張椅子，因為他們想把這張椅子收到自己公司的博物館內。

商店則是希望能成立一個常設展示區，展示他們曾經販售過所有知名的椅子。

其他未直接涉及椅子製造的人也可能會要求把椅子給他們。例如：國家歷史博物館，因為某位知名的總理坐在這張椅子上發表了他第一個重要的政治演講。

最後，讓各位笑一下，某位來這個禮堂參與會議的人可能也會要這張椅子。他發現有位迷人的女士坐在這張椅子上發表了一篇非常精采的演講。他們認識、相愛、結婚，因此想把這張椅子放在客廳裡做為紀念。

再回到正事！我會以全新的角度來看接下來這個法律問題，但我只能簡短且大略地分析，因為這並不是我最主要的問題：哪一種法制才適用？實際的所有權法律或物品所有權(或持有)改變才有效的法律？我們要向誰要求椅子？只能向所有者要求？或者也可以向持有者要求？假如某個物品是由一個富裕且不在乎這個物品的家庭擁有，但這個物品數個世紀以來都是由某個博物館(合法)持有，那要向誰要求？

如果法制本來就違法呢？例如殖民者或戰爭期間的法規？在此我們還必須考慮到道德的問題。另一個我們要考量的角度是何謂「法定」：如果沒有法律認可的法人團體，例如一群「熱愛椅子」但沒有成立協會的人，原住民等較弱勢的團體，沒有受到官方認可的原住民族團體等等，誰該是真正的合法所有者？另一個也很重要的問題是：若要歸還物品，應該還給誰？還給國家？或人民？或者，這個物品屬於全人類？「全球文化遺產」認為全人類都有共同的責任要保存物品，但這樣的想法真的就是最好的辦法嗎？這也就表示：恆久與穩定變成一種價值。最後一個問題：複製品、替代品或長期借展是否為可行的解決方案？

我之前針對這張知名的椅子提出的所有要求都不算是合法的要求。(我並沒有提到主辦單位也可能會提出要求，因為那個情況會使大家更困惑，而且對我們來說並不重要)這些要求都與我之前提到的附屬價值有關。但是我們也要考量到文物的象徵價值：所有權與持有都代表權力。一旦國家介入，文物的象徵意義就會變得很重要。

我們在討論歸還(而非出售)遺產時，需要考量附屬價值嗎？若博物館藏品對某些人有特定的附屬價值，博物館是否有道德責任而需把藏品歸還給這些與這件文物有特定關係的人？文物可以在「法律上」或「情感上」屬於不同的人嗎？若持有者持有這件文物許多年、數十年或數個世紀，會對所有權造成影響嗎？如果法律上的界定不明，而且又有許多不同的「價值要求」我們必須把文物還給誰呢？

另一個問題：我們能否歸還無形的遺產嗎？我對無形遺產這個詞不太滿意，因為每件文物都有有形與無形的一面(實體與資訊)。唯有具備這一體兩面的文物才能將其視為博物館藏品，且是遺產的一部分。最後，一件文物絕對不會只有無形而沒有有形的一面：不管是知識或技能都需要有形的一面才能溝通。但這又帶來另一個問題：歌曲、舞蹈、手工藝技能等東西要怎麼歸還？我們到底擁有藏品裡的什麼？樂譜、說明、影片等都是有形的東西。也許有本地舞團喜歡另一大洲的民族舞蹈。民族學家可以找到最原始的民族，教導他們這些人民已遺忘的舞蹈。這種情況可能也會有問題，因為教導者教的可能是自己認為正確的舞蹈，而不是原本的舞蹈。我們可以歸還這麼無形的元素嗎？目前這個問題是無解。這是個很有趣的案例，因為我們不需歸還原來的文物；影片、書籍、筆記等都可以複製，因為有形的一面比較不重要(不過，有些重要的文物如手稿等當然是例外)。

我了解我的椅子並不是埃爾金大理石雕也不是部落的聖物。但它讓我們可以來討論一些很重要的博物館學原則。

當然，我必須要謹記我提過的法律問題(包括所有的條件)，但更要從人與物關係中的文化背景來談這些問題。這個概念需要非常靈活的態度。我們不能執著於法律或半法律。我要求的是以開放的態度來看待每個情況，了解文物的歸還涉及非常複雜的價值網路。一言以蔽之：我們的藏品中有些文物或許是其他人的遺產，而這些人希望要回他們的傳統。

我可以想像這樣的考量對博物館人員來說比較容易理解，但政府機構以及監管博物館的機構等往往只注意到(更重要或更不重要的)法律問題。我們不能低估特權與權勢的影響力!也不能忘記權力人士很難承認他們早期曾在一個法律(與環境)都不同的情況下取得某個文物。當然若以實際的偷竊或非法出口來看,這樣的反思沒有什麼價值，因為這些活動本來就非法。

博物館策展人扮演非常重要的角色，因為他們必須要告知他們的行政長官。我們要必須不斷強調：我們要考量相關的文化背景!我們要有點彈性!當然我們不能用博物館學來說教，但從博物館學的論點可以支持我們的論點。我認為國際博物館協會(ICOM)作為一個影響力深遠的國際組織(以及其道德委員會)應該要在這種情況下支持我們。不用正式表達支持，但可以提供我們支持的論點。

我們也不能忘記：要求嚴格的機構也要有彈性。歐洲與美國都需要民俗博物館，讓他們對外國文明有更多了解。因此我們必須為每種情況找出解決辦法，例如用複製品、永久借展等。

我們的研討會在名稱上用了「全球」這個詞：「全球道德」。到底全球人權、全球道德等是否存在仍然值得商討。全球化原本是經濟詞彙，當然後來它影響到文化與人類行為。這樣的評估使我們的責任更為複雜，因為我們必須要先了解其他的哲學背景，再來爭論。

「博物館促進社會和諧」是國際博物館協會(ICOM)大會的主題!非常好!讓我們在探索歸還遺產的問題時也能實現和諧。

我知道我提出很多問題。但我如果不想提出這些問題，又何必來報告?

或許當我最後終於回到地球，我仍然坐在同一張讓我開始反思的椅子上?我不知道!我只希望各位會一直記得這張椅子，還有我提出的問題。

