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Exhibiting Europe. The Development of European narratives in museums, collections, and exhibitions is financed by the Norwegian Research Council and is hosted by the *Norwegian University of Science and Technology* in Trondheim, collaborating with the Centre for European and International Studies Research of the *University of Portsmouth* and the Institute for European Ethnology of the *Humboldt University, Berlin.* The first of its five part projects is focusing on the development of a cohesive master narrative of European Union history in current museum exhibitions. Trying to find out how national and regional museums in Europe start to integrate European and transnational history in their respective exhibitions, Wolfram Kaiser who conducts the research, visited a variety of biographical museums that are dedicated to certain figures and moments of the political integration process; such as the Museo Casa De Gasperi, the Maison de Jean Monnet, or the Adenauer-Haus. Kerstin Poehls, ethnologist from the Humboldt University on the other hand, approaches the museal representation of contemporary Europe by looking at the display of migrants as a negotiation of the borders of EU-Europe. Her aim is to approach the construction of *Europeaness* in the museum by looking beyond Europe. As the seemingly immaterial and place-less phenomenon of migration is turning into a popular theme of museal display all over Europe, she asks if the figure of the migrant in the museum is becoming the naïve fulfillment of a European dream about mobility and intercultural diversity? Furthermore, *Exhibiting Europe* has two Phd students who work with related topics. One of them is working on a specific motive of European integration history that has become a foundation myth of the EU: namely overcoming the Second World War. This work addresses our general topic by looking at a interesting phenomenon of how to represent history today: namely, by analysing the figure of the witness in contemporary European museums and exhibitions, with a special focus on War Museums and Holocaust memorials. The second PhD thesis looks at the Europeanization of Industrial Heritage Sites and the efforts to make those sites serve as vehicles both for local redevelopment as well as for transnational and interregional cooperation in Europe. Finally, the last research project within *Exhibiting Europe,* addresses the notion of a European collection and the idea of specific European objects. As we can observe the development of European narratives within the museal field, the key-question remains: which objects represent Europe today?

Hence, in the course of its research, *Exhibiting Europe* analysis whether and how the discourses about Europeanization that are going on in different disciplines at the moment manifest themselves in concrete exhibitions, affect the planning of new museums or even transform the policies of existing ones. Doing so, it becomes clear that we take the economical, political and cultural integration driven by the European Union seriously. In other words, we analyse the museal representation and construction of Europe, with two capital letters in the beginning. It goes without saying that Europe is more than the EU. At the same time we know that without *Brussels* there would be no extensive literature on Europeanization (Borneman and Fowler 1997), on Building Europe (Shore 2000) or European Cosmopolitism (Beck and Grande 2004; Delanty 2005), to name just the most prominent publications of recent years in the field. Neither would different networks exist, such as NEMO, the Network of European Museum Organisations, whose foundation was a reaction to the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. This is why also the field of Museum Studies has spotted the ongoing Europeanization as an important part of analysis in our respective field.

This field, as mentioned before, is triggered by the political and economical integration process and headed by different actors and institutions in the European Union. The EU might just be one more idea of what we call and imagine as Europe, but it is definitely the most successful idea so far. As integration proceeds contemporary and historical ideas of Europe merge. EU's institutions and Europe are not the same, but not to separate either. The construction of European culture and heritage, however, remains open – as a field of common negotiations as well as specific power relations.

Of overriding importance for our research is not only our interdisciplinary approach but even more, that we define the ongoing processes of Europeanization as a cultural practice. So far, there has been a tradition in the academic field, mainly within the disciplines of Political Sciences and Contemporary History, to conceptualize Europeanization as a "multilateral bargaining of interests' (Kaiser 2008: 28) between the national states and the EU institutions. Challenging this one- dimensional notion, we understand Europeanization as a cultural practice. This means, that we look at the intertwined moments of Europeanization. Moments, which are obviously affected by European integration, but at the same time, they run as independent cultural and aesthetic processes of their own. Museums, exhibitions and collections, in our view, are highly relevant examples of such 'moments'. They have to react to 'Brussels' and the integration process increasingly – by this, transforming the process of Europeanization and making it into a process of their own. Hence, Susan Pearce pointed out in the year of the implementation of the Maastricht treaty: 'As the Europe of the Single Act comes into being, with its legal, commercial and cultural climate, museums must be in the forefront of interpreting us Europeans to ourselves.' (Pearce 1992: 2).

There is one more important point, why exactly the institution of the museum – and not the theatre or sports culture for example – needs to be highlighted in this context. Since the musealization of Europe seems almost inevitable knowing the history of nation building in the 19th century and the role of museums in this process. That is the reason why our focus is on exhibitions and museums with a clear historical and social historical focus on the one hand – and this encompasses regional museums as well as city museums – and on ethnological museums on the other hand. We are not ignoring that natural science museums for instance are open for a re-definition that reflects the ways in which science and technology have contributed to invent Europe in terms of infrastructure, knowledge networks, consumer artefacts or global exchanges for example. Nevertheless historical and ethnological museums and exhibitions were amongst the first to actively re-direct their profile claiming to represent a specific *Europeaness* in their field. As for today they are at least more visible participants in the production of European heritage than for example science museums or art galleries. Historical and ethnological museums are an important catalyst of what Benedict Anderson (1983) has called in his canonical study the 'Imagined communities' and they actively participate in the 'invention of tradition', to quote Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (1983) who have done such important research in the field of nation building in the 19th century. In the 20th and 21st century, however, these cultural practices have been re-modelled in the light of Europe and the EU. Between the 1973 'Declaration on the European Identity' and the 2007 'Agenda for Culture', the EU turned out to describe itself more and more as a heritage project. The Agenda for Culture, to provide just one example, describes the EU as 'an unprecedented and successful social and cultural project' (Commission of the European Communities 2007). Fostering cultural integration the EU uses instruments that are structurally similar to those of nation-building processes. The display of European integration history in the museal field seems central to the

cultural politics of European integration that could be observed over the last years. Hence, museums, collections, and exhibitions are supposed to serve as catalysts for social cohesion and identity formation on a European or transnational level. We observe to some extend that museums became exploited in the name of Europe and it remains to be examined whether the museums of the 21st century are able to foster this level of integration or whether the impact of museums is highly overestimated these days.

Whatever the answer to this question may be, any museum representing the history and histories of European integration has the potential to be an important forum for defining a common European heritage and *Europeaness* not as a national, but as a trans- and supranational culture and identity. What we can observe respectively is a certain need for a cultural valorisation and institutionalisation of the idea of an integrated Europe. Let me give you some brief examples, some of which you might already know. For more than ten years, prominent members of intellectual and political elites have been fostering the idea of a *Musée de l'Europe* in Brussels which is supposed to become 'the "place of memory' that Europe needs' (www.expo-europe.be). Following two temporary exhibitions in 2001 and 2006, the *Musée de l'Europe* has opened its first prominent exhibition in October 2007, celebrating fifty years of the *Treaties of Rome*: 'It's our history!', opened in the Brussels event centre *Tour & Taxis*. This exhibition – travelling to other European cities like Wroclaw in spring 2009 – should form the nucleus of a future permanent exhibition, which is to represent the history of European integration in the *longue durée*. It seems more and more doubtful that there will ever be such a museum. Having lost its prospective location to the European Parliament (EP), which in 2007 decided to use the space for its own *Visitors' Centre* (Charléty 2007; Mazé 2008), the *Musée de l'Europe* might never pass its planning phase.

There are more reasons to believe that the *Musée de l'Europe* will remain a single exhibition rather than become a permanent museum. Its idea of displaying the history of European integration has now been adopted by a more prominent and powerful player. In late 2008 the European Parliament decided to set up a *House of European History* which is supposed to open in Brussels in 2014. Hans-Gert Pöttering, the former president of the EP and one of the driving forces behind the project has observed that, the *House of European History* should 'help promote an awareness of European identity' (www.europarl.europa.eu/news/). The model for this new project is the German *Haus der Geschichte* in Bonn and Leipzig, whose president, Hans Walter Hütter, has chaired the first expert committee for the *House* in Brussels. The representation of history, European history in this case, continues to be a project of the political elites.

Outside of the EU milieu projects negotiating a contemporary idea of Europe have had their difficulties, just as the *Musée de l'Europe* did. In Aachen the *Bauhaus Europa* a cultural centre that aimed to show the history of ideas of Europe was rejected by a referendum in 2006. In Turin the projected *Muséion de l'Europe* was immediately turned down by the authorities, whereas the highly acclaimed 'post-national museum' (Rogan 2003: 46) in France, the projected *Musée des Civilisations de l'Europe et de la Méditerrané* (MuCEM) in Marseilles, has struggled for political and economic reasons for a long time. It might now come into existence due to the proclamation of Marseilles as *European Capital of Culture* in 2013. What remains seems to be the digital platform *Europeana*. However, *Europeana* does not answer the question what kind of European culture they presented by the help of a virtual platform that gathers all sorts of objects that are originally defined as national heritage.

These are just some spotlights and they could certainly be complemented. However, they show that representing contemporary European history in the museum is a highly contested field. First of all our research reveals that we are still some steps away from the implementation of European narratives in contemporary exhibitions. But we can work – both academically and practically – with this mismatch. Taking into account the gap between ambition and the reality of a specific *Europeaness* in the museal field, the development of European narratives in museums, collections and exhibitions appears as follows:

First, the integration of Europe within the economic, political and cultural framework of the EU influences the museal field on a large scale – but can barely be found in the actual museal content until this day. We observe the emergence of European museum networks (for example *The Museums of Europe* network founded in 2000 or *NEMO*); we experience various re-definitions from 'national' to 'European' museums (for example, *Museum für Europäische Kulturen* Berlin, former *Museum für Volkskunde or the MuCEM* in Marseille, former *Musée National des Arts et Traditions Populaires*) as well as a growing cultural self-representation of EU institutions (as in the new European Parliament *Visitors' Centre*, and the projected *House of European History*).

Second, reaching out for Europe within the museal field is still a central European process, limited as it seems to a small number of nations. It is by no means arbitrary that two core countries behind the economic and political integration process, France and Germany, are striving hard to overcome national fragmentation by cultural Europeanization. Together with the Benelux countries and Italy they appear to form the nucleus of a forthcoming European narrative within the museal field while for Eastern Europe or Scandinavia, for example, the contemporary focus on a European perspective appears rather remote.

Third, as if the vanishing nation state wanted to claim for itself a last memorial, we observe the emergence of national history museums in recent times. Poland, the Netherlands, Austria and France have all revealed their plans for all-encompassing history museums that should reinforce their respective national identities – even though these projects differ considerably.

Finally and more generally Europeanization today appears as a code for modernisation. Europeanization is used in politics, economics, and culture as well as in the academic field in times of reformation. Europeanization aims at futurity, it is a term that implicitly strives to overcome both past and presence in order to modernise the respective fields. In this sense it is more than just 'a spirit, a vision and a process' speaking with words of Borneman and Fowler (1997: 510) and it is something more specific than a hybrid process between Globalisation, Regionalisation and Nationalisation. As a code for modernisation, Europeanization means, what Reinhart Koselleck (1989) has called an 'Erwartungsbegriff; i.e. an anticipation with a specific quality. If we conceptualize the term in this way, we as researchers and we as the public, have the chance to acknowledge and reflect *our* role in the ongoing process of Europeanization. Whenever the concept Europeanization is used, the aim is to modernise or even transcend the existent situation. This is why we can find the idea of Europeanization in all sorts of field, not at least in the museum. Bjarne Rogan and Camille Mazé have demonstrated that the Europeanization of the *Museum für Volkskunde* and the *Musée National des Arts et Traditions Populaires* was embedded in the process of modernizing the idea of the ethnological museums and the discipline of ethnology in both France and Germany since the Seventies. 'The old national project – it is claimed – has no future; the museums have to expand in time and space, to Europe and adjacent areas, and bring history into dialogue with the present' (Rogan 2003: 47). Similarly, Kurt Imhof (2008) describes the ongoing

Europeanization of the museal field as a process which is producing 'Zukunftsmuseen'; meaning museums for the future that – in his view – are supposed to produce a European public; are supposed to develop reflexivity as part of the museal display; and finally are supposed to foster a democratic Union (Imhof 2008: 59). This might be a highly idealistic vision but it reveals that the concept of Europeanization is used whenever one tries to voice clear expectations for the future.
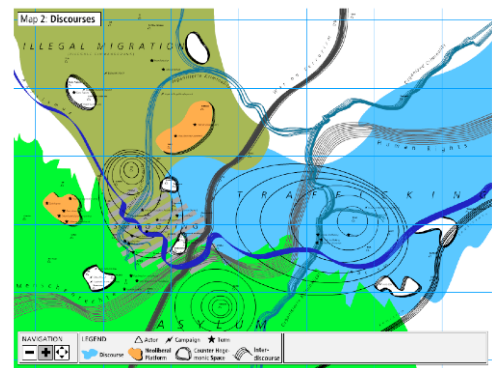
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Confusing Maps and the Contested Role of Objects in Museal Representations of Migration into and within Europe

The seemingly immaterial and place-less phenomenon of migration is turning into a popular theme of museal display all over Europe – a process that we might interpret as an attempt to self-reflexivity by which European museal institutions and societies *cosmopolitise* themselves, forced to do so by the ever-increasing importance migrants and their practices gain in Europe and for the process of Europeanization (Beck 2007, Delanty 2005). Something that struck me when I turned my attention to the aesthetic and narrative strategies used by exhibitions on migration is the tension when it comes to meaning and relevance of objects, „things", or „stuff" as key elements of museal representation: When talking to curators and museum staff, there was often put a passionate emphasis on the role of objects. To be more precise: on either the necessity of their absence or on the importance of their presence in a show on migration. For very different reasons, three-dimensional objects seem to be utterly problematic for some, while they are indispensable (unabdingbar) for others. In exhibitions where curators opt against turning things from migrants everyday life into museal objects, photography, maps or contemporary art often took the *3d part*.

The starting point for my research is the understanding of Europeanization as something circular – as 'both cause and effect of itself' (Borneman and Fowler 1997: 488). An *implicit* understanding of Europe is what I am interested in when scrutinizing displayed objects and narrative strategies in exhibitions on migration. The museal space has always been as tightly linked to the emergent nation state as it is to a universalist world view. And collection strategies are still overwhelmingly

based on settledness, i.e. on placing things. But what about objects in the context of migration then?

We might, at least for a moment, see objects as "fundamental provocations": „[T]he thing functions as fundamental *provocation* – as that which, in the virtuality of the past and the immediacy of the present cannot be ignored – [but] it also functions as a *promise*, as that which, in the future, in retrospect, yields a destination or effect, another thing. [...] The thing is the point of intersection of space and time, the locus of the temporal narrowing and spatial localization that constitutes specificity or singularity."[i] So what might the promising provocation be about...?

Be it *in situ* or *in context (*Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1993): For very different reasons, three-dimensional objects seem to be fundamental for some, while they are superfluous for others. In exhibitions where curators opt against turning things from migrants everyday life into museal objects, photography and artwork or the display strategies themselves oftenly have a main part to play. This was the case in exhibitions such as *L'essenza/assenza dei confini* (Turin 2009) which was on display in Turin at the Museo Diffuso. Here, recent as well as historical photographs by journalists where used to contrast the physical vanishing of borders in the Schengen area with the prison-like situation of migrants in one of Italy's largest detention centre in the outskirts of Turin. Although the protagonists of the exhibition expose their possessions to the photographers gaze and thus to the exhibition audience, the decision to abstain from three-dimensional object prevents an atmosphere of contemplation (no "epistemic object"...) and adds to a sense of urgency which characterizes the show.

For *Crossing Munich* curators chose a different aesthetic strategy. They initiated cooperation between artists and ethnographers at a very early stage. Although cliché objects of migration do occur here – such as those bags and suitcases you all have seen before –, they do so as part of a larger installation and narration. We may interpret this as an ironic side blow towards all those shows where suitcases still are considered an adequately subtle and metaphorically elegant hint at the complexities of migration.

Rather, they might confront the visitor with his or her expectations of what migration an Europe "looks like". *Crossing Munich* makes visible how the city of Munich has been changed and shaped by incoming migrant. Curators mute the perspective: Migration is being deciphered in its own logics, and consequently the exhibition

highlights the creative strategies migrants develop when confronted with bureaucracy or an infrastructure not responding to their needs.
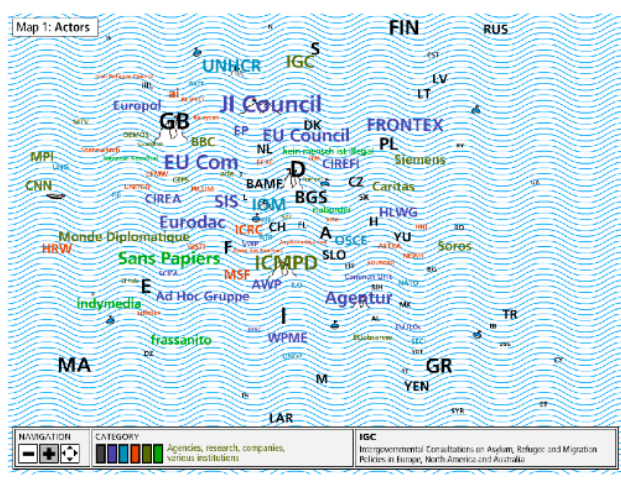
Walking through and under a giant mobile, sized 4x4 meters, we are taken into the invisible structures of an informal "grey" bus station in the outskirts of Munich. From there, commuting bus shuttles to the Balkans depart. For the German context, this approach had been established by *Projekt Migration* (Köln 2005) where heated debates occurred precisely because of the absence of classical museal objects – while more abstract (art)work became the quintessence of the whole project. This meant a move away from earlier exhibitions such as *Fremde Heimat* at Ruhrlandmuseum Essen (1998), and from what we may see in smaller community museums or in some showcases at the French national immigration museum in Paris, *CNHI*.

In those displays, objects more often than not symbolize e.g. migrant workers' contribution to economic growth and cultural enrichment, and they hint at successfully accomplished integration. The educational or enlightening function of such objects seems obvious – but at the same time, acting as a replacement, a book, or ring, the famous suitcase or a music instrument "appear[s] as static object of disinterested contemplation" (Ingold), evoking nostalgia rather than becoming an "epistemic thing" (Korff 2005), i.e. as one that raises question.

Tim Ingold suggests instead "to invert idea and movement, to see the movement as truly generative of the object rather than merely revelatory of an object that is already present, in an ideal, conceptual or virtual form, in advance of the process that discloses it." He suggests to "bring the products of human activity back to life, to restore them to the processes in which they, along with their users are absorbed". (Ingold 2000, see Candlin/Giuns 2009, p. 88)

Similar to tha maps produced for *Projekt Migration*, the research project and exhibition *Migropolis. Venice / Atlas of a Global situation* (Venice 2009) explores the real and the imagined streets of Venice. *Migropolis* portrays the city and its inhabitants as an emblem for the interrelation between global economy, tourism, geopolitics, migratory movements and individual pursuit of happyness. Maybe, Ingolds idea – to focus on the movement as prior to the object – goes hand in hand with the ethnographic turn in the arts which we have been able to observe for quite some years. It might also contribute to an increasing interest for maps as a medium not for assuring world views, but as a source of confusion.

The exhibitions I have been able to see and to analyse so far suggest that it is the difficulty to display *processes* that ignites debates on the need for or rejection of objects. At the same time, it seems more and more difficult NOT to tell the various stories of migration as a process where structures and individual or collective agency are interrelated.

European exhibitions on migration might reveal a competitive relation between temporary exhibitions and "classical" museums that have their own collections. Many collections, heritage sites and archives are now brushed against the grain (see e.g. *Kreuzberg Museum* in Berlin, heritage sites and archives in the UK, SAMDOK in Scandinavia) in a quest for the migration dimension in all kinds of objects. In the meanwhile, temporary exhibitions appear to be more versatile an – quite understandably – less attached to objects as such. Currently, they manage to drive museums in front of themselves, asking for reflexivity and a broadened understanding of both national and European history.

Migration turns into a phenomenon accepted as an essential feature of today's European societies and their histories. Exhibitions and museums on migration, then, are "Zeigewerke des Zeitgeistes" (demonstrations of Zeitgeist) as Walter Benjamin famously put it. More often than not this makes their line of argumentation, narrative strategies and "outcome" predictable. Their implicit norms turn the exhibition installation into what I would like to call a "Zeigewerk der Zugehörigkeit" (demonstrations of belonging, implying sometimes integration as a norm and pedagogical aim), unfolding their potential in the "expanded" museal universe (MacDonald 2006).

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[i] *Elisabeth Grosz*: The Thing. In: *Fiona Candlin, Raiford Guins* (Hrsg.): The Object Reader, Abingdon 2009, hier S. 125.