

**Dissolving Boundaries:  
Museological Approaches to  
National, Social and Cultural Issues**

**ICME-ICOM Annual Meeting  
Banz Monastery  
Bad Staffelstein, Germany  
October 2-5, 2011**



**International Committee of Museums of  
Ethnography  
International Council of Museums  
<http://icme.icom.museum>**

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in collaboration with  
ICOM Germany  
University of Bamberg

## Welcome

Places – times – people are the cornerstones of a conference. When they are in harmony, everything takes its course. The program gives structure to the meeting and contributions lead to the cognitive and mental involvement of participants. These are the secret wishes of the organizers that plans will become reality. In this sense, welcome to the Annual Meeting of ICME/2011 at Banz Monastery in Upper Franconia, Germany. The preparation time has been unusually short. With the help of all, we finalized it in eight months with enthusiasm and certainty that our goals would be reached. We hope that everyone coming from around the world will be inspired and will communicate the results while bringing together questions about material culture and its expressive witness.

“Dissolving Boundaries” and the museological approaches, is especially valid in Upper Franconia as in other German regions. The topic is even more powerful here because of the history of the past decades, especially after August 13, 1961, when the wall bisected Germany. We are reminded of the fall of the wall in 1989 and the unification of the two German states in 1991 annually on National Day, October 3. The disaster of World War II has taken a long time to dissolve artificial boundaries. Yet they still exist, often hidden as traces in memories. How do we make them visible in exhibitions for all of our visitors?

This aspect of German history was the impetus for developing the conference theme for ICME/2011. But there are more examples of borders from all over the world. The reasons for boundaries might be different including national, social, and cultural issues. They exist on innumerable levels. We will see what the presentations reveal and we will discuss and think about the roles of ethnographic museums in dissolving boundaries. At least, we will consider if human beings also need them to live, as a philosopher explained briefly, “So, what is about the matter of dissolving boundaries?”

Bamberg, September 2011

**Bärbel Kerkhoff-Hader**

**Dear colleagues of ICOM ICME,**

It is my pleasure and honour to be here with you today in Bad Staffelstein for the annual meeting of ICOM's International Committee for Museums and Collections of Ethnography. I thank you for your kind invitation and extend warm greetings to all participants and especially to our kind hosts at the Banz Monastery, a historically significant abbey that was founded just under a millennium ago.

ICME deals with museums of many names: museums of ethnography, ethnology, anthropology, folk museums, popular culture museums, völkerkunde- and volkskundemuseums. The conference theme, *Dissolving boundaries. Museological approaches to national, social and cultural issues*, is at the heart of the preoccupations of those working in ethnographic museums, and particularly ICME. This committee is very tuned in to the challenges facing ethnographic museums and collections in a changing world, and has developed many constructive activities in this vein, including successful annual meetings in Vienna, Jerusalem and Seoul and a joint session with the International Committee for Exhibition Exchange (ICEE) in which the speakers addressed the topic of exchanging meaning.

This ICME gathering highlights the energy that exists among ICOM's International Committees. The number of sessions organized and stimulating themes chosen is an inspiration.

I have no doubt that the following four days of workshops, presentations, study visits and work group meetings will offer plenty of opportunities to learn, share ideas and make useful contacts. I hope that many of you will also have the opportunity to discover the Bavarian region and its many cultural attractions. I would like to thank you once again for allowing me to be part of this great occasion for the ICME community. I wish you a fruitful and enjoyable conference!

Hans-Martin Hinz  
**ICOM President**

## Greetings

Annually, the International Committee of Museums of Ethnography convenes; speakers working with current topics and issues facing museum ethnographers assemble to share ideas. The last time we had the opportunity to meet in Germany was in 1994 to celebrate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ethnological Museum of Leipzig.

Each year, the host of the conference chooses a topic to be discussed. In 1994, it was “xenophobia.” This year’s central theme of “borders” is not so far from the previous discussion, although twelve years latter it is much more broad. From the museum perspective, each of these subjects can be posed as challenges to museum practices and museum personnel. Challenge is an overarching subject being addressed by a new working group of ICME and runs through the presentations in this year’s meeting.

Conceiving of and organizing a conference of this nature is not an easy task. Long-time ICME member, Dr. Baerbel Kerkhoff-Hader, took it on with enthusiasm. She identified a location which will promote thoughtful discussions and interactions – the backbone of ICME. Added to the serious work, provided by the speakers, is a day of excursions to see local museums which address issues related to the annual theme. She has also, in the best ICME tradition, organized engaging pre- and post-conference tours. In addition, Dr. Kerkhoff-Hader has brought a number of sponsors to the table, without which the meeting would not be running as smoothly. Thanks to all of the sponsors of ICME/2011/Banz Monastery and even more thanks to Dr. Kerkhoff-Hader for all of her energy and hard work.

**Annette B. Fromm, Ph.D. President  
International Committee of Museums of  
Ethnography**

## **SUNDAY, October 2**

18.00            **Dinner**

19.00 – 21.30   **Welcome: Opening Session**

### **Introductions**

Professor Dr. Heidrun Alzheimer, University of Bamberg,  
Chair of European Ethnology and Dean of Study Affairs  
(Faculty of Cultural Studies)

Professor Dr. Baerbel Kerkhoff-Hader, University of  
Bamberg, European Ethnology

Dr. Annette B. Fromm, President, ICME; Florida  
International University

### **Round Table with invited guests**

*Chair, Dr. Baerbel Kerkhoff-Hader*

Dr. Hans Martin Hinz, President, ICOM  
German Museum of History, Berlin

Dr. Matthias Henkel, ICOM Germany board member;  
Director, Nuremberg City Museums

Dr. Michael Henker, Chairman of the Central Office of  
the Bavarian Non-state Museums, München

Professor Dr. Guenter Dippold, Director of Cultural  
Affairs, District Government Upper Franconia, Bayreuth

Professor Dr. Konrad Vanja, Director Museum of  
European Cultures, Berlin

### **Cocktails**

**MONDAY, October 3**

**09.00 – 09.10 Introduction, ICME President**

**09.10 – 10.30 Session I : Challenging Borders and Boundaries**

*Per Rekdal, Chair*

*Dr. Beate Wild, Encounters – A Double-Exhibition about Identities in a Tri-border Region*

*Mari Mathiesen, Who is shooting? On Teaching Youth about Complex Ethnicity*

*Martin Earring, Do All Indian Live in Thipis?*

*Challenging Antiquated Indigenous American*

*Stereotypes Through Informal Museum Education*

*Discussion*

**10.30 – 10.50 Coffee break**

**10.50 – 12.10 Session II: Indigenous People and Society**

*Paulina van der Zee, Chair*

*Larlee Brahma, Change in Cultural Dynamics and Challenges for Museum: A Case Study in North East India*

*Martin Tindi, Challenging the Museum: Role and Relevance in Contemporary society*

*Ekaterina Teryukova, The State Museum of the History of Religion as a Space for Dialogue*

*Discussion*

**12.10 – 14.00 Lunch – Banz Monastery**

**14.00 – 15.20 Session III: Objects and Identity**

*Zvezdana Antos, Chair*

*Paulina van der Zee, Shifting Meanings and Multilayered Identities*

*Pekka Virtanen, Between Art and Science: Borders of the Forest*

*Dr. Jongsung Yang, Ethnographic Museum uses National and International Cultural Materials of Shamanism in Korea*

*Discussion*

**15.20 – 15.40 Coffee break**

**15.40 – 17.20 Session IV: Breaking Out of the old and Into the Present**

*Matthias Beitzl, Chair*

*Tony Candon, Breaking into the present: from traditional folk museum to addressing boundaries at the National Museum of Ireland – Country Life*  
*Per Rekdal, "Cultures are good and regimes are bad" – what if museums were run by political scientists and journalists instead of ethnologists and educators?*

*Luca Basso Peressut, Mariella Brenna, Gennaro Postiglione, European Museums and Libraries in/of the Age of Migrations (MeLA)*

*Discussion*

**18.00 – 19.00 Dinner – Banz Monastery**

**19.00 – Leisure time**

**Films**

*Almanya. Welcome to Germany.* Germany 2011  
(English subtitles)

A film about a Turkish migrant family in Germany, written by Yasemin and Nesrin Samdereli, two sisters.

*Alienated in Germany.* Germany 1995  
(English subtitles)

An award-winning film, about 20th century borders in German society.

*\*ICME Board meeting*

**TUESDAY, October 4**

**09.00 – 22.00 Excursion “At the Border of Upper Franconia”**

a. Marktredwitz: The Egerland Museum, a museum of displaced people and refugees of Czechoslovakia and the new “Euregio Egrensis,” a ‘region in Europe’



- b. Selb-Plössberg: The European Museum of Porcelain, a museum complex at the border (Germany/Bavaria – Czechoslovakia/ Bohemia)
- c. Töpen-Mödlareuth: The German-German Museum, a museum on the former border between DDR and BRD

Dinner in a Franconian village  
Return to the Banz Monastery

### **WEDNESDAY, October 5**

#### **09.00 – 10.20 Session V: Telling Stories**

*Mihai Fijor*, Chair

*Gianluigi Mangiapane & Anna Maria Pecci*, Cultural empowerment and civic responsibility in a collaborative and non-hierarchical display

*Martinus Dery*, Analysis of Application of Story Line In the Museum of Traditional Indonesia

*Laurie Kalb*, Secrets and Lies: The Mouth of Truth in the Piazza della Bocca Verita, Rome

*Discussion*

#### **10.20 – 10.40 Coffee break**

#### **10.40 – 12.00 Session VI: New Means of Communication, New Ways for Community Involvement**

*Yang Jongsung*, Chair

*Chao-Ling Kuo*, Jennifer Shannon, Li Tzu.ning, Dissolving Boundaries through Online Collaborative Museology: Connecting Museums and Communities East and West through the *iShare* Project

*Tone Cecilie Karlgard*, “Every day is party” celebrations-tools for tearing down boundaries?

*Dinah P. Guimaraens*, Dissolving Boundaries at the Guarani Living Museum, Camboinhas, Brazil

*Discussion*

#### **12.00 – 12.15 Summary – ICME President**

#### **12.30 – 13.30 Lunch – Banz Monastery**

## **ABSTRACTS**

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Larlie Brahma (India)

### **Change in Cultural Dynamics and Challenges for Museum: A Case Study in North East India**

Cultural dynamics are reflected through tangible and intangible cultural properties when they face stress and strain due to changes in situations. Cultural dynamics are covertly expressed in many cultural elements that govern the way of life of the people. Such dynamics need to be represented in museums dealing with the lifestyles of the people and the manner in which they are represented is a matter of great concern.

In this paper, an attempt is made to understand the cultural dynamics among the tribal people of North Eastern India, especially how a particular cultural element meets the challenges of change and how it adapts to changing situations. All of these concerns will be examined looking into the social and cultural milieu of selected tribal groups. In addition, the objective of this paper is to determine how ethnographic museums of North Eastern India represent cultural dynamics within the museum functions, re-creating and interpreting them in their overall presentation and communication.

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Tony Candon (Ireland)

### **Breaking into the present: from traditional folk museum to addressing boundaries at the National Museum of Ireland – Country Life**

The National Museum of Ireland – Country Life is the national folk museum of the Republic of Ireland and is a branch of the National Museum of Ireland. When it opened to the public in 2001, its opening was the culmination of decades of campaigning for the establishment of a national folk museum. It is my contention in this paper that, although it has been hugely successful in attracting visitors and garnishing a very positive public response, in its present incarnation it is essentially an historical museum based on an ideological outlook of the late nineteenth – early twentieth century.

Irish society has gone from being largely mono-cultural to multi-cultural and multi-ethnic in a very short space of time. In a number of recently undertaken projects, the Museum has begun to look beyond the confines of its founding and has identified further areas to address: both more contemporary issues, generally, and also areas of exclusion. One of the recent projects focused on the lives of Irish Travellers; another project dealt with a multi-ethnic group of asylum seekers; both resulted in exhibitions.

My paper will explore these projects. It will also look at how the Museum can address other areas of contention and exclusion such as the Magdalene Laundries, where 'fallen' women and girls were sent if they were deemed sexually promiscuous, when they became pregnant out of wedlock and where they were treated abominably until the 1970s, and reformatories run by various religious orders for the incarceration of teenage offenders, again into the 1970s. These, of course, are not the only areas, but they still resonate and are problematic in contemporary Ireland.

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Martinus Deny (Indonesia)

Stella Rika, Rendy Hartanto, Yesica, Nopieter Wijaya (Indonesia)

### **Analysis of Application of Story Line In the Museum of Traditional Indonesia**

Indonesia is an archipelago which has many ethnic groups and a traditional richness of variety. Each region has the characteristics of different cultures, such as: traditional clothing, traditional weapons, traditional dance, and traditional toys. All of these artifacts should be stored and treated well and properly for the next generation to recognize and know the culture of their origin. The museum is one place to store all these artifacts, but there are always problems in the museum design in Indonesia, for example in the application of the story line in a traditional museum.

The application of the story line is also important in the design of a museum, because through the story line we learn history from artifacts. The story line provides the meanings in detail and visitors can understand the meaning of core artifacts on display.

Many people come to museums in Indonesia, but they do not understand the meaning of the contents of the museum. Thus, the museums are only mere tourist attractions which will eventually be forgotten. This paper will raise questions about the application of story line so that visitors coming to the museums understand the essence of the contents.

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Martin Earring (USA)

### **Do All Indian Live in Thipis: Challenging Antiquated Indigenous American Stereotypes Through Informal Museum Education**

This paper explores the re-construction of the National Museum of the American Indian's Resource Center and its new purpose of addressing stereotypes of Native North American Indians through informal education for young children, ages six through twelve. I will examine how the museum, a museum which is an advocate for Indigenous perspective, views antiquated perceptions of American Indians and how those stereotypes today are challenged. In the planning stages, the revamped Resource Center is asking questions such as:

- Why would children want to wear Native North American a warbonnet or headdress?
- Why do children want to sit inside a Northern Plains indigenous dwelling (e.g. thipi)?

Some indigenous peoples would view these physical acts (e.g. dressing up in indigenous traditional clothing/regalia) as racist and insensitive activities. Resource Center planners are exploring how museum practice can informally educate children about outdated stereotypes of the United States Indigenous populations, which are alive and striving in the contemporary modern world. Where is the balance to be found between these two groups: the museum the patrons, who are interested in learning about the multifaceted and culturally-evolving indigenous peoples who inhabit the United States, and the Indigenous groups themselves. I will examine these questions. This paper should prove useful to indigenous-themed museums and museums that choose to informally educate the public about North American Indigenous peoples.

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Dinah P. Guimaraens (Brazil)

**Dissolving Boundaries at the Guarani Living Museum, Camboinhas, Brazil**

The museum is perceived as a fragmentary space, where cultural and political representations of relations established among different groups and social categories are staged. The contribution of anthropology to the field of museology can be achieved through the elaboration of self-awareness with respect to cultural articulation applied within museums, by decoding social hierarchies prevalent in such institutions.

Museological objects are part of a communication system, through which individuals, groups and social categories may exchange information pertaining to their *status* and social positions. These objects do not demarcate precise positions and identities, but really produce the way through which indigenous individuals and social groups experience systems of identity and *status*. The intercultural dialogue derives from the capacity of each culture to propose itself as the life form that everyone within its grasp will take for granted. Cross-cultural communication focuses on a dialogical space within an anthropological, architectural, and territorial assessment of indigenous cultures.

Several ethnic groups throughout Brazil are creating living museums, thus revealing how indigenous populations are really eager to integrate and participate as common citizens in Brazilian society. A new indigenous museum in Brazil derives from a participative posture that allows real Indians to become members of staff as curators, docents and even builders.

The Guarani Living Museum aims at increasing public visits to Tekoa Itarypu, Camboinhas. By generating indigenous jobs the museum allows social inclusion, as well as preservation and dissemination of the Guarani culture.

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Laurie Kalb (USA/Italy)

**Secrets and Lies: The Mouth of Truth in the Piazza della Bocca Verita, Rome**

During the Medieval period Virgil, the grand poet who was a contemporary of Augustus, became the protagonist of a series of legends. The importance given to his works made him rise in the medieval visionary imagination as a wizard who made enchanted palaces, talking heads and mysterious machines. Rome's "Mouth of Truth," a stone slab in a human likeness believed to severely punish those who tell lies, if they put their hand in its gaping mouth, is believed to have been Virgil's invention.

Located in central Rome, along the Tiber River, on the porch of the Byzantine Church of Our Lady in Cosmedin, also the site of a pre-Roman altar to Hercules built by Arcadians, the "Mouth of Truth" is tied to even more ancient tales about oaths made by immigrant merchants in a nearby cattle market. Hercules was connected to these pledges, which thus gave birth to many other legends about this area of Rome. Today, the "Mouth of Truth" is among Rome's most heavily visited tourist sites. Large travel coaches carrying thousands of international visitors line the street in front of the slab as visitors with cameras wait on long lines to place their hands in the "Mouth of Truth" and be judged by this legendary lie detector. No matter that the "Mouth" is presently believed to have once been a drain cover depicting the face of a river god. Surrounding the "Mouth of Truth" is not only an important Byzantine church, known for its sumptuous décor, but also two of Rome's most ancient structures, a Roman temple to the river god Portunus and another round temple to Hercules.

Long undergoing significant restoration by the Special Superintendent of Archaeology in Rome, the two temples will open to the public in the fall of 2011, offering an additional tourist draw. Anticipating heightened visitor attention to the area, this paper examines historical and contemporary legends that surround the "Mouth of Truth," and contemplate whether its presence will enhance or detract from future visitor appreciation of two newly opened historic Roman monuments.

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Tone Cecilie Karlgård (Norway)

**“Every day is party” celebrations - tools for tearing down boundaries?**

Creating and strengthening the role of the museum as an arena for intercultural dialogues is important, challenging and gratifying, especially within a museum that houses old, colonial, ethnographic collections. The museum as “Contact Zone” - the challenges and values of participation will be discussed in this paper.

The international day of the Roma-people, the traditional Japanese Hanami day, The Day of the Dead in Mexico, the national Independence Day in DR Congo – these and other events are celebrated internationally - as well as in the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo (KHM). Through cooperation over several years with the associations of the Congolese people in Norway, the Roma and others, these celebrations may be experienced as tools for dissolving boundaries between the majority and the minority groups. Establishing awareness of the old, national institution as a place that belongs to and welcomes all, is another value achieved and a “border” torn down. To have the museum host the celebrations for groups that have experienced discrimination in Norwegian society over centuries is valuable in the ongoing work for a more diverse and inclusive society.

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Chao-Ling Kuo (Taiwan), Jennifer Shannon (USA),  
Tzu-ning Li (Taiwan)

**"Dissolving Boundaries through Online Collaborative Museology: Connecting Museums and Communities East and West through the *iShare* Project"**

The University of Colorado Museum of Natural History and the National Taiwan Museum in collaboration with the Paiwan tribes in Southern Taiwan and the Navajo Nation in the American southwest have created the online web application *iShare: Connecting Museums and Communities East and West*. The purpose of *iShare* is to facilitate these two indigenous communities to have greater access to CUMNH and NTM collections and to provide

the Paiwan and the Navajo with ways to collect and disseminate their own tangible and intangible culture.

In the past, museums used to be collectors and interpreters, but in this project, the Paiwan and the Navajo are important decision makers, storytellers and interpreters. Museums are often the leaders in collaborations - the knowledge and resource holders – but over the course of this project they have become partners and learners. As *iShare* demonstrates, the roles of museums and communities are changing, the boundaries blurring.

To achieve the outcomes of this project, the four partners have had to develop ways of working that reduce barriers of language, distance, culture, institutional traditions and emotion. One of the central tenets of this project is that you cannot build an online partnership without establishing an in-person one. Group problem solving and developing personal connections have made the partnership stronger during the project period.

In this presentation we will elaborate on the process and products of *iShare*, and the challenges and rewards of doing this kind of work. We consider how *iShare* dissolves boundaries between museums and communities, spans borders dividing continental traditions in museum practice, and uses technology to achieve these goals. We will also discuss the impacts of this project on *iShare* partners and how it provides a compelling collaborative model between museums and communities for contemporary museology.

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Gianluigi Mangiapane, Anna Maria Pecci

### **Cultural Empowerment and Civic Responsibility in a Collaborative and Non-Hierarchical Display**

The Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography at the University of Turin has recently met the challenge of exploring an innovative path of practice leading to inclusivity. Using the example of the participatory project, “Tongue to Tongue: A Collaborative Exhibition,” this paper will discuss how nine citizens – mainly working as cultural mediators – and two museum educators took part in the experimental task of challenging the Museum’s



monologic voice and authority. The nine individuals are originally from Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Italy, Morocco, Romania, Senegal. At the heart of the project was a training course for Cultural Mediators of Intercultural Heritages, primarily conceived as a process of cultural empowerment based on storytelling. Trained mediators, recognized as “new interpreters” of the museum’s heritage, were, in fact, involved in the planning and mounting of a collaborative exhibition, in close cooperation with the museum staff and an architect/exhibition planner.

The Museum acted as facilitator, promoting rights to cultural access and participation. “Tongue to Tongue” created a multivocal space of representation where the voice of the Museum (institutional, scientific and didactic) engaged in a dialogue with the citizens’ voice (autobiographical, evocative and emotional) within a curatorial embrace of multiple voices and cultural viewpoints.

The final result consisted of a non-hierarchical display, a space in which the act of mixing museum objects with personal objects and the blurring of the boundaries between tangible and intangible heritage created a negotiated arena of meanings leading to a re-interpretation and re-contextualization of collections. Museum objects hence “evaded” the classifications and narratives into which they had been institutionally inscribed and the project finally provided an opportunity to experiment a more inclusive poetics and politics of cultural representation in the Museum. Nevertheless, the constraints and weaknesses implied in the process of incorporating those same issues into a sustainable institutional mission were also revealed.

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Mari Saugestad Mathiesen (Norway)

**“Who is shooting?” On teaching youth about complex ethnicity**

I will present an educational project called “Who is shooting?” The aim is to explain to school groups in Southern Norway how the “colonial” history of the relationship between the Sami minority and the Norwegian majority of Northern Norway influences the way Sami and descendants of Sami view their

identity today. The project's goal is to educate youth about complex identity negotiation processes through one particular case. By combining film and music produced by young Sami from the Coastal region, with the museum exhibition, this day at the museum attempts to deconstruct some of the stereotypes held by many young Norwegians, stereotypes which the exhibition alone might serve to strengthen.

The “Norwegianization” process, conducted by the Norwegian government from the 1600s to the 1940s, resulted in many Coastal Sami families abandoning their ethnicity. This is possible in a region where everyone has the same skin colour. The 1970s brought cultural renaissance and political mobilization. In the 1990s the Norwegian government, in an attempt to address the wrongs of the past, decided that all formerly Sami regions should take pride in their ethnic heritage. The physical manifestations of this officially imposed pride were new bilingual road-signs. These signs were soon attacked with rifles, shot-guns and various forms of paint.

Questions asked in this paper include:

- Why were young people so outraged by these signs?
- Who were the people shooting?
- Why should schoolchildren learn about this story?
- And, why does this project belong in a museum?

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Luca Basso Peressut, Mariella Brenna, Gennaro Postiglione (Italy)  
**European Museums and Libraries in/of the Age of Migrations (MeLA)**

This paper presents research questions and objectives of the forthcoming 4 years MeLA project (granted by EU FP7) titled *‘Reinterpreting Europe’s cultural heritage: toward the 21st century library and museum?’* This work is coordinated by Politecnico di Milano/DPA-Research Unit in Museography) and to be developed together with other eight Partners ([www.mela-blog.net](http://www.mela-blog.net)).

The MeLA project will investigate the traditional idea of Museums and Libraries as places of consolidation, conservation and transmission of the identity of a dominant social group. It will also explore the traditional relationship between these institutions and the civil society they represent as part of a Nation. The goal is to define new strategies for the multi- inter- cross-cultural organization of the conservation, exhibition and transmission of knowledge in ways and forms that are capable of reflecting the conditions posed by the migration of people and ideas in the global world (Bennett 2006) and its influences on the European Union process in the last 30 years. Adapting the concept of ‘*contact zone*’ formulated by M. L. Pratt (1992) and exploited by J. Clifford (1997), the project reconsiders the identity of Museums and Libraries as a historical theme, tackled on the basis of new cultural productions and new relations. Considered as ‘contact areas,’ and in a manner that is in some aspects utopian, Museums and Libraries are being reconsidered as public venues for collaboration, shared control and complex translation; places of power turned into places of cultural integration; places of complex hybrid multi-cultural representation of identity (different layers of identities); places of knowledge; places of conservation; places of meeting and mutual understanding on the free ground of cultural research (Clifford 1997).

The purpose of the MeLA program is consequently also to develop basic multi-disciplinary resources necessary for investigating and comparing major public Museums and Libraries, as created historically and responding to contemporary challenges of globalisation and European integration. The wish is to potentially define new roles.

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Per Rekdal (Norway)

**"Cultures are good and regimes are bad" – what if museums were run by political scientists and journalists instead of ethnologists and educators?**

In museums we see friendly exhibitions about “cultures;” in news media we read negative reports about “regimes.”

What if the museums of ethnography/ethnology/folk museums/recent history/contemporary society museums were run by political scientists and journalists instead of ethnologists/ethnographers/ anthropologists/folklorists and educators?

- What if these museums did not focus on describing societies as “cultures,” but as communities with politically active individuals and groups?
- What would give the most “true” descriptions of the world of today?

Some museums try. In Norway museums are encouraged by the authorities to be actuality-oriented and to have a critical approach to the issues with which they deal. And in Sweden, some museums have declared that a power perspective should be the value base for their activities. They feel they should defend, historically as well as in relation to present day society, the underprivileged.

However, in practice the museums in Norway as well as in Sweden (as well as in many other parts of the world?) uncritically display the officially authorized versions of injustices, with fitting moral indignation. Why do museums, in spite of their ambitions to the contrary, always end up being so harmless?

What I miss in museum exhibitions is a reflection upon the real complexities of the issues, no matter the approach. Many would, of course, argue that a museum exhibition is neither a newspaper nor a book. But is it not about time the museums as conveyors of simple, if benign, cultural stereotypes are replaced with something more challenging? Using concrete examples I will reflect upon the why's and how's and possibly where to go, for some museums.

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Ekaterina Teryukova (Russia)

### **The State Museum of the History of Religion as a Space for Dialogue (Saint-Petersburg, Russia)**

The State Museum of the History of Religion (St. Petersburg, Russia) was founded in 1932. The Museum's purpose was to present the evolution and typology of religions with genuine

objects. These items were considered to illustrate one of the most important and universal elements of human culture in its historical development. Since 1932, the Museum has presented a comparative typological display of ritual objects of various peoples which range from antiquity to modern times.

The project “The State Museum of the History of Religion as a Space for Dialogue” was organized in 2008. Its realization is characterized by the special ethnic and religious situation in St. Petersburg expressed in its multi-ethnic and multi-faith makeup. The project’s goal is aimed at stimulating and strengthening of culture of conscious tolerance to the way of thinking and life of people of another nationality and religions. One of the activities of the project is the organization of academic and research conferences, round tables, seminars. In addition, annual training courses for the staff of Russian museums and countries of CIS, titled “Theory and Practice of Museum Religious Studies,” are held. The problems of attribution, description, conservation, preservation, research and display of ritual objects and monuments of religious art are discussed. Other aspects include the development of the permanent exhibition and educational activities and guided tours. These museum activities address the widest range of visitors, including children, migrants, diasporas, and members of the religious organizations. Using the museum’s secular space they are engaged in dialogue, dissolving boundaries of misunderstanding.

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Martin Tindi (Kenya)

### **Challenging the Museum: Role and Relevance in Contemporary society**

ICOM defines a museum as “[a] non-profit making, permanent institution in the service of society and of its development and open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates, and exhibits for the purpose of study, education and enjoyment material evidence of man and his environment.” Traditional roles place collections at the center of all museum activities (exhibition & education, research & documentation, and conservation & preservation). Although these traditional roles must be maintained, new roles must also be formulated and

adopted to insure that museums remain vital and relevant to contemporary society and not merely dusty warehouses containing old objects.

The question then becomes what can museums do to remain relevant in contemporary society – how can they speak to and engage modern audiences? Emerging factors such as globalization, communications technology, international relations and cultural diversity present new challenges to museums throughout the world. In the African context, museums can and must play an important role as a community space which allows for debate and dialogue and addresses issues which are important to and affect the community such as HIV/AIDS, sexual and gender based violence, environmental conservation among others. Museums can also attempt to help educate people in matters of conflict resolution to create a peaceful and sustainable future.

How can museums achieve these lofty but necessary goals? Diverse and strong partnerships must be formed to allow museums to blossom and maintain relevance with contemporary society. Partnerships with other museums and heritage professionals is required, partnerships with the private sector and NGO's are needed, and close partnerships with the museum's local community is mandatory. With strong partnerships and leadership museums can maintain their traditional roles as custodians of heritage and culture while also adopting new roles to remain relevant in contemporary society.

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Pauline van der Zee (Belgium)

### **Shifting meanings and multilayered identities**

The ethnographic collections of Ghent University, founded in 1825, are nearly as old as the university itself, and are the oldest in Flanders. Seen in the course of time, the objects constantly took on a new meaning, depending on the various ways they were studied. They were looked upon as curios, as artifacts or ethnographical materials, as primitive art or ethnic art objects, and nowadays they are called world art.

But as the academic study of these objects became increasingly specialized, it consequently broke up into more disciplines. In the same time the politico-economic aim of European unity arose. This was also adopted by universities in Bologna, which led to the introduction of the bachelor/master structure. As a result, small disciplines typical of a specific university were no longer viable and had to be phased out, like the department of ethnic art in Ghent. The objects in its collections have taken on the new status of academic heritage and, perhaps paradoxically, are meant to propagate the unique identity of Ghent University.

As these objects have already shown their flexibility in their different meanings, it will be no problem to be able to take on this new status of academic heritage. In fact, their new function shouldn't be lumped in with the local history of Ghent University. This interpretation is too restricted as the collections surpass it in significance; the objects can be regarded as ambassadors of cultures from around the world.

The fact that these objects can be approached from so many different angles is an advantage; it offers a point of departure to stress on the possibility of multilayered identities, especially in Belgium, where at this moment the Flanders nationalistic party is bringing politics to a standstill by focussing on one language and one culture, appearing to exclude the world.

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Pekka Virtanen (Finland)

### **Between art and science: Borders of the Forest**

I will examine different kinds of forest exhibitions the variety of visual and intellectual boundaries presented. In addition to art-science, nature-culture, and history-future, many invisible borders can be examined critically. Some thoughts are also presented about nature, forests, museums, and forest culture as a whole. The forest can be presented as a neutral or romantic landscape but, for example, sustainable development also brings many new challenges to exhibitions or to museums as a whole.

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Beate Wild (Germany)

***Encounters* – a double-exhibition about identities in a tri-border region**

In 2009, the Museum of European Cultures in Berlin presented the double-exhibition *Encounters*, which combined two different photo-series taken in the region between Croatia, Serbia and Hungary. The portraits of people who lived in the Southern Hungarian village of Véménd during World War I are contrasting with actual portraits and interviews of the German minority within this tri-border area.

The time interval between both photo-collections is marked by three wars, new politically determined boundaries, and important demographical changes including persecutions and expulsions of several ethnic and religious groups. Ethnic and national identities seem meanwhile to have taken the place of the former common local and regional identities.

But does this new political reality correspond to the daily experience of the people living in this area today? The recent interviews prove that it does not! Despite all kinds of adverse political influences, sanctions and persecutions, people living in this area have kept their own way of a multi-ethnic coexistence. Several generations continuously redefined it until today. They feel at home in several cultures at the same time, in an area in which the majority consists of minorities, an area which has always been “Europe in a nutshell”. Their individual mental map does not focus on political boundaries.

The exhibition’s design had to illustrate the different concepts of space, the different ways of coexistence and communication, as well as the different options to maintain private space and individual identity within a multi-ethnic community. The interactive program “Bring an object” invited the visitors to reflect on the other and the otherness in relation to their own identity and their individual concept of space, within an exhibition open to dialogue.



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Yang Jongsung (Korea)

## **Ethnographic Museum Uses of National and International Cultural Shaman Materials in Korea**

The new exhibit at the National Folk Museum of Korea (NFMK) “Exhibition on Shamanism - Mediators Between Heaven and Earth” will present a comparative exhibit of shamanism, which is viewed as a mankind's primordial religious nature (11/30/2011 to 2/27/2012). The exhibition also provides an opportunity for visitors to experience shamanism from around the world through a variety of displayed objects, multimedia materials, and hands-on activities. The contents of the exhibition compare the broad spectrum of shaman cultures from Central Asia and East Asia, centering on the Himalayan regions and Siberia. The prologue communicates the significance of the exhibition, the meaning of shamanism, geographical information on featured items, and visual media.

Part one of the exhibition presents the center of universe (*omphalos*) as an installation featuring a symbolic sculpture of the cosmic tree, along with symbolic sculptures of each ethnic group's (or country's) shamanistic rituals. Related artifacts are displayed. Part two focuses on connecting heaven and earth, rendering a space where visitors can sense the ritualistic atmosphere by presenting different shrines for shaman rituals of the Himalayas, Siberia, Korea, and in Evenki and Ainu groups, while presenting related artifacts and display text to highlight their relevance. Part three centers on facing the divine spirit. The exhibit presents a variety of symbols, sculptures and images representing the divine spirit of different regions and ethnic groups for a comparison. Part four explores the world of shamanism through the expression of the mythical world views appearing in various ritual wares and symbolic images which demonstrate similarities and differences of each area and ethnic group. Finally, the epilogue is a display illustrating how shamanism has changed from the past to the present, as well as the modernization of shamanism, through photographs and visual media. Special lectures and rituals are planned during the exhibition, including Himalayan, Siberian and Korean shamanic performance.

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## **ICME Round Table, 2 October 2011**

### **Dr. Hans Martin Hinz (Berlin)**

Since the 1980s one recognizes a wave of founding of new national history and cultural museums. This process started in the highly developed, post-industrial societies and continues today. These museums present a multi-perspective view of culture and history, often accompanied by an international comparison and with a focus on political history.

Visitors do not learn about the past from narrow national perspectives any longer. In these news museums, they can reflect on history at a higher level.

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### **Dr. Matthias Henkel (Nuremberg)**

Nuremberg looks back on almost one thousand years of history. National Socialism transformed the city of the "imperial assembly" [add: of the Holy Roman Empire] into a city of party rallies. The hail of bombs in 1945 destroyed the historic old city. Only a few months later, starting in November 1945, Nuremberg gained the attention of the world's media as the site of trials against the main war criminals. The "Nuremberg Principles" were incorporated in the European Convention on Human Rights of 1950 and form the historic basis for the International Court of Justice in The Hague, today.

The reconstruction in the 50s and 60s was oriented on the historic proportions and character of the medieval city; emphasis is on the signature buildings, such as the imperial castle [Kaiserburg], the churches and the patrician houses convey an image of quasi-historic authenticity today. This factor is of utmost importance for urban tourism.

In the wake of the influx of displaced persons, refugees and guest workers over the years, a large number of ethnic Germans from formerly German territories has settled here. Currently thirty

percent of Nuremberg's population has a migration background and this number is growing.

The Museums of the City of Nuremberg, a network of seven museums, three collections and two historic sites, are responsible to convey this complex, but always significant history of the city to its residents and visitors. The individual institutions are unique because they tell history at the location where history actually happened.

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### **Dr. Michael Henker (München)**

Starting in 1908 as a one-man-office at “Bayerisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege” the “Landesstelle” has grown to an efficient museum board with a fulltime staff of 17 members and a changing number of 15 to 20 assistants.

The “Landesstelle” cooperates with all Bavarian non-governmental financed museums like huge city museums, diocesan or open-air-museums and has over the last years also been entrusted by the State Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts – to which it reports directly – with coordination-tasks of non-state-owned and state-owned museums.

The support service of the “Landesstelle” offers more than just giving the museums advice on museological questions which arise in the creation of a museum and during the daily activities. Depending on certain conditions, the “Landesstelle” is in the position to provide financial support for special projects. Furthermore, it takes care of other areas of museum business such as conservation and documentation of the collections, cataloguing and exhibition-presentation.

Exhibition support given by the “Landesstelle” is very signification. It is applied to aspects of exhibit content as well as functions and design. In particular, the consultation includes the description and interpretation of objects through texts and graphics as well as professional support for the development and application of the technical needs to guarantee appropriate conditions of lighting, climate and safety. Ideally the

“Landesstelle” is involved in the whole process from the first idea to the final realization of new museum projects, especially in developing concepts.

Important milestones in the productivity of the “Landesstelle” were set by the lasting increase in the number of new museums in Bavaria in the 1970s. Today more than 1,350 museums exist in Bavaria, among them about 1,200 non-governmental financed museums. They are found in large cities and towns and also enrich the cultural life away from the metropolitan areas.

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### **Professor Dr. Guenter Dippold (Bayreuth)**

Borders, especially in Upper Franconia, have been part of everyday life for a long time. Until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, because of distinctive laws often the next village, sometimes even the neighbor’s house, was a foreign country. On one hand the multitude of these borderlines didn’t mean anything, on the other hand they affected the consciousness.

When the idea of the state was established around 1800, borders decreased but became more noticeable. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, they became hardly crossable separating lines. The border between two Germanies ran about 20 kilometers north of Banz Monastery; 100 kilometers to the east is the Czech Republic. Even since 1989, when these borders became more permeable and crossing is no longer a problem, people are still aware of them. Collaborations between the counties are still rare.

For Upper Franconian museums, borders are an important theme. It’s very palpable in Mödlareuth (county of Hof). The village was separated – a long time before the German separation took part – into a Bavarian part and a Saxon part. But this insignificant parting line changed to a real border in 1945 and could only be crossed with difficulty. Finally, face to face contact was made impossible by a wall. After 1989, parts of the GDR’s border installations had been preserved and interpreted. The German-German Museum in Mödlareuth tells about the creation, reality and collapse of the inhuman border separating the two Germanies. Other museums in Upper Franconia also address this history. Of course these

cooperative activities are single cases involving the day to day duties of the staff. They occur not only in the communities along the borders of Upper Franconia, but in the institutions inside the region.

The regional authority of Upper Franconia makes it to one of its main tasks to facilitate the cross-linking of museums. Conferences in which experts from the region and all of Germany take part are one way to put forward this effort. Links are established at these conferences between people and museums. This year's exhibition initiative has gathered the activities of ten institutions in Upper Franconia. In addition institutional borders have been crossed; a library and an agricultural training centre are involved.

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### **Professor Dr. Konrad Vanja (Berlin)**

The Museum of European Cultures was founded in 1999, when the 110 year old Museum of Folk Art (Museum für Volkskunde) with the European collection of the Ethnological Museum merged. The Museum, comprised of approximately 27,000 objects, houses one of the world's largest collections of European objects of ethnographic and cultural-historic importance. I will describe examples of networking and cooperation over the past ten years with which we, the Museum of European Cultures – Public Museums of Berlin, has promoted European projects. It's important to show the preconditions of the initiatives.

Long before the institutional networks were established, these initiatives prepared a Europe of cultural encounters on a professional level and/or based on friendships. A metaphorical bridging of the borders between Germany and France at the region of Alsace was one site of these encounters. This process has continued in Poland after the collapse of the Iron Curtain. With the growing impact of the European Union and opportunities of border-crossing initiatives, museums have gained chances to undertake lasting projects. Which roles do politics and cultural politics assume? Do they complement or limit one another? We'll have to ask these questions from cultural-historical and ethnological-anthropological points of view, too.

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*ICME Pre-Conference  
1-2 October 2011, Bamberg*

**The old town of Bamberg  
UNESCO World Heritage since 1993**

**SATURDAY, October 1**

Arrival at Bamberg

Hotel reservation by the participants (see registration form)

- 12.00 – 18.00 Registration: University of Bamberg, Am Kranen  
12, 2nd floor, room 205
- 14.00 – 16.00 “Historical City – UNESCO World Heritage,”  
guided tour
- 16.00 – 17.00 The “Diocesan Museum,” 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century  
textiles, guided tour
- 19.00 Dinner at typical Franconian restaurant (on own)

**SUNDAY, October 2**

- 10.00 - 11.00 The Museum of Natural History – opened in 1791
- 11.30 - 12.00 St. Michael Monastery Church, the universe of  
flowers
- 12.00 – 13.00 lunch at Michaelsberg (on own)

*(Times and places subject to change)*

**Shuttle to Banz Monastery**

- 14.00 Departure from Bamberg to Bad Staffelstein/Banz  
Monastery via Vierzehnheiligen
- 15.00 - 16.00 The Baroque Basilica of ‘Vierzehnheiligen’ (Bad  
Staffelstein), built by Balthasar Neumann (1697-  
1753) in the so called “Garden of God”
- 17.00 Arrival at the Banz Monastery

*ICOM-ICME Post Conference Tour*  
*October 5–October 9 2011*

**City Tour Görlitz – Dreden – Nuremberg**  
**In the traces of political, cultural and social foot steps**

**WEDNESDAY, October 5**

- 14.00 Departure from Banz  
18.00 – 19.00 Arrival at Görlitz, hotel  
19.30 Welcome and a short **Guided tour around Görlitz**, Maximilian Eiden, cultural adviser for Silesia; Romana Roszak, assistant  
20.00 Restaurant Schwibbogen, Obermarkt 34 (on own)

**THURSDAY, October 6**

- 9.00 – 11.00 Schlesisches Museum  
(Silesian Museum, Brüderstr. 8)  
**“The distant and the recent past of a border region”**  
9.00 Welcome: The Silesian Museum and its work.  
Dr. Markus Bauer, director, Silesian Museum  
9.15 Silesias rich heritage: an outcome of shifting boundaries and identities through the Centuries, Permanent Exhibition, Maximilian Eiden  
10.00 Journey into Uncertainty. Migration in Görlitz-Zgorzelec from 1933 to the present day, Temporary Exhibition, Dr. Martina Pietsch, historian, Silesian Museum  
11.00 Coffee break  
11.30 The Present/Absent Border. Europeanization Processes in Görlitz/Zgorzelec, twin town on the Polish-German border. Presentation and discussion  
Dr. Marie Sandberg, Copenhagen University  
12.30- 13.45 Lunch, Vierrandenmuehle, Four Wheel Mill, Hotherstr. 20 (on own)

The Restaurant is situated inside a historical mill by the river Neisse, to-day the border between Germany and Poland, adjacent to the Old Town Bridge, rebuilt as a symbol of European unity in 2004.

- 2.00 – 6.00 p.m. **Tour of Zgorzelec**, Maximilian Eiden, cultural adviser for Silesia
- 14.00 Dom Jakuba Böhme (Jacob Böhme's House, ul. Daszyńskiego 12)  
“A local-born famous German philosopher is becoming part of Polish historical consciousness,” Jolanta Loritz-Dobrowolska, chairwoman of Euroopera Society
- 14.30 Muzeum Łużyckie (Lusatian Museum, ul. Daszyńskiego 15).  
“One of Poland’s youngest museums is investigating the post-war shaping of a new Polish city and the identity of a cultural region at both sides of the border,” Piotr Arcimowicz, director, Lusatian Museum
- 15.30 Dom Kultury (House of Culture, former Oberlausitzer Ruhmeshalle, Upper Lusatian Hall of Fame, ul. Parkowa 1)  
“A building originally inspired by German nationalism serves as a community centre in a Polish town,” Barbara Szutenbach, cultural manager
- 16.15 bus transfer to Stalag memorial site
- 16.30 Stalag VIII A (former P.O.W. camp, final section of ul. Łużycka)  
“Difficult history can be an inspiration for a peaceful common future,” Dr. Albrecht Goetze, chairman of MeetingPoint Music Messiaen
- 17.45 bus transfer
- 18.15 Dinner  
Przy Jakubie Restaurant, ul. Daszyńskiego 11, Zgorzelec (next to Dom Jakuba Böhme) (on own)  
Böhme

## FRIDAY, October 7

8.45      **Via Regia, 800 Years of Movement and Mobility**  
Kaisertrutz (Historic round bastion, Platz des 17. Juni 1) guided tour  
The Third Saxon State Exhibition highlights the Via Regia, the "Royal Highway", an ancient trans-European trade route, connecting the trading areas of the Rhineland, Thuringia and Saxony in the West with Silesia, Bohemia and Poland in the East. As part of a Europe-wide network of roads which developed over many centuries, it also provided links to more distant destinations, including Spain and Ukraine, crossing countless borders.

### 10.00      **departure for Dresden**

11.45      Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden  
(Art Collections of the State Museums)  
Old Masters Picture Gallery, Prof. Dr. Bernhard Maaz, Director  
Grünes Gewölbe (Green Vault)/Türkische Cammer (Turkish Chamber) (audioguide)

14.30      Short City Walk with Dr. Lydia Icke-Schwalbe

### 15.30      **departure for Nuremberg**

19.30              Arrival at Nuremberg  
20.00              Dinner (on own)

**The Görlitz/Zgorzelec tour is supported by: German Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media (BKM)**

## **SATURDAY, October 8**

- 9.00 – 10.30 City walk, including “The Way of Human Rights,”  
(Dany Karavan 1993)
- 11.00-12.30 Industrial Museum of Nuremberg  
Discussion with Dr. Axel Kreienbrink,  
Representative of the Federal Office for Migration  
and Refugees  
Dr. Matthias Henkel, Director of the Nuremberg  
City Museums
- 13:30 A typical “fast food” of Nuremberg
- 14.45 “Memorium Nürnberger Prozesse,” the  
Nuremberg War Crime Trial, Dr. Matthias Henkel
- 16:00 Tucher Mansion and Hirsvogel Hall  
Reception by the Nuremberg City Museums
- 17.30 Church of St. Sebald – Second World War  
Memorial (with a Coventry cross)
- 19.00 Farewell Dinner (on own)

## **SUNDAY, October 9**

- 10.00 – 12.00 On your own  
German National Museum - the largest cultural  
history museum of Germany  
or  
Documentation Centre (NS)

*Please remember – This program is subject to change, especially with regards to sites visited.*

**The part Nuremberg is supported by: Nuremberg City  
Museums**

  
**museen** der stadt nürnberg

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