

ICME 96: October 26 - 31 in Bhopal India

Letters, articles, viewpoints, reports, information, warnings, advertisements: on conferences, meetings, decisions: past, present and future: potentialities and realities: romantic visions, traumatic experiences (or vice versa) - even gossip can be sent to the editor. Of course I know well that nobody will send me anything. But in case you want to surprise me, the deadline for the next issue is September 1. This year.

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Articles or other long messages are preferably received on e-mail or on diskettes. We can handle both Mac and PC, Windows and MS-DOS. Even so: a nicely written manuscript through fax or the good old mail is warmly welcomed.

Dear friends and colleagues!

Time is flying fast! The memories of our encounter in Stavanger are still fresh and all intentions are still to be realized. But between Stavanger and now is almost a full year of work and of administrative routines.

For several months we hoped that we could have a joint meeting between ICME and the Network of European Museums of Ethnography/Ethnology in Romania in May. My hope was that we should have been able to have a dialogue between museums of ethnology (museums of national/local/regional culture) and museums of ethnography (the cultures of the others). We did not agree on the agenda and have therefore decided not to make that meeting an official meeting between the two groups. I hope, though, that several ICME members participated and will give us a report when we meet in India this year.

I will also express my gratitude to Dr. Chakravarty and the National Museum of Man in Bhopal, who on short notice agreed to arrange the ICME meeting 1996 instead of in 1997. The programme of the meeting in Bhopal is exciting and I look forward to meet you all in October in India.

This issue is of great importance to our committee. I say, and I stress it, that our museums are not museums for a specific academic discipline, but museums about man, based on several academic disciplines and on scientific methods. What we have in common is our interest in man, in mankind, in humanity, in explaining for those who have not had the possibility to study, to travel, that man is one, and that we have more in common than we have that differs. We are all the products of environment, of coincidences, of historical factors that we can only control to a minimum.

Our museums have for these reasons a role in society. We know, or should know, so much about man that we also can participate in the fight against ignorance, intolerance, xenophobia. I know that this is easy to say from my sheltered situation in Sweden and that it is not so easy to say it if you are threatened by political reprisals if you express opinions that are against the dogmas of the rulers.

But we can be able to help each other if we cooperate. ICME, like ICOM, is based on individual, professional voluntary participation. If we manage to keep in touch with each other, to communicate, we can also help each other. If you cannot express a certain opinion in your country, somebody else may express your opinion from another country. He or she can in his/her country explain the situation in your country. He/she may through exhibitions and other activities influence politicians, ambassadors, etc. and hopefully influence to the better a country's unacceptable attitudes towards minority groups or religious believers or in other vital questions.

According to my idea of the ethnographical museum it is possible to tell about all aspects of humanity, the good and the bad, the beautiful and the ugly, and show the consequences of the choices that we make.

The results of ICME's work depend on us all. As we can see of the proceedings from Stavanger, a great lot has been achieved through the papers of the participants. And I believe that a lot more has been achieved and realized in the daily work in our museums all over the world.

Finally, I like to tell you about a dream I have. It is about us from our museums of non-European cultures meeting colleagues from Asia or Africa who are working in museums of non-Asian or non-African cultures and who perhaps have an excellent old collection of objects from my home province in inland Sweden and where we can exchange ideas of ethnical problems in describing the rites and traditions of these groups from the same position, thus making our museums more general, more dealing with humanities common existential questions than just the also common interest in surviving.

I hope that many of us will meet again in Bhopal later this year and that our discussions on the issues and ethics of our museums will continue.

Per Kåks
President

From Stavanger to Bhopal

The ICOM general conference in Stavanger is history - but hopefully remains in the memory of those present. Both for those present and not, the proceedings can now be ordered. I will not print a specific number of copies, but produce on the basis of demand (see last page).

ICME 1996 in Bhopal: "Cultural Diversity and Indigenous Knowledge System".

The next meeting will be in Bhopal, India from October 27 to 30. It is hosted by the National Museum of Man and its director Dr. K.K. Chakravarty. The conference gives possibility for both a pre- and a post-conference tour. I recommend the little article on Bhopal in this issue. Invitations to the conference are sent directly to the ICME members from Bhopal.

Some of our members - depending of course on where you start - may find the flight into India costly. The cost of living and travelling in India is on the other hand modest, also for members coming from countries with non-exchangeable currencies, and you will find that the total cost is not at all high. Our local organizer have also done an excellent job in securing special rates to our advantage. In addition they have listed agencies from which funding can be sought.

ICME was one of the original committees in ICOM, dating from 1946, and it is hard for me to say whether "we" have ever met in India before. In any case, Bhopal is an important step in the direction of Melbourne in 1998 and towards a mobilization of old and new ICME members in the Asia/Pacific region. But the Bhopal meeting will of course also be an important event for our members from the Americas, Europe and Africa. The theme is of interest to us all. And by the way: **ICME will celebrate its 50th anniversary in Bhopal!**

Regional subgroups?

The meeting in Stavanger brought up several challenges to our organization - some old and important like the question of repatriation and the role of museums in multicultural societies - some new, or at least new in the sense that we have to deal with them organizationally.

Among the new ones is the question of regional groups within ICME. An initiative has already been taken in forming the Network of European Museums of Ethnography/Ethnology. A meeting of this network in 1995 stated that they wanted to join ICME, but maintain their organization as a regional group. The network will hold a new meeting in Bucarest in Romania in mid-May and we hope that this will result in a formal contact between the network and the ICME board at the meeting in Bhopal in October/November.

Forming a regional subgroup within ICME in Europe inevitably raises the question of forming such groups for other regions. One might object on the ground that the number of ICME members are too few or too dispersed in many parts of the world to be able to form a group. On the other hand a regional group might help creating activity and networks for museums of ethnography in parts of the world where such contacts is badly needed. And it might reduce the admitted tendency in ICME of being Western Europe dominated. ICME is not at all alone among the ICOM committees in this respect (and not the worst). Of course this has reasons partly based on relative wealth and on number of museums. But we have to move on from this stage and hopefully the 1996 conference in Bhopal and the next general conference of ICOM in Australia will represent breakthroughs in this respect. In any case, the question remains: should we start organizing regional groups within ICME?

What is a museum of ethnography?

This question is related to another theme, namely: what is a museum of ethnography or ethnology? I have noticed that representatives from Western European museums of ethnography seem to take for granted that ICME are for museums dealing (mostly) with so-called non-European cultures; that is the cultures of others, of peoples far away. The fact that our members from Africa

and Asia come from museums dealing with their own culture does not seem to bother them, since objects from Asia and Africa is also found in their own museums.

There is also a tendency that our colleagues from European museums dealing with their own culture (in fact also museums of ethnography) does not consider ICME their natural committee. They frequently organize themselves rather in ICR (Regional Museums) or the European Association of Open Air Museums (an affiliated org. to ICOM).

A museum of ethnography is in my opinion a museum based on the principle that all aspects of the culture is of interest - even if we are not able to do this in practice. This as opposed to a maritime museum, an art museum, a glass museum, a museum of costume, etc. These are museums dealing with specific parts or aspects of a culture (though a maritime museum may also be ethnographic when dealing with for instance a coastal community).

The initiative from the Network of European Museums of Ethnography is mostly based on museums working with their own culture. An attempt to organize such museums world wide in our committee would, if successful, make the ethnographic museums dealing with the cultures of other parts of the world a rather small minority within ICME. It could also make ICME one of the largest committees in ICOM since most museums, large and especially small, are ethnographic.

My point is not to try to make ICME grow out of all proportions, but we should be aware that no matter whether we are directing our work towards our own local culture, national culture or cultures far from our own, we can all be ethnographic museums. It is important that this fact is stressed again and again, and that we base our recruitment policy and cooperation on this fact. Many of the other ICOM committees have attractive leaflets describing the aim of their organization, helping them in their recruitment. Maybe time has come for a more active recruitment policy on ICME's part also?

Whar should be the information policy of ICME?

Hosting the ICME secretariate always involves extra cost for the secretary's institution. ICME's own income is extremely modest. This issue of ICME News is produced on a low budget basis and I would like to discuss with the board at the meeting in Bhopal what should be our policy regarding the production of information material for ICME. Personally I feel we should try to accumulate funds with the aim of producing an attractive information leaflet in such quantity that it can be used as hand out at the ICOM general conference in Melbourne in -98 and in other fora where we meet potential members.

Another strategy could be to put more money into the production of ICME News. If so it would help having contact persons, each being responsible for bringing in material from different parts of the ICME-universe. And we would probably have to claim a subscription fee, like they do in MPR (International Committee for Museum Public Relations).

Per B. Rekdal
Secretary

Need funding for ICME 96 in Bhopal?

The following institutions are suggested regarding funding of your participation in the Bhopal conference:

- Director General, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Azad Bhawan, Indira Prastha Estate, New Delhi 110002, INDIA Tel: 91-11-33 18 471 Fax: 91-11-37 12 639
- UNESCO, 7, Place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, FRANCE
Tel: 33-1- 45 68 10 00 Fax: 33-1- 47 34 85 57
- Indo-US Sub-Commision on Education and Culture, c/o Asian Cultural Council, 280, Madison Avenue, Room No. 1202, New York NY 10016, USA Tel: 1 - 212 - 72 52 66
- Ford Foundation, 55 Lodi Estate, New Delhi 110003, INDIA

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ICME CONFERENCE 1996 *Bhopal, India*

A background note on the theme

Cultural Diversity and Indigenous Knowledge Systems

In order to retain their relevance in a fast changing world, the museums have to start playing a role in the protection of cultural diversity and conservation of indigenous knowledge systems which go hand in hand. The traditional knowledge bases of communities the world over are being threatened and eroded by the growing tide of technification and homogenisation of the planet. Development has taken the form of mega projects which destroy the habitats of the indigenous communities along with their eco-diversity, comprising organic and inorganic communities. Such destruction may drag mankind towards gradual non-catastrophic extinction.

The protection of cultural diversity will come from the recognition by museums of the validity of plurality and complexity as a factor coexistent with harmony and consensus. The museums have to demonstrate that similarity of culture among communities is not to be confused with sameness and a broad identity of motifs, patterns or concepts in the cultural fabric need not be equated with uniformity of inspiration. Similar forms may often prove to be parallel and coordinate developments flowing from similar needs and contexts rather than from any common source or from mutual borrowing. The alphabet and script of cultures, like that of languages, cannot be exhibited in museums in an immutable hierarchy of domination or subordination, classical or folk, ecumenical or provincial, great or little, written or oral traditions. Attention must be paid to the nature and nurture specific to temporal or spatial contexts.

The museums have to play a role in exhibiting and protecting cultural diversity against bioprospecting, unsustainable development and unauthorised extraction of cultural resources. In order to fulfill this role, the museums have to help the indigenous communities to codify, classify, analyse, maintain and communicate their cultural data in their own languages; explore and strengthen sui generis knowledge systems, customs, myths and rituals which help them to live in harmony with their environment; replenish vital and valuable elements dormant in their cultures which can contribute to human wellbeing and bounty; and build protective ramparts around those endangered values among them which can prove to be life enhancing. The museums have to treat indigenous habitats and cultural landscapes as living museums, where the diversity of cultural heritage can be integrated with graded socio-economic activities in dynamic spatial continuum with core, buffer, multiple use surround patterns involving community participation; and where, elements of the heritage, including monuments, could be harnessed to non-invasive, compatible uses.

In other words, museums may have to reconsider their traditional role of storing, collecting and exhibiting physical artifacts as specimens of languishing, vanishing or dead cultures or of demonstrating the irreversible progress of technological civilization. They must collaborate with communities in their cultural recuperation and self determination. With this change in role, museums may no longer be treated by communities as monuments to the destruction of cultural diversity and knowledge systems, but as partners in the struggle for their restitution and preservation.

Sub-themes:

1. Subsistence systems.
2. Eco-management (use of land, forest, water and other natural resources).
3. Folkways and the Arts.
4. Sustainable development: Alternative visions.

Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Sangrahalaya (National Museum of Man)

The IRGMS is the National Museum of Man located at Bhopal, the capital city of Madhya Pradesh, in the central province of India. The Museum has a large well equipped library with 125 national and international journals, hundreds of hours of audio-visual cassettes, a video-audio unit, a sizeable computer section with multi-media CD-Rom and editing facilities, open air exhibition of tribal habitat, of arts and crafts, rock art and ethno botanical trails. It has cultural activities codirected by indigenous communities throughout the year and the occasion of the ICME meet will coincide with a meet of practitioners of indigenous knowledge and skills and other spokesmen of indigenous systems drawn from different disciplines.

The museum has already participated in or organised several seminars and exhibitions in the World Ethnobiology Congress, World Archaeology Congress, World Rock Art Congress, ICOM national meeting, International meet of Tribal and Analogous People, and World Environment Day celebrations. It is engaged in collaboration with several national institutions and involved in UNESCO projects as well as in cultural exchange programmes with a large number of countries in the world.

The museum is situated between 77° 25' E longitude, 23° 16' N latitude, in about 80 hectares of undulating land at a height of 1900 ft. above the sea level on the bank of a seven mile long lake. It is an extraordinary site with 36 prehistoric and historic rock shelters with paintings, historic and probably mesolithic, ranging from 1000 to 6000 years old, and with evidence of ancient habitations linking it up with prehistoric industry, technology and settlement patterns. The surrounding area is littered with historic and prehistoric sites bearing evidence of the Narmada Man (Homo Erectus between Sangiran 17 and Ngandong 12); myriad floral and faunal fossils; with geological evidence of the clash of the central Indian and Tibetan plates, raising the Himalayas, the youngest and tallest mountain in the world; with archaeological evidence of human settlements in thousands of painted rock shelters, in close proximity to tribal villages; with continuing artistic activity in the area of folk and tribal arts and crafts; and numerous excavated sites, mostly Chaleolithic and Mesolithic, some Paleolithic.

The National Museum of Man is dedicated to demonstrating the simultaneous validity of human cultures and the plurality of alternatives for human articulation. As such, it is trying to develop a non-hierarchical, non-hegemonic account of the biocultural evolution of man, a story of the multilineal evolution of alternative ideas of human creativity and adventure. It is trying to develop an exhibition showing man as an organic part of nature, rather than as its adversary or slave, and it is conducting researches in various ethno-sciences including ethno-biology, ethno-musicology, ethno-linguistics, etc. to understand this relation in its myriad aspects. It is concerned with the internal and external environment of man and with the threats endangering the mental health or ecological wellbeing in different indigenous habitats. As such, it is developing a museum, not of dead and dying objects representing vanishing cultures, but of the vital and relevant patterns of such cultures. In the process, it is also trying to revitalise elements of knowledge and skills in traditional cultures in the contemporary context. It is concerned with the process rather than with the products of progress in science and technology and with the context, ethics and implications of such progress. The museum is concerned with the documentation and conservation not of objects alone, but of the communities which create such objects. While doing so, it is exploring the common area of resonances in which India joins hands with the rest of the world. It is engaged in cross-disciplinary, inter-cultural studies with the objective of developing channels for intra and inter-regional transfer of technology among communities and to recognise and combat the problems which endanger such communities with ecological and biological extinction. It is, ultimately, a Museum of social care and concern.

Bhopal

Bhopal is situated in an area comprising the Betwa source region and Narmanda valley, which are littered with Pleistocene sites, floral and faunal fossils, numerous excavated sites bearing evidence of unbroken human activity since 3000 B.C. and more. In October, Bhopal enjoys a mild salubrious climate ranging from 30 °C (max) to 15 °C (min). It is an old town with not only mesolithic rock shelters, but also remains of Paramara walls of 1000 years and earlier, and later Islamic and pre-Islamic tribal, "Gond" remains from the last 400 years. The seven mile long lake used to form a continous body of water up to Bhojpur 35 kms away. This 30-mile long lake was cut in the 15th century during interneccine warfare, changing the micro-climate of the region to an arid condition. The World Heritage site of Sanchi and many other 3rd century B.C. Buddhist sites are situated close to Bhopal. The proselytising movement was launched from Samchi in the 3rd century B.C., changing Buddhism to a world religion. Bhimbetka is another site nearby (40 kms south of Bhopal), with 700 rock shelters. Here, in vivid panoramic detail, paintings in over 500 rock shelters depict the life of pre-historic cave-dwellers, in one of the largest constellations of such art in the world.

Museums for national unity? Museums for continental unity?

In this issue we print two of the papers presented in Stavanger. The first describes plans for a national ethnographic museum in Nepal. Since the paper was presented, an international conference was held in Kathmandu, discussing concretely how to bring the plans closer to realization. Hopefully we will meet some of our museum colleagues from Nepal in Bhopal, and learn about the latest development of their project.

The other discusses the idea of making a very, very large museum celebrating the unity of Europe. Not unity in the sense that cultural differences should be suppressed. But unity in the sense that Europe is - after all - a relatively small area with peoples having shared a tumultuous history, but is now on a path leading towards political unity and peace.

Admittedly - as seen here from Norway, a small country at the edge of Europe - the idea of a European museum feels unusual, controversial, even utopian. The small nations of Europe have always been sceptical of their dominant neighbours. On the other hand I find the establishment of a national ethnographic museum utterly recommendable, although I know well that questions of cultural autonomy and dominance are also relevant within a nation.

Perhaps our readers wish to comment upon the articles?

Professor Ganesh Man Gurung

Professor Gurung is chairman of the national committee for the establishment of a national ethnographic museum in Nepal

National Ethnographic Museum and National Unity

Introduction

Nepal, squeezed between the two giants; China and India, is a Himalayan kingdom with geographical variation; snow-capped mountains, mid-hills and lowland. Terai inhabited by various ethnic groups followed by cultural diversity. On the other hand Nepal is a colourful garden of different ethnic groups, each of them characterized by particular social organizations, social values, religious beliefs, dialects, clothings, housing pattern and food habits. The country is very rich in its cultural heritage. But the process of change has been observable in their daily life; food habits, clothing, language, housing, economy and other aspects due to the influence of transportation, education, western culture, and their contact with outsiders. There has been a rapid spread of tourism across many parts of the kingdom and, more recently, an upsurge in tourist interest in ethnographic material with a corresponding increase in the disappearance of traditional objects from their areas of origin. Such objects are now beginning to fetch high prices abroad which merely accelerates this trend. Opportunities for finding traditional material culture in its original settings will diminish as surely as these processes of change and development will spread. If we do not keep alert for the preservation of the cultural objects we have to lose every thing our culture, our history, our technology as developed by our ancestors. In this context, a National Ethnographic Museum concerned with the representative objects and crafts that tell us about the daily lives of ordinary people is an urgent need. Therefore, we have to begin making a commitment for the establishment of a National Ethnographic Museum in Nepal.

Unity in Diversity

As stated above, Nepal is heterogenous in its nature either socially or geographically or culturally as being inhabited by both caste and non-caste people. However, the caste system, rooted for long time immemorial, has stratified Nepalese people in different groups and certain groups of noncaste people have been dissatisfied with certain ruling high caste people. The non caste ethnic groups known as Janjatis have a feeling of their domination by high caste ruling people. As a reaction to this feeling, many ethnic organizations have been mushrooming in the country for their

identity, for their share in state power, for the preservation and prosperity of their language and culture under the umbrella organization "Federation of Nationalities" (Janjati Mahasanga) along with the restoration of democracy in Nepal after the Peoples Movement of 1990. At present there are 23 such ethnic organizations in the country under the umbrella organization. The ethnic organizations through the umbrella organization have raised their voices with various demands on the ground of democracy and human right in peaceful way for instance education through mother tongue, country be declared a secular state and representation in different organs of the government. This is the congenial and appropriate time for the availability of the support for the campaign of the establishment of ethnographic museum from all ethnic organizations, ethno-political parties in Nepal along with their various demands for their identity and power sharing in national context. In this regard the role of National Ethnographic Museum would be quite relevant and significant for the integration and unity in Nepal especially among the different ethnic groups and noncaste and caste groups. With the collection, exhibition and preservation of national heritage, the Ethnographic Museum would be the symbol of national unity. On the other hand, national unity in the country will be reflected through the National Ethnographic Museum. The present committee for National Ethnographic Museum believes that the collection of detailed information on an ethnic groups, material and social culture can be important integral part of the development process, as well as preserving an important aspect of national heritage for future generations. In this venture I hope all of you the distinguished personalities will cooperate me in different ways either through monetary funds or their experiences in this regard.

Dr. Gerhard Böck

Dr. Böck is director of the Heimatmuseum Krumbach in Krumbach, Germany:

A European Museum and European Unity

This is not a scientific report but only a plea for a new little step on the way to tolerance and peace. Does a European Museum contribute to European unity? In some kind in my mind grew the idea of the necessity of a great European Museum, a big European Ethnographic Museum of course.

I am working in a little local Museum in the Suebian part of Bavaria, in Krumbach, a little town of 13 000 inhabitants near Ulm (or between Ulm and Augsburg - or 120 km in the west of Munich). Up now our little museum had collected all kinds of objects, mostly ethnographical objects from Suebia. I intend to link the future concept of the museum with the challenge of multicultural change in the growing European Union. But there are other papers discussing later on the future tasks of local museums in respect to the adaptation of multicultural change. Thinking that little museums can not be the first institutions to support this idea and therefore European integration, I came to the conclusion that greater efforts have to be made. To attract Europe-wide or even world-wide attention for a revolutionary idea like this, the example of a big, a very big museum is necessary. A huge common effort should create a masterwork of architecture and curatorship and maybe even poesis.

The idea of a European Museum is not new. 200 years ago, the curator of the "musée napoléon", Dominique Vivand Denon, had similar thoughts, but limited to objects of art. It was the will and aim of the great emperor Napoleon, to collect all the masterpieces of art all over Europe and to demonstrate his power with this stolen objects. The thought was right: to set a gigantic symbol for a Europe-wide power and to concentrate the masterpieces of art in Europe at a special place. The question of homogeneity or diversity of art styles or cultural styles did not exist or was at least not so important.

Today the need and aim of a European museum is different. In the first way it does not seem so important to collect arts, but to collect many cultural things of daily life: ethnographic objects of all the different cultures of Europe. That means to collect and therefore to set up symbols. Not only minorities should be displayed, but also greater ethnographic units without their status of state or nation. Showing the diversity neither means here to emphasize the difference, nor to deal with the question whether you and I, nor whether people at all are different in categories of national characteristics. The aim should be to minimize the importance of national characteristics and therefore it might be helpful to enhance the perception of ethnic diversity. But not only as a static,

permanent fact, but as a fluent, dynamic ethnic process. For this the discussion of migration in Europe will become of the greatest importance of the next years. We have to enhance the identification with our local ethnic or cultural group to diminish at the same time the meaning of maybe artificially constructed younger national feelings.

To get all people informed, it is not useful to discuss this problems in the exclusive circles of ethnographers and scientists. We have to attract the attention of millions of people in Europe and all over the world.

Next year, in 1996, the revision-conference of the treaty of Maastricht will take place. For the first time in Europe - and perhaps in human history - we have the chance to establish constitutional laws to protect the rights of minorities and ethnic groups within the growing European Union. This may be not only important for minorities in Western Europe, like the Basks, the German Sorbes, the Danish minority in Germany, the Roma and Sinti, the Corses, the Bretones, it is much more important with respect to the many minorities in Eastern Europe, impatiently waiting to to become free citizens of a united Europe. For this day we should be prepared. Not only in constitutional terms, not only in categories of law and order, philosophy and politics, but it should exist a pre-information and awareness of cultural diversity, or even a proudness, in the heads and hearts of all Europeans. And therefore a big and important place for education should be built: a big European Ethnographic Museum. This is the way we should safe lifes, the way we should safe the peace for our children in future. Only for the simple aim not to get another Jugoslavie somewhere else in Europe. This allone would be enough to justify the efforts. Our security - and this is the real hereby followed aim - can not be discussed in economic terms. It should be regarded from the same point of view we regard the financial efforts, we are ready to make for military equipments. You all know about the many ethnic conflicts all over the world. The themes of this congress reflect that you are on top of the discussion of our most urgent problems, namely to solve these ethnic conflicts. With a great European Museum we have also the chance to put an example and to seduce other countries to do the same - following us on the way to solve ethnic conflicts. By the way, the discussed theme is - already today - not only actual for Europeans. For other countries central ethnographic museums have a tradition. I remember the National Museum in Jakarta, Indonesia. Indonesia is a state with nearly 400 different ethnic groups with nearly 250 different regional languages and is sucessfully on the way to national unity. The National Museum in Jakarta shows the ethnic variety in great displays and in several rooms you can see objects of the traditional material culture from all over the 13 000 isles of the archipelago. Without justifying the methods of a police-state, I think we can learn also in parts from this country - if we are not falling back in the mistakes of eurocentrisme. May be that there are other examples in the world from which we can learn. This congress will deliver inspiration and induce contacts to improve these thoughts.

I just told you in the beginning of my account, that this is not a scientific report, but a plea to start building a European Ethnographic Museum. Therefore we should not remain in the stage of theoretical discussions. We should immediately begin with working and struggling to reach this aim pretty soon. Perhaps that the chance for realisation is good for the moment. Maybe that this is a phenomenical historic chance in the world of museum-people. But besides the convincing actuality it is one of the most urgent necessities in the field of education. The lack of identification marks in Europe is a problem. The European Museum could cope with it, by setting up symbols, by emphasizing ethnic identification (this means more identification with local cultural or ethnographic markers), by provoking an awareness of unity in diversity, by creating new symbols, by stopping museological nationalisme. Here is the chance to contribute to European Unity and to the peace in the world. Use it by supporting the idea of a great European Ethnographic Museum. This is, what I wanted to say.

The following papers were presented at the
ICME Conference at ICOM 1995 Stavanger, Norway

The role of museums in disintegrating nations

Leif Pareli, The Norwegian Folk Museum, Oslo, Norway: *Museums at war – a cultural heritage under siege in Sarajevo*

The role of museums in creating national - and overnational? - unity

Wolfgang Mey, Hamburgisches Museum für Völkerkunde, Hamburg, Germany: *Beyond the Bone-House - The Changing Role of a Regional Museum in Sri Lanka*

Gerhard Böck, Heimatmuseum Krumbach, Krumbach, Germany: *A European Museum and the way to unity*

Ioan Godea, Le Musée du village, Bucarest, Romania: *The ethnographical museum — convergence points of the national cultural values*

Professor Ganesh Man Gurung, Kathmandu, Nepal: *National Ethnographic Museum and National Unity*

Museums and cultural diversity: old and new challenges

Anette B Fromm, Oklahoma Museum of Natural History, USA: *The Creek Council House Museum - Indigenous and dominant cultures working together*

Per B Rekdal, Ethnographic Museum, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway: *Black Norwegians in Blond Museums - Norwegianness Past and Present*

Espen Wæhle, Ethnographic Museum, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway: *Museums and cultural diversity: challenges in creating an exhibition on Congo/Zaire in Oslo, Norway*

David C Devenish, Wisbech & Fenland Museum, Wisbech, England: *Problems in presenting transatlantic slavery*

Flora E S Kaplan, Museum Studies Program, New York University, USA: *Problems of gender and multicultural museum interpretation of African women: American "political correctness" reexamined*

Jane Peirson Jones, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham, England: *Community interactions in Gallery 33 and beyond*

David Boston, Horniman Museum, London, England: *Africa in a London museum: context (II)*

Hein Reedijk, Museum of Ethnology, Rotterdam, the Netherlands: *The museum of ethnology in the 21st century*

Rivka Gonen, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Israel: *National unity and the museum — the case of the Israel Museum*

Repatriation

Per Kåks, The National Museum of Ethnography, Stockholm, Sweden: *On repatriation of totem pole to Canada*

Steffan Brunius, The National Museum of Ethnography, Stockholm, Sweden: *The return of lower part of La Amelia Stela I to Museo Nacional de Arqueología y Etnología, Guatemala*

A joint meeting was arranged with participation from CECA (Education & Cultural Action), ICME (Ethnography), CIMCIM (Musical Instruments) and NatHist (Natural History). The following papers were presented

CECA:
Dorothee Dennert, Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Bonn, Germany: *Contemporary history and national identity – Experiences in the field of museum education*

ICME:
Nick Merriman, Museum of London, London, England: *The Peopling of London: addressing cultural diversity in the museum*

CIMCIM:
Margaret Birley, The Horniman Museum, London, England: *Musical instruments and cultural identity*

NatHist:
Andreas Steigen, Centre for Studies in Environment and Resources, University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway: *Biodiversity, biophilia and cultural identity*

Proceedings of the conference in Stavanger 1995

The proceedings of the conference will not be published by producing a certain number of copies. A copy will be produced and sent to each person who orders one. The price is 10 US \$.

The following papers are included:

- Wolfgang Mey: *Beyond the Bone-House - The Changing Role of a Regional Museum in Sri Lanka*
Gerhard Böck: *A European Museum and the way to unity*
Nick Merriman: *The Peopling of London: addressing cultural diversity in the museum*
Anette B Fromm: *The Creek Council House Museum - Indigenous and dominant cultures working together*
Per B Rekdal: *Black Norwegians in Blond Museums - Norwegianness Past and Present*
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Proceedings of the ICME annual meeting in Stavanger 1995

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