

## ICME Newsletter 34, February 2003

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### WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

We are many already who look forward to continue the discussion with good colleagues from Romania and the world, being surrounded by the Romanian situation both as information and inspiration.

It has been said about ICME that it in many ways represent a continuation of the colonial set-up: dominated partly by the earlier European colonial museums of non-European cultures and partly by local and regional museums in the earlier colonies. ICME *has* changed and *is* changing in this respect. With the meeting in Romania we tie up with the large tradition of European museums mainly dealing with their own traditional culture.

I know that we are many that have to count our funds before going to each conference, whether it be abroad or in your own country. Note then that the package price of 300 or 140 Euros is fantastically reasonable once you start dividing into each item. Let us see as many as possible of each other in Sibiu! And do bring friends and colleagues from outside ICME or ICOM. Some of our most valuable participants have been brought in that way. And do you know a person that we should urge specifically to come, please tell us about him or her, and we will follow up!

Per B. Rekdal  
ICME President  
p.b.rekdal@ukm.uio.no

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**ICME 2003: THE NATIONAL COMPLEX "ASTRA" MUSEUM , SIBIU ROMANIA,**

**SEPTEMBER 26-30**

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

"Cultural Traditions in Danger of Disappearing in Contemporary Society A Challenge for Museums"

**CONFERENCE PROGRAM**

FRIDAY, 26.09 - SUNDAY 28.09:

Presentations, debates, visits to the museum and the artisan fair.

MONDAY, TUESDAY

29-30.09.2003

**ONE AND A HALF DAY STUDY TOUR TO BRAN AND OTHER LOCALITIES IN THE AREA**

After the study trip (30 Sept) the participants will be accompanied to Bucharest (to the airport) or back to the Sibiu airport (taking into account the location of arrival and departure for each participant).

**VENUE**

Presentations will take place in the hall of the Central Pavilion at the Open Air Museum in Sibiu.

**THE ARTISAN FAIR**

Parallel with the ICME conference is the "International Fair of Craftsmen". This fair was initiated by the National Complex "ASTRA" Museum in 2002, taking into account that revitalising the intangible cultural patrimony should represent one of the major preoccupations in all the countries of the world.

The aim of this fair is that of an intercultural universal dialogue for a better understanding of universal cultures and civilisations. Craftsmen from Romania and from other countries of the world (last year, there were participants from Bulgaria, Georgia, Sweden and The Republic of Moldavia), wearing their traditional folk costume, gathering in the open air museum in Sibiu for exhibiting their products and for practising their crafts in front of a numerous public visiting the museum.

**TRANSPORT:**

The organisers plan to have two minibuses waiting for the participants at the Otopeni Airport in Bucharest, one bus in the morning (for morning flights), and another one in the afternoon (for afternoon flights). But an easier route to Sibiu flies from Munich, Germany on Monday, Wednesday,

Thursday and Sunday at 18.25 pm (German time) and arrives in Sibiu at 20.15 (Romanian time) with TAROM air company and direct flights with Carpathair daily, except Sunday. There are also direct flights to Sibiu from Bologna (Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday), Milan (daily flights, except Sunday), Rome (Monday, Wednesday, Friday), Treviso (daily flights, except Sunday), Verona (Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday).

#### ACCOMMODATION

The hotel where the participants will be staying is located in the centre of Sibiu, each room has its own bath, toilet and TV. All participants will be staying at the same hotel.

#### THE STUDY TOUR

The final program has not been settled yet, but we will visit some of the following museums:

- Sibiu: the Museum of World Ethnography "Franz Binder", the Museum of Transylvanian Civilization "ASTRA", the Museum of Saxon Civilisation "Emil Sigerus", the Memorial Room "Cornel Irimie", a memorial exhibition dedicated to the 40 years from the Open Air Museum's foundation and an international fair of the craftsmen) and Brukenthal National Museum;
- Cisnadioara: Saxon Museum;
- Cisnadia: Textile Industry Museum;
- Avrig: Ethnographical Village Museum;
- Sambata de Sus: Monastic Museum with traditional iconography;
- Brasov: Tara Barsei Ethnographical Museum;
- Sacele: Ethnographical Museum of Mocanimea Brasovului ? transhumant sheep-farming orientated;
- Bran: Ethnographical Museum of Bran Area and the Museum of the Bran Fortress (the famous "Dracula" Castle).

The route passes through some ethnographical areas which are Representative for Romanian civilization: Tara Oltului, Sercaia Depression, Tara Barsei, Mocanimea Brasovului and Bran Area.

Click on the image to see a larger map of the tour:



#### CONFERENCE FEES

Regular fee: 300 EUROS (includes transport from/to Bucharest, accomodation In Sibiu 25-30.09, meals and study tour, conference expences). Reduced fee for participants from economically disadvantaged countries. 140 EUROS (includes as above)

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE, SEND THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION TO

mcpt@sbx.logicnet.ro, p.b.rekdal@ukm.uio.no

or to

the Astra fax number (+40 269 24 24 19 and +47 23 23 94 41

(please send to both e-mail addresses or fax numbers so that we both can doublecheck and reduce the possibility of not being able to contact us because of break in communication with one of us)

Name:

Institution:

Address:

Telephone:

Fax:

Email:

Comments/special needs:

Would you like to present a paper? Give title and a short draft:

PAYMENT

300 EUROS Regular fee (tick off)

or

140 EUROS Reduced fee for participants from economically disadvantaged countries (tick off)

DEADLINE BOTH FOR SUBSCRIBING AND FEE PAYMENT: JULY 31 2003.

Participants can send money through the swift address of the Romanian Commercial Bank (the same as "Banca Comerciala Romana") which has the following SWIFT address: RNCBROBU

-in EUROS:

- BANCA COMERCIALA ROMANA-SUCURSALA SIBIU  
STR.EMIL CIORAN NR.1  
SIBIU-JUD.SIBIU  
in the account of COMPLEXUL NATIONAL MUZEAL "ASTRA" SIBIU  
ACCOUNT NUMBER: 2511.1-1410.69/EUR

-in ROL (for Romanian participants):

- TREZORERIA SIBIU titular de cont COMPLEXUL NATIONAL MUZEAL "ASTRA" SIBIU cont nr. 50104406304
- 

### **A tradition of non-cooperation**

In circles of the museums of ethnography and of ICME the discussion about the return and restitution of objects to their countries of origin is of a long standing. In recent years the notion repatriation has been added to the discussion.

But it seems that the discussion does not carry much weight in our circles these days. The ICME Working Group on Repatriation has not shown its face over the past years and nobody seems to bother.

As somebody said: "Why carry on a discussion if all the arguments are known and have been exchanged time and time again?" That rests the case, so it appears.

Yet only recently 18 major Museums in the World, led by the Metropolitan Museum in New York have issued a statement that they will never return any art treasure to its country of origin, which has come into their possession. They made an exception for art objects which have been taken from Jewish families during the last World War and for objects recently stolen or illegally exported from their countries of origin.

This implies that such world treasures as the Parthenon Marbles, the Head of Nefertite, the Pergamom Altar, will for ever remain in the museums where they are on display at present.

The secretary-general of ICOM was quick in issuing a reminder that according to the ICOM Code of Ethics, which all of these museums have signed, " in response to requests for the return of cultural property to the country of origin, museums should be prepared to initiate dialogues with an open-minded attitude based on scientific and professional principles." (par. 4.4)

This blunt refusal by these major museums to ever return art treasures, even if they came into their possession under dubious circumstances, is in fact nothing new. I am inclined to think that it fits in a very old and strong European attitude towards the possession of art treasures.

When Napoleon had established himself as the sole ruler of France he turned to Italy, at that time not yet a nation but consisting of dozens of smaller and larger independent states, republics and dukedoms. At the conquest of each state a treaty was drawn up in which a special envoy, Baron Dominique Vivant Denon, Director of the Museum Napoleon, stipulated which artobjects had to be handed over to the French army. In this way the four bronze horses from the San Marco in Venice, the marble statue of Laocoon from Rome and hundreds of treasures became war booty. Napoleon was so convinced of the righteousness of his deeds that he organized a grand and triumphant entry of the loot into Paris. The scene has been immortalized on a beautiful, two meter high vase of Sevres porcelain.

Equally remarkable was the reaction of the allied powers which after Napoleon had been exiled into Elba, drew up the First Treaty of Paris. They decided that they did not want their stolen goods back and that they could stay in the Louvre. It was only after the final defeat of Napoleon's army at

Waterloo that the Second Treaty of Paris was signed in which all loot had to be returned to its countries of origin. Most objects, not all, have been returned. When the Duke of Wellington discovered a cache of Spanish art treasures in French hands, he offered them to the king of Spain, to whom they had once belonged. To his surprise he received the following reply: "His Majesty, moved by your consideration, does not wish to deprive you out of what has come into your possession by such just and honourable means."

The 19th century saw the erection and rise of most major museums in Europe. Some of the finest private collections in the United Kingdom and France became the property of the State. The first National Museums were established. The great Museums of Archeology and Ethnology were founded. Within a couple of decades they proudly displayed the finest and rarest collections of the entire world. Egypt was a never ending treasure trove. Thousands of mummies, sarcophagi, statues, golden ornaments, funeral gifts, were excavated by archeologists or by tomb robbers and shipped to Europe. The obelisks which don squares in London, Paris, Rome and Washington D.C., bear witness to the greed of the powerful nations in the world. A weak government and poorly organized custom office in Egypt made it easy for shrewd entrepreneurs to get their wares out of the country. As Howard Carter, the discoverer of the tomb of Tutankhamon, remarked: "Those were the great days of collecting. Anything for which a fancy was taken, from a scarab to an obelisk, was just appropriated and if there was a difference of opinion with a brother excavator one laid for him with a gun." (1) No questions were asked when these treasures arrived in the capitals of Europe. On the contrary, these newly acquired riches added to the prestige of Kings and Presidents, and were used in publicity campaigns to prove to the common people, that European culture was deeply rooted in the ancient world. Therefore, not only Egyptian, but also Greek, Roman and Turkish historic and archeological sites were excavated, temples and ruins were searched for remnants of a glorious past. Sometimes objects found were just removed and carried away to their new owners, at other occasions the objects were purchased from local authorities for a token price in order to establish a semblance of legitimacy.

In almost alle cases the Museums which became the new owners have always claimed to be the rightful owners. They still do. Wallace Budge, one of the great collectors of Egyptian art for the British Museum in the 1880s, wrote: "Every unprejudiced person must admit that, once a mummy has passed into the care of the Trustees and is lodged in the British Museum, it has a far better chance of being preserved than it could possibly have in any tomb, royal or otherwise, in Egypt." (2)

From the middle of the 19th century a new category of museums developed, one with which the readers of this Newsletter are most familiar: the Museums of Ethnography. The hinterlands of Africa, Asia, New Guinea, Latin America were rapidly being discovered by explorers, adventurers, soon followed by traders and missionaries. Towards the end of the 19th century it was the European nations which invaded Africa, often by military force. Africa was divided between a number of colonial powers. They took the land, confiscated natural resources, overruled any African claim to independance or even identity with brutal force, and considered Africa's cultural heritage as one which could be taken away at random.

The massive looting of Europe's own treasures by Napoleon had been forgotten, it seemed. Even as an awareness of one's own National Heritage was growing in most European nations (after all it was the age of the founding of Nation States in Europe), this did not lead to the recognition of the right of

other, extra-European nations and cultures to cultivate their own cultural heritage as they saw fit. Colonies were considered the 'property' of the colonial powers, without rights of their own. This situation and the attitudes that went with it, was institutionalized at the Berlin Conference in 1884-1885.

It is this attitude that is illustrated by the intransigence of European museums to 'ever return' art objects to their countries of origin'. It is this attitude which has prevented legislation in European countries to that effect. Laws have been ratified in order to protect one's own cultural heritage, but no laws have been ratified until recently which protect the cultural heritage of non-European states. Even if an art object was stolen in one country, it could be legally imported in another (European) country, if certain conditions were fulfilled.

### **The tradition challenged**

The first time that this attitude was challenged was in 1960 when thanks to a numerical majority in the institutions of the United Nations the newly independent countries started pressing for legislation concerning the return and restitution of illicitly imported and exported objects.

This resulted in the well known 170 UNESCO *Convention on the means of prohibiting and preventing the illicit import, export and transfer of ownership of cultural property*.

Like in all such cases, a convention, once ratified, does not work retrospectively. In other words, the Parthenon marbles, the head of Nefertite and the Benin bronzes would not be affected. The ratification of this convention would at least be a legal tool to stop and to prevent the illicit import and export of art treasures from that moment onwards.

Did the Convention stop the illicit trade? No. Did it change the attitude towards return and restitution? Hardly and then only very, very slowly. In order to take effect, international conventions such as the 1970 Unesco Convention and the 1995 Unidroit Convention need to be ratified and implemented by memberstates of the United Nations. Implementation means that other legislation of the country which ratifies, is adjusted, adapted, or extended.

Although the Unesco Convention was signed in 1970, thirty years later, in 2000, less than 100 countries world wide had actually ratified the Convention Amongst those which had not ratified were such important countries as the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Belgium, Holland and the Scandinavian Countries. Their governments bowed to those who had an interest in what they called 'free trade'.

And all along the plundering continued, illegal excavations in Mali and Nigeria continued, the plundering of the temples of Angkor Wat in Cambodia continued. Unscrupulous collectors and artdealers continued to invest money in illegal trade. Custom officers looked the other way when bribed. Governments had other priorities when they faced economic hardships of their citizens. Peasants were all too willing to help in the digging for a 'good piece', that could earn them a year's income.

And the museum world kept quiet. The ICOM Code of ethics, approved in 1986 (i.e. 16 years after the establishment of the Unesco Convention), was the first official document that condemned activities by museums in this field: "A museum should not acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or

exchange, any object" unless the museum has got a valid title. "The museum should recognize that it is highly unethical to support in any way that illicit market" (Code of Ethics. Par.3.2)

The ethical code is to be signed by all museums in the world. Yet, even if this has been done, there is no guarantee that museums follow the code. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Getty Foundation, the Musee Branly in Paris, which together with the Louvre organized its first major exhibition in the Louvre itself, the Mido Museum in Japan, have all been accused of illegally acquiring objects of cultural heritage of other countries.

The case of the Louvre has drawn a lot of attention. Part of a deal between France and Nigeria with regard to development aid, was that the Nigerian President donate a Nok statue of high artistic quality to the French President who is known to be a great lover of what he calls 'Arts Premiers', a word coined in order to avoid the pejorative Primitive Art. Nigeria could never have consented to the deal, because no objects from the Nok culture can ever leave the country legally. That has been Nigerian law for decades. France could never have consented to the deal, because it had already ratified the Unesco Convention, implying that it would respect the Nigerian laws concerning illicit import and export of cultural goods.

The situation became very embarrassing to both countries and their Heads of State. International pressure, critique by Unesco and ICOM, made a compromise possible. The French government acknowledged that Nigeria has and will continue to have the right of property. In return the Nigerian government agreed to a loan of the Nok statue to the Musee Branly for 25 years.

This compromise appears to usher in a slow change in attitude on the part of some leading museums world wide. Way back in the 60s and 70s countries in Africa and Asia used to demand their cultural property back from the museums in which it had been stored for a century or more. The museums which owned the objects retorted that they were the rightful owners, that thanks to the good care by these museums the objects had been preserved (implying that that would not have been the case if they had stayed in their countries of origin), and that these art treasures belonged to mankind, that they were part of the world's cultural heritage, and that therefore they better stay in the world's leading museums, where everybody could come and admire them.

Now a new trend appears to surface. Several extra European museums which some 20 years ago claimed their cultural heritage back, now discuss matters of common concern with those same museums which house these treasures. They are aware that they share a heritage, that both parties, and indirectly both countries will fare better if they share each others expertise, their knowledge, their experience. They visit each others museums, compare data, and discuss how collections could be distributed between the two countries. Certain objects in a European museum may be returned to their country of origin in exchange for some objects that will go the other way round. The parties will discuss and agree on the terms of the deal, on the right of ownership, on the issues of long term loans, on the additional benefits each party will receive.

The Museum of Ethnography in Stockholm has actually returned objects to their countries of origin, among which Canada and New Zealand. The Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam is negotiating joint enterprises involving exchange of collections with the National Museum in Jakarta. In the United Kingdom a campagne has began to work out a deal with Greece so that all or a large part of the Parthenon Marbles may return to Athens for the next Olympic Games. American museums are

bound by the NAGPRA legislation to get in touch with those groups of Native Americans objects of whom they possess and return them to these groups if the groups request their return. Museums in New Zealand have worked out new deals with Maoris concerning the right of property of sacred objects and the way in which the cultural heritage of the Maoris must be treated.

African museum directors have asked for cooperation with colleagues in Europe and America to tackle problems of pillaging, illicit excavations, looting, and illicit exports and imports.

ICOM itself is actively supporting such initiatives ( among others by its very successful publications in the One Hundred Missing Objects series and the Red List) and so is AFRICOM. Several European governments have supplied funds for computerized registration of museum collections, so that they can be traced more easily in case of theft.

### **ICME**

ICME has had a working group on issues of Return/Restitution for at least twenty years. I have been a member of this working group since 1983, when ICME met in London for the General Assembly. The late Herbert Ganslmayer has been very active in the same working group. He drafted procedures to be used during the negotiations between the two parties: the one from the country of origin, the other from the museums that possessed the objects.

Yet the working group cannot boast of great achievements.

The one International Committee within ICOM which is most specifically connected with the cultural heritage of non-western cultures, our own committee ICME, appears to be absent in the discussions on an international level. We seem to be non-existent in these issues. We are not being consulted by ICOM or Unesco or Interpol or any other agency which deals with problems of illicit traffic. As far as I know, no ICME member has ever been invited as an expert to assist in the making of the series *One Hundred Missing Objects* or *The Red List*.

I am not looking for a scapegoat within ICME. If anybody, I would have myself to blame for the lack of initiative over the past decades. I am putting the question in a more general manner. Are we showing a lack of activity, because we are not interested? Is it because we donot wish to be involved in these discussions as we have something to hide? Is it because we are actively engaged in the fight against illicit traffic as individuals and donot feel the need to make it a concerted action within ICME?

In September 2001 a group of professionals (archeologists, anthropologists, sollicitors, museum curators, educators, scholars as well as civil servants) joined hands and established what came to be called the Leiden Network. It is made up of men and women from some ten different countries in Northern and Western Europe. They exchange information, they advise each other on delicate issues concerning illicit traffic, they supply their governments with information and try to influence policy makers to act according to the Conventions.

Could ICME play such a role within the international museum community? Is there a need to do so? Is ICME willing to contribute towards a change of attitude in museums which so far are showing the old fashioned intransigence with regards the return and restitution and repatriation, which has dominated the European museum scene for the greater part of the past two centuries?

Basically, my question is: how great is the interest among ICME members world wide to have an active working group on Return/Restitution/Repatriation or even such a working group at all?

I put this question also in view of the discussion which Per Rekdal initiated last year about the future of ICME. He even had the guts to raise the question: do we need an ICME at all?

1. Chamberlain, Russell. Loot!.The Heritage of Plunder. New York. 1983. Page 53
2. Ibidem.page 61.

Harrie Leyten  
Working Group on Repatriation  
Thorbeckelaan 27

e-mail: hleyten@msn.com

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#### **REPORT FROM THE 2nd CONFERENCE OF ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUMS FROM CENTRAL AND SOUTH-EAST EUROPE, Vienna, 18-21 September 2002**

The 2nd Conference of Ethnographic Museums From Central and South-East Europe took place in a seminar center in the Mauer suburbs of Vienna from 18-21 September 2002. There were about 50 participants from Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Germany, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Ukraine and Yugoslavia.

Part of the work was "Open space" - group work and discussion of different problems in unconventional and relaxed manner. This gave opportunities for everyone to communicate freely and promote some interesting initiatives.

The Conference in Vienna has confirmed again that these kinds of meetings are necessary, enabling people to meet, and get to know each other better. They also promote cooperation among museums and professionals in this part of Europe.

It has been also agreed that Web pages containing simple information and proceedings of meetings should be started, if possible hosted on the ICME Web pages.

It was agreed that the next conference will be organized in Martin, Slovak Republic in the autumn of 2003.

Damodar Frlan  
Ethnographic Museum, Zagreb  
dfrlan@etnografski-muzej.hr

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Croatia has been an independent country for only 12 years now, so for those less informed, here are some basic facts. The Republic of Croatia is situated in Central Europe and on Adriatic sea, which is part of Mediterranean sea. It borders with Italy, Slovenia, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Bosnia and

Herzegovina. The population of Croatia is 4.500.000, approximately 90% belonging to Roman Catholic religion and Croatian nationality.

Since prehistoric times, this part of Europe was exposed to numerous migrations, wars, political and military influences of large powers, but above all, different cultural influences that have amalgamated into specific traditional culture. Before Slavic tribes settled in these parts in 5th and 6th century A.D., Celts, Roman Empire and Illyric tribes left their deep marks. Slavic people that have settled in Dalmatia became politicaly organized in first kingdoms around 10th century A.D., but later, due to numerous crisis's, Croatia recognized Hungarian rulers and later a succession of rulers from Austrian Empire. On the Adriatic coast, except for some places like Dubrovnik, the political presence and cultural influence of Venetia was very strong for centuries. Finally, to the East of Croatia, there was the large Ottoman Empire, which also influenced traditional culture in Croatian territory.

Today, there are three ethnographic museums in Croatia. The oldest one was established in 1910 in Split. Although of regional importance, it houses some exquisite and rare collections of traditional textiles, jewelry and other objects from Dalmatia and other parts of Croatia. The museum is housed in beautiful 15th century renaissance palace which is unfortunately totally inadequate for the purpose. Critical situation with storage space endangers valuable collections. In spite of financial difficulties, the museum is lively, organizing interesting exhibitions and doing valuable research. In 2001, the museum opened a new permanent exhibition. This is an unavoidable destination for serious researchers, but also for tourists eager to learn about local traditional culture. The Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb was established in 1919 after merging of several ethnographic collections from other museums, and thanks to initial collection of textiles owned by Salamon Berger, a rich textile manufacturer of Jewish-Slovakian origin. He was to become the first Director of the Museum. The museum is located in a representative art-nouveau building in center of the city. Today, the collections contain some 85.000 objects, mostly textiles (folk costumes and objects of soft furnishings). There are also collections of furniture, handicrafts, objects from traditional households, folk customs and others. A small but valuable collection of objects from overseas (Africa, Asia, Latin America, Australia, Oceania) dates from the end of the 19th century. The oldest and perhaps the most valuable item is Moai-kava-kava (ancestral figure) from Easter Island, dated (acquisition) 1860. Thor Heyerdahl, the controversial anthropologist who died last year, visited the museum twice to see this fine example of Moai. Next, there is a fine collection of several hundred objects from Congo dated at the end of 19th century. This was collected by Dragutin Lerman, a Croatian who served as governor of one of the provinces in the Belgian Congo. The collection is comparable to a much larger collection in Tervuren, Belgium, originating from same period and area. Worth mentioning are also collections from Eastern Africa, Brasil, Japan, China, India, Melanesia, Polinesia and Australia.

The permanent exhibition of the Museum displays folk costumes and traditions from three ethnographic regions in Croatia. The northern region, so called "Pannonian", covers the area of North Western Croatia and the Pannonian plain. Although its basic traditions have Slavic origins, cultural influences from German areas in the west, Hungarian area in the north and oriental areas from the east are strongly present and recognizable. The central ethnographic region stretching along the Dinaric alps has always been reclusive and conservative exhibiting oldest layers of tradition. The third area along the Adriatic coast was on the other hand under the influence from hinterland (Dinaric area) and Italian (Venetian) culture.

The Museum organizes temporary exhibitions, lectures, projections, concerts and similar, but its educational activity is also very strong. Exchange of exhibitions with museums within Croatia and internationally is one of primary goals.

Being of national importance and having professional and material resources, the Ethnographic Museum conducts researches and acquisition of objects throughout Croatia. For same reasons it is also engaged in providing professional aid and advice to other museums.

The third museum is the Ethnographic Museum of Istria, a regional museum established in 1961. It is placed in 10th century castle and its collections outline the traditional culture of Istria. Today, this museum produces some of the most interesting and professionally intriguing exhibitions. Its strong exhibition exchange program includes museums both nationally and internationally.

Apart from the museums already mentioned, there are many other regional, social history or other museums which include ethnographic collections and have them on display. Worth mentioning are museums in Dubrovnik, Zadar, Sibenik, Rijeka, Varazdin, Osijek, Slavonski brod, Vinkovci etc.

The only open air museum in Croatia is in Kumrovec, near Zagreb. It was established in 1953 and contains nearly 50 buildings representing local traditional architecture. In some buildings there are on display smaller thematic exhibitions explaining local traditions.

Most of ethnologists employed in museums in Croatia are actively taking part in activities of Croatian Ethnological Society. Its annual meetings, regular lectures and gatherings provide opportunity for many ethnologists to explain and exchange their professional ideas and viewpoints. Most museums also publish journals and exhibition catalogues, but unfortunately not always in foreign languages.

Damodar Frlan  
Ethnographic Museum, Zagreb  
dfrlan@etnografski-muzej.hr

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Mme SHAJE TSHILUILA

inforoute.patri@ic.cd, joshaje@hotmail.com

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## **A UNION OF COWBOYS AND INDIANS**

The following words appeared in LA Times "Calendar" Section of Dec 11, 2002. They are an interesting expression of American trends in the museum world which can be viewed as worth considering among us.

- The merger rescues Los Angeles' oldest museum from a life-threatening financial crisis and brings the Southwest's 350.000-item inventory, one of the leading collections of Native American art and artifacts, under the same umbrella with the Autry \$100-million endowment.

The move, Autry Director John Gray said, gives the museum the chance to present "a dynamic dialogue between the cultures that made up the American West". There is no other museum that really does that".

Maria Camilla De Palma  
Castello D'Albertis, Italy  
mcdp64@hotmail.com

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**Two proposals to be published now for general discussion among members:**

Considering ICOM statements regarding the Repatriation of Cultural Property and its strong support of the Unesco Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970) and Unidroit Convention on Stolen and Illegally Exported Cultural Objects (1985),

- what is your opinion about the international debate regarding the Greek request of repatriation of the Elgin Marbles from the British Museum to Greece?
- Do you think that museums of the indigenous population have different problems and challenges from the museums of the other? In Europe and in other parts of the world?

Preparing the conference at the Astra National Museum Complex in Sibiu, Romania, it could be interesting raising relevant issues for all of us to be debated together in September. Our past debate over the dissolution of ICME touched some questions regarding ICME identity, mission and name that we could bring together for further examination in Sibiu; and defining our museums' challenges and missions can help us define ICME's objectives and name.

Another theme could be: poverty and identity, tradition and modernization: how much is our relationship with the past affected by modernity and so-called technological development?

Maria Camilla De Palma  
Castello D'Albertis, Italy  
mcdp64@hotmail.com

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**SEOUL 2004: INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

The next ICOM General Conference is scheduled for October 2-8, 2004 in Seoul, Korea. Preparations are underway, and the Korean contact person for ICME is Jong-cheol LEE, Director, National Folk Museum, Korea. Tel: 82 2734-1341 Fax: 82 2 734-2161 Email: hope0921@nfm.go.kr

The Korean Committee has proposed "Intangible Cultural Heritage" as the main theme of the Conference. This is a topic which has been discussed quite a lot in UNESCO circles the last few years. Here is one definition:

- *The intangible heritage might be defined as embracing all forms of traditional and popular or folk culture, i.e. collective works originating in a given community and based on tradition. These creations are transmitted orally or by gesture, and are modified over a period of time through a process of collective recreation. They include oral traditions, customs, languages, music, dance, rituals, festivities, traditional medicine and pharmacopoeia, the culinary arts and all kinds of special skills connected with the material aspects of culture, such as tools and the habitat.* [http://www.unesco.org/culture/heritage/intangible/html\\_eng/index\\_en.shtml](http://www.unesco.org/culture/heritage/intangible/html_eng/index_en.shtml)

These points are appropriate for THIS year's ICME conference theme, as well as NEXT year's. Maybe something to keep in mind?

Daniel Winfree Papuga  
papuga@c2i.net

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### **NEW ICME SERVER**

As you may have noticed, those irritating pop-up advertising banners have disappeared from the ICME web site. This is due to the Norwegian Museum Authority having graciously given ICME space on it's server. ICME's web address still officially points to ICOM <http://icme.icom.museum>, but the files actually are hosted at [www.museumsnett.no/icme/](http://www.museumsnett.no/icme/). Thank you, Museum Net Norway!

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### **MORE PAPERS FROM ICME 2002**

The ICME editors are still collecting papers from last summer's ICME conference, but the following papers are presently available for downloading from the conference page.

- Hon. Clever C. Silavwe: [Opening remarks](#)
- Dr. F. Musonda: [Welcome message from SADCAMM](#)
- Lorna Abungu:
- Simon Makuvaza:
- Clare Mateke: [Putting Museums on the Tourist Itinerary: Museums and Tour Operators in Partnership making the most out of Tourism](#)
- Flexon M. Mizinga: [Managing a museum resource in Zambia: A daunting task](#)
- George S. Mudenda: [The Role Of Museums in Rapidly: Growing Cities: A Zambian Case](#)
- Arthanitius Henry Muloongo: [Developing the Tourists` Interest in the Museum: A Case for the Livingstone Museum](#)
- S M Siachoono: [Using Cultural And Other Relevant Images To Improve Museum Finances, Lessons From Past Experience.](#)

- Tone C Simensen:
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## UP-COMING CONFERENCES

<http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/ethno/powwow.html>

<http://www.comite-film-ethno.net>

March 19-22, 2003: Museums and the Web. Charlotte, North Carolina, USA.

<http://www.archimuse.com/mw2003/index.html>

March 19-23: "Of Lighthouses and Libraries: History ReLit", African Literature Association's 29th annual meeting, Alexandria, Egypt. Includes a sponsored panel: "Public/private, in and out of Africa's museums". <http://academic.udayton.edu/ala/>

March 19-23: Building bridges: Collaborating beyond boundaries. Portland, Oregon, USA. Society for Applied Anthropology Annual Meeting.

March 19-22: Museums and the Web 2003. Charlotte, North Carolina, USA.

<http://www.archimuse.com/mw2003/>

April 7-25: International Course on Flexible Materials in Asian Collections, sponsored by the ASEMUS programme (Asia-Europe Museum Network) and ICCROM, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

April 25-26: *Anthropologies of Art* conference, Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, MA, USA.

[http://www.clarkart.edu/research\\_and\\_academic/content.cfm?ID=253&nav=2](http://www.clarkart.edu/research_and_academic/content.cfm?ID=253&nav=2)

May 6-10: Canadian Museums Association, 2003 Annual Conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

May 12-13: Annual conference of the Museum Ethnographers Group (MEG), University of Leicester, UK. 'Developing audiences - developing collections' looking at the development of museum work with minority, British-based communities (Black and White), centered around the use of existing and recently assembled ethnographic collections. contact: Emma Martin, Museum and Art Gallery, Leicester, New Walk, Leicester, LE17EA, UK; 0116 2666590; emma\_belgrave@yahoo.co.uk

<http://www.museumethnographersgroup.org.uk/>

May 18: International Museum Day, "Museums and Friends" <http://www.icom.org/imd.html>

May 18-22: "Bridges to the World", AAM Annual Meeting 2003, Portland, Oregon, USA

May 28-31: Central Europe and the Mediterranean. Mediterranean Studies Association International Annual Congress, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary.

[http://www.mediterraneanstudies.org/ms/2003\\_conference.html](http://www.mediterraneanstudies.org/ms/2003_conference.html)

June 18-20: "Accented Cultures. Deterritorialization and Transnationality in the Arts and Media". Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

<http://www.multicultureelplein.nl/mcplein/pagina.asp?pagkey=22238>

July 4-6: RAI International Festival of Ethnographic Film. Royal Anthropological Institute, London.

July 5-12: "Cultural Heritage" & "Trans-national south Asian diaspora": Two pre-conference sessions organized by the Commission on Museums and Cultural Heritage, in connection with the XV International Congress on Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (ICAES), Florence, Italy.  
[http://www.icaes-florence2003.com/pre\\_congress.htm](http://www.icaes-florence2003.com/pre_congress.htm)

15-22 July: 37th world conference of the International Council for Traditional Music, Fuzhou and Quanzhou, China. <http://www.ethnomusic.ucla.edu/ICTM/welcome.html>

September 1-5: "World Cultural Heritage: Uniting by Understanding" CIDOC-ADIT conference, St.-Petersburg, Russia.

September 18-20: "The Best in Heritage", Dubrovnik, Croatia. [www.TheBestInHeritage.com](http://www.TheBestInHeritage.com)

September 26-30: ICME 2003: THE ASTRA NATIONAL MUSEUM COMPLEX, SIBIU, ROMANIA.  
(information in this issue) <http://icme.icom.museum>

November 19-23: American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Chicago Hilton and Towers, USA

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ICME - International Committee for Museums and Collections of Ethnography

<http://icme.icom.museum>

Mailing address: ICME, Ethnographic Collection, The National Museum of Denmark,  
12. Frederiksholms Kanal, DK-1220 Copenhagen K, Denmark,  
tel.: +4533473206/03/04, fax.: +4533473320,  
e-mail: [editor@icme.icom.museum](mailto:editor@icme.icom.museum)

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