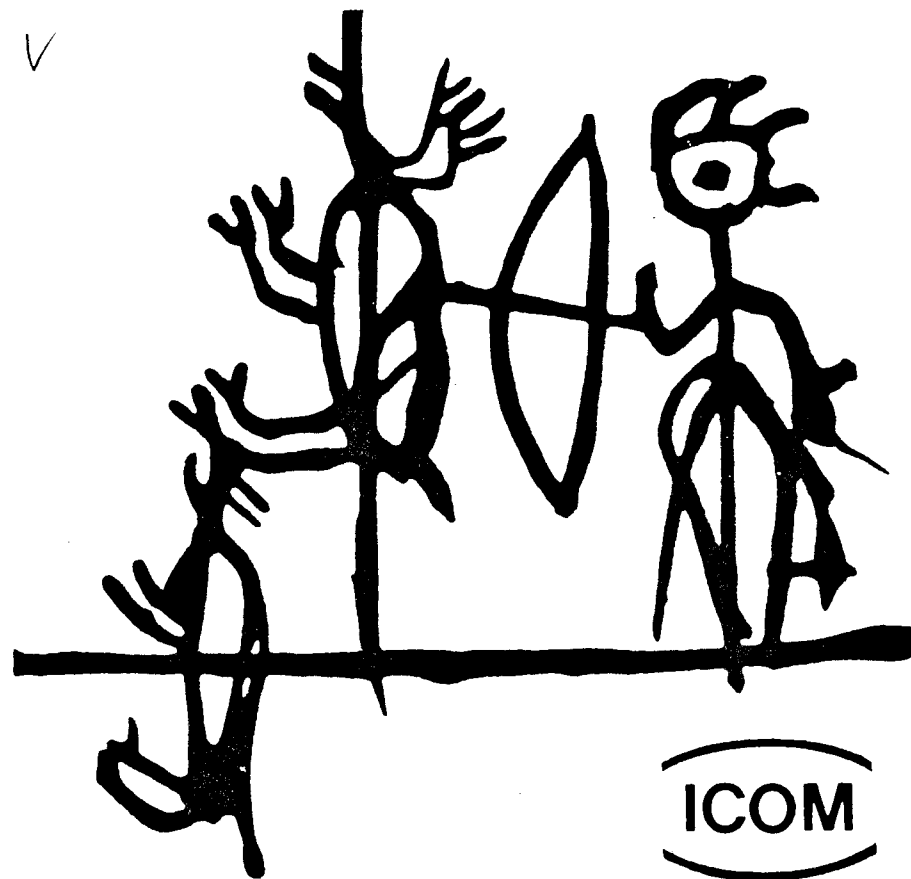


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ICME News  
No 10  
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ICME NEWSLETTER NO 10

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FROM THE EDITOR

Dear friends!

Time flies! Tempus fugit! This much quoted adagium certainly applies to ICME. Six years have passed since the first ICME Executive Board enthusiastically agreed in London to continue the ICME work. Three years have passed in which little was achieved. But since the last ICOM Triennial Conference in Buenos Aires, more than three months have passed and I feel I have to rush in order to get the ICME news to the far corners of the world before time catches up with us.

Here is the ICME Newsletter 10. It has basic information about ICOM's Triennial Conference as well as our own ICME Conference which understandably had not got very many participants. We all agreed, however, that it was a good meeting, and we are all determined to make these three years a success. One of the recommendations was that the ICME Newsletter be continued and serve as a means of communication between the members. Let us try to make it a genuine means of communication, in other words: write to the editor, write about exhibitions, about plans and problems.

We are starting to introduce the members of the ICME-Executive Board. Two of them tell us about

themselves. We are inviting other Board members to follow suit. The publication of the Newsletter will be done by the Übersee-Museum in Bremen, of which our new chairman is the director.

Wishing you the best of luck in your work,

Harrie M. Leyten  
Secretary ICME

ICOM - TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE  
BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA,  
OCTOBER 26 - NOVEMBER 4, 1986.

Argentina deserves to be congratulated! It hosted the ICOM Triennial Conference and did it very well. ICOM members from all corners of the world were made to feel at home. All over the city huge billboards announced the Conference and bade the participants welcome. The organization was almost perfect. The official opening was solemn and impressive. Dr. Alfonsin, Argentina's President, was given a standing ovation by the more than 1200 ICOM members, when he entered the large hall and prepared for his formal inaugural address. That first day was marked by speeches and plenary sessions. The next day saw the first of four sessions organized by ICME on four consecutive days of which a special report is filed in this Newsletter.

The ICOM National Committee of Argentina presented a welcome buffet lunch to all members at the Sheraton Hotel. Close to 2000 people were in attendance. It was the first opportunity for many to meet old friends. After all, with ICOM members and friends spread across the globe, one does not meet a good many of them unless at Triennial Conferences. Throughout the week the Cultural Center of San Martin was buzzing with meetings of the International Committees. As had been expected, the Latin American presence was strongly felt at these meetings. Many ICOM members as well as interested museum workers who were not (yet) members, took the opportunity of an ICOM Conference on their Continent to become familiar with ICOM's work. A good many new ICOM members have been registered from Latin America. The weekend halfway through the Conference was used for a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Saturday and a massive barbecue on Sunday. Especially the barbecue was a great success. With scores of busses the participants were taken into the grasslands where we were received by the Argentine equivalent of the cow-

CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL  
DES MUSÉES

Cover illustration:  
Hunting motive of Sámi Shaman's drum.

boys: the gauchos.

Especially for the anthropologists and ethnographers among us, it was a fascinating and intriguing spectacle. On Tuesday, 4th of November, there was the General Assembly, which marked the closing ceremony of the Conference. A number of resolutions were proposed to the Assembly. Some were hotly debated, before they were amended and accepted. One such resolution was about accepting Spanish as an official language of ICOM, alongside English and French. With the Conference taking place in Latin America, nobody was surprised that the Spanish-speaking contingent pressed for such a resolution. However, the majority of the Executive Council were not prepared to accept the resolution offhand. It was remarked that the bill for the ICOM Secretariat would go up with US\$ 60,000 a year. This was said to be prohibitive, especially in view of the diminishing revenues of UNESCO. In the end a resolution was adopted that demanded a serious study of the problems as well as the possibilities for such a request.

Another important resolution was the one proposed by the ICME Committee about the ethical aspects of exhibitory objects which belong to minority groups. If the interests of such groups are threatened (in the eyes of the groups), such exhibits should be abandoned. Museums should not give loans to such exhibitions.

The resolution, which drew a spontaneous applause, was the ICOM Code of Professional Ethics. After years of tedious meetings, drafts, proposals and new proposals, the Code of Ethics could be accepted by the General Assembly. This Code has already been discussed in the ICME Newsletter No 7, September 1985, pages 6 - 7.

#### ICME CONFERENCE BUENOS AIRES 1986

During four consecutive mornings ICME met. As had been expected, not many members had been able to raise the funds to come to Argentina. There were about 20 members at each of the meetings. On the other hand many ICOM members from Latin American countries took the opportunity to come to Buenos Aires to make acquaintance with the many International Committees. ICME, too, welcomed a good number of them to its meetings and some of them as new ICME members.

An important item of the first meeting was the elections for the new ICME Executive Board. It had been announced in Newsletter No 9 that for the 9 vacancies on the Board there were only 7 candidates, and that consequently these 7 might consider themselves elected. During the meeting however, this assumption was questioned and overruled. One important reason was that the Southern Hemisphere would not be represented on the new Board. Several new candidates were proposed. Latin American representatives asked for an adjournment of one day in order to find a suitable candidate. The elections took place on the next day. The following people were elected to the Board:

Julio Cazzasa	(Argentina)
Lawrence Foanaota	(Solomon Islands)
Dawson Munjeri	(Zimbabwe)
Helmuth Fuchs	(Canada)
Herbert Ganslmayr	(Fed. Rep. of Germany)
Annette Fromm	(U.S.A.)
Ulla Wagner	(Sweden)
Irina Baranova	(U.S.S.R.)
Harrie Leyten	(Holland)

The Board elected as its new chairman: Herbert Ganslmayr, and as its new secretary: Harrie Leyten. (You will find their addresses at the end of this Newsletter)

There were reports on the working groups as they had been established in London 1983. Except for the working group on Folk Arts which had organized a weekend conference in Greece in 1985, the other working groups: Return/Restitution, Inventories, Aims and Objectives, had not met in the past three years.

It was suggested to abandon the working group on Return/Restitution. The reason given was that as a result of the discussions in the past years, most museums had made up their minds. They either are in favour of returning objects to their countries of origin, if requested and after negotiations, or they are not (yet) in favour for a number of reasons. It was proposed that the discussion was to be transferred to the level of private collectors and the international art market. However, the meeting was of the opinion that a working group which has had such impact on the general policy of ICOM, should not be discarded for fear that somebody might conclude that ICME had lost interest in the issue. Even if no action is taken, the working group should be there, should be on the alert for any eventualities and keep track of developments in this field.

The working group on Inventories.

Herbert Ganslmayr informed the meeting about an initiative taken by the Übersee-Museum in Bremen and backed by UNESCO to make an inventory of objects, both utilitarian and art, of the Republic of Mali. A meeting of international experts has been planned for 1987. Herbert Ganslmayr will be the coordinator of this working group.

The meeting also decided to coordinate our activities with those of CIDOC (Documentation) for projects concerning inventories of collections. For this purpose Mr. Roy Mitchell (U.S.A.) was asked to be on the board of the CIDOC working group on Computer Systems.

The working group on Folk Arts.

The working group on Folk Arts will continue its activities and is planning a meeting during the Leiden Conference in September 1987. Annette Fromm will remain the coordinator. This conference is seen as an appropriate occasion for the working group on Aims and Objectives to manifest itself. (More about this conference further on in this Newsletter). Harrie Leyten will be the coordinator.

ICME has also taken the initiative of establishing a joint working group in which both ICOM and the World Council of Crafts participate in order to draw the attention of museums to crafts in our society. This will be done by research, by conferences and by organizing exhibitions. (The Tropenmuseum is preparing one on Indonesian crafts ((both historical and contemporary)) in 1987.) Initially, it will be an informal working group with its own newsletter.

An important issue was raised by Torben Lundbaek, National Museum Copenhagen, who narrated how his museum had been approached by the Glenbow Museum at Calgary for a loan of certain important Indian artifacts to be put on display during the Calgary Winter Olympics in 1988. Soon after that request was received, the museum in Copenhagen received information that the Lubicon Lake Indian people of Northern Alberta are organizing an international boycott of the Calgary Winter Olympics "because the Calgary Winter Olympics are being sponsored by basically the same interests which are systematically trying to wipe us out as a people, so that they

steal our aboriginal lands and the valuable gas and oil resources which our aboriginal lands contain." (From a letter by Bernara Ominayak, chief of the Lubicon Lake Band, to the National Museum in Copenhagen.)

Torben Lundbaek obtained more information, got in touch with different organizations which are supporting the Indians' case, and through his activities got in conflict with the Director of the Glenbow Museum. As the latter was present at the ICOM Conference, ICME invited him in order to give him the opportunity to comment on the request.

Both the Glenbow Museum Director and Torben Lundbaek stated their case and explained their arguments. For the Glenbow Museum the Olympic Winter Games 1988 offer a unique opportunity to organize an exhibition of international standards and exceptional quality. The Canadian Government has provided the museum with a huge sum to mount this exhibition. The protests by the Lubicon Lake Indians were understandably a disillusionment to the museum. Torben Lundbaek on the other hand emphasized the long history of repression of the Lubicon Lake Indians and that he could not but agree with them taking the Olympic Winter Games as a means to draw the International Community's attention to their plight. He informed the meeting that his Museum had decided not to give loans to the Glenbow Museum for this exhibition. The intended exchange of views between the Glenbow Museum Director and Torben Lundbaek was soon marked by the former's insulting and insinuating remarks against Torben Lundbaek and all those museums in Europe who think along the same lines. His uncompromising stand barred every discussion. The Director then left the meeting abruptly. Torben Lundbaek continued to explain the Lubicon Lake Indians' campaign for a boycott of the Olympic Winter Games 1988. This campaign is supported by the World Council of Churches, the National Indian Brotherhood, Assembly of First Nations, the Metis Association of Alberta, and other organizations.

The ICME meeting in Buenos Aires then decided to draft a proposal for the General Assembly in order to seek support for these Indians and for all minorities in the world who feel suppressed and the material evidence of whom is in the museums of ethnography. During the General Assembly the proposal was accepted, although not unanimously,

saying that "museums, which are engaged in activities relating to living ethnic groups, should whenever possible, consult with the appropriate members of those groups, and such museums should avoid using ethnic materials in any way which might be detrimental and/or offensive to such groups."

The General Assembly suggested that this proposal be developed into a 'code of ethics', specifically for cases of this nature. ICME has promised to do so during its Leiden Conference in September 1987. Torben Lundbaek, former member of ICME's Executive Board, has agreed to chair the workshop in Leiden which will study this problem.

#### ICME CONFERENCE LEIDEN 31. AUGUST - 5. SEPTEMBER 1987.

At the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde (National Museum of Ethnography) in Leiden, this museum and the International Committee for Museums of Ethnography will organize an international conference:

#### "Presentation of Culture – Problems and Challenges."

The participants will deal with the question how changing views on 'culture', all over the world, should be translated in ethnographical museum presentations.

The aim of this conference is to develop new perspectives, new theories and new administrative recommendations with respect to the presentation of culture in museums of ethnography.

There will be three lecture cycles. The first cycle is entitled:  
"Museums of Ethnography and their Relation with Society".

Proposed themes in this cycle are:

- to whom do museums of ethnography address themselves?; how to present your own culture to your own people?;
- the accessibility of museums of ethnography;
- education and museums of ethnography;
- architecture and museums of ethnography;
- museums without buildings;
- tourism and museums.

The second cycle is entitled:

"Problems with Respect to the Presentation of Culture in Museums of Ethnography".

Proposed themes are:

- external factors having influence on museum presentations;
- problems of developing countries.

The third cycle is entitled:

"Solutions and Challenges with Respect to the Presentation of Culture in Museums of Ethnography."

As in the second cycle the perspective will be regional. The focus of attention will be on recent developments in museum presentations.

Besides these lectures there will be a whole day of workshops on:

- folk arts and crafts;
- ethical aspects of presentations of culture;
- educational aspects of presentations of culture;
- architecture and design serving the presentations of culture;
- audiovisual material serving the presentations of culture;
- presenting your own culture to your own people.

Another important part of the conference is the series of excursions to museums of ethnography in The Netherlands. Visits are planned to the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam, the Museum voor Volkenkunde in Rotterdam and the Museum in The Hague. We are at home in the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde (National Museum of Ethnography) in Leiden.

The Conference will be organized as follows:

August	31	9.30 h. Opening of Conference followed by visit to the Museum, plenary sessions and dinner;
September	1, 2	Plenary sessions with lectures, followed by excursions to museums;
September	3	Workshops;
September	4	Plenary session, followed by jubilee festivities and concluding dinner;
September	5	Excursion to museums and departure.

The Conference Fee will be approximately \$ 325,-. Please register before the first of May 1987. Send your booking form to

ICME Secretary  
Harry Leyten  
Tropenmuseum  
Mauritskade 63  
1092 AD AMSTERDAM  
The Netherlands

#### BOOKING FORM:

#### PRESENTATION OF CULTURE. PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES.

ICME Conference Leiden, 31 August / 5 September 1987

Name: .....

Address: .....

Tel. No.: .....

Residential Conference Fee approximately \$ 325,-.

Please, register now. You will be invoiced later.

### THE RETRIEVAL OF "LOST" OBJECTS.

(Two years ago the present writer bought at an auction in Amsterdam a small stone image. On its lower back was painted a neat registration number: 884. No 7. The image, a squatting human figure of about 19 cm height resembled some prehistoric Indonesian sculpture found in Java. The find was reported to some ethnographic museums but a similar object was not found missing. The former owner of the piece could not be identified.)

It happens that one finds in the market or at auctions ethnographic objects that bear a registration number. Their occurrence arouses suspicion, because they will almost certainly have belonged to a museum collection. They may then have been stolen, because the scrupulous museum trading off redundant collection items would have removed the registration number before disposal. Some investigation seems therefore appropriate, especially since there are persistent rumours of illegal depletion of museum collections in the developing countries, rumours not without ground.

It would be very pleasing if a way could be found to track down the collection of origin. Unfortunately the registration number is no great help, because it does as a rule not identify the collection. The wide variety of registration codes in use should make it possible in theory to narrow the inquiry down to those museums that apply that code-type. Alas there is no way of knowing them, because there is no list available in which the various codes are shown and mention is made of the museums and their addresses, applying them.

There is no doubt that the attentive auctioneer or dealer would make good use of such a list as would the police. The effort to find out the former or rightful owner is to cumbersome, the insured value of the objects often not large enough to justify even a limited inquiry. Considering the good chance that stolen objects, still recognizable as former museum property are sooner sighted in the market than that they are reported missing in the museum, museums might wish to receive warnings from outside that something seems wrong. This would enable then to alert their collections by petty thefts is a nuisance. Although the security systems may never be completely foolproof and invulnerable, piecemeal improvements should be made as the opportunity arises. These improvements may be made on the

internal system or on the external security system thus enhancing the chances of retrieval. One recommendation could be to publish a list as indicated above. Another would be to expand the present registration code with a collection (museum) identification code. These do not need to be very large: two capitals to indicate the country and one or two small characters to denote the museum would suffice in most cases.

A third recommendation would be to investigate new techniques of object-marking that resist efforts of eradication. After all it is better to have duly (and neatly) marked items in the collection than to suffer passively their loss. It is perhaps advisable to invest more in collection security measures, also in the case of the low-valued objects. For what is common and cheap today, may be rare and precious tomorrow.

C. op ' Land, Ph. D.  
former Head African Dept.  
Rotterdam Museum of Ethnography

### IN MEMORIAM MOSES ABUN.

We have just received the sad news of the sudden death of Mr. Moses Saliyuk Abun of Nigeria. On his way to the Lagos Airport in order to enjoy the Christmas holidays with his family, he died, 37 years old, December 20, 1986. He was laid in state at the Jos National Museum, of which he had been the director for several years before he was transferred to the National Museum in Lagos. Mr. Moses Abun was a member of the ICME Executive Board for the past six years. May his soul rest in peace.

Harrie Leyten

### THE MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD PRESENT THEMSELVES.

— Ulla Wagner.

I was born in 1935, got married in 1966, and divorced in 1974. I have one child, a son of twenty.

Work-wise, or subject-wise, I've been involved in ethnography/anthropology most of my grown-up life. (Although I also majored in Nordic archaeology, I left that subject in 1966.) I wrote my thesis on a problem concerning colonial politics and indigenous economy/culture with the title "Colonialism and Iban Warfare". During the 1970's and early 1980's my work was divided between field research, teaching and administration, and the social problem I was interested in was the effects of international tourism on the local population in a developing context.

This work resulted in a small monograph and a number of articles, and I believe I spoke to several of you concerning this. Apart from the monograph, three of the articles are in English.

In 1984 I became the Director of the Museum of Ethnography in Stockholm.

— Harrie Leyten.

I was born in Holland in 1935 and did my first degree in theology. In 1961 I left for Ghana where I worked as a missionary for ten years. I then read social anthropology in Oxford and was appointed curator for the new Africa department of the Tropenmuseum. I got married to the Head of the Outreach Department of the Educational Service, and we have two children.

I was fortunate to be appointed in the time that this museum underwent its rites de passage, its transition into a modern centre for the presentation of cultures and peoples of the developing world.

I enjoyed every minute of the challenge, even though it was a most hectic period. I published a book on Gold Weights of Ghana (1979) and another about Modern Art (1980). I was the co-author of the catalogue of the Africa Museum in Cadier en Keer (Holland), and I am now preparing a book on African Stools. Unfortunately the museum's budget does not allow me to travel much, although I have been back to Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Burkina Fasso several times in the past 15 years. In 1984 I was appointed a lecturer of museology at the University of Amsterdam, specializing in Museums of Ethnography.

Museology, the relationship between museums of ethnography and the community within which they operate, the presentation of cultures to people of different background have my interest. That is why I enjoy working in a progressive museum and enjoy teaching my students about the challenges of the museum world.

I am looking forward to meet you at the Leiden Conference in September, which is specifically concerned with this issue.

### MEMBERS OF THE BOARD ADDRESSES

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### INTRODUCTION TO MUSEUM STUDIES.

We received the following News Release from the Cultural Resource Management in Victoria, Canada:

A comprehensive independent study package entitled 'Introduction to Museum Studies' is now available through the Cultural Resource Management Program of the University of Victoria. This fourth year level study package comprises 2100 pages of study instructions, journal articles, text

excerpts and manuscripts on all the major topics identified in the ICOM curriculum. Five and one-half hours of originally produced video programs are included to complement and illustrate the print package.

This course may be taken for University credit. The student is in regular contact with a tutor on-campus and submits assignments for evaluation. Annual enrollment takes place throughout July and August and students normally start the course in August. The current fee is \$ 495.00 (Canadian Funds).

Course materials are also available for sale to institutions for use in their own training programs for professional development, entry level training and volunteer training. The course books also serve as useful reference guides.

For information, registration materials or order forms please contact:

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