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FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear friends,

this ICME-newsletter contains a summary of our workshop on Chalki as well as the first two contributions dealing with the ethics of exhibitions in museums of ethnography. What had occasioned the discussion, was the appeal of the Lubicon Lake Band of the Cree Indians in Canada to boycott the exhibition "The Spirit Sings" in the Glenbow Museum in Calgary. I should be very grateful if you would let us have your comments, or articles on the subject.

In particular, I should like to call your attention to the announcement of the forthcoming General Conference of ICOM in August of this year in The Hague in the Netherlands and the simultaneous meeting of our committee. We should appreciate it very much if you would reply and fill in the enclosed registration form.

With my very best wishes for a successful and happy 1989 I am
yours truly

Dr. Herbert Ganslmayr

MUSEUMS AND DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL ISLANDS CONFERENCE IN GREECE October 15 - 23, 1988 Excursions

On Saturday, October 15, the participants started to gather in the beautiful city of Rhodes. They arrived from Athens in different planes but with one goal in mind: the night boat to Karpathos. At 22.30 that boat departed from the harbour into a warm Mediterranean night. The sea was smooth, the sky twinkling with countless stars.

On the upper deck there was the first encounter of a truly international conference. Two Norwegians and one Russian, two Canadians, though one of German origin, one American, a handful of Germans, three Dutch, of whom one couple; these were the first to get together. Later on they were followed by a Portuguese, a young man from Afghanistan and the entire Greek delegation.

The debarkation at the island of Karpathos happened in the dark, at 5 o'clock in the morning. Fortunately, Eleonora Ganslmayr, wife to the president of ICME, who lives on the island at this time of the year, managed to have coffee shop open for us so that we could enjoy an early breakfast. We were accommodated in two comfortable hotels. There was a first day to enjoy the sun, the beach, the atmosphere. In the evening a meeting was organized between the participants of the conference and the local population in order to discuss the main theme of the conference: Museums and development. It was meant to be the continuation of a discussion which took place on the occasion of a small exhibition arranged by the Übersee-Museum, Bremen, on Karpathos, its cultural as well as its natural heritage and its possible future development. Then the question had been discussed in a large round, how the development of the island might proceed and whether a cultural center or a museum could be of any help for it. Karpathos seemed to be an ideal case study for the Conference. The island has beautiful beaches and a rugged mountainous nature. It has some historic villages, such as Arkassa on the coast and Olimbos, high up in the mountains hidden from medieval pirates. Last year, in 1987, the first big charter planes were able to land after an extension of the existing airport. Suddenly the gold fever gripped the island population. Even on the Sunday of our arrival, work on new hotel accommodation continue at top

Cover illustration:

Karagös -
figure in a shadow-play, Greece

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speed. As many hotels as possible had to be prepared for the next holiday season.

The meeting in the evening became a disappointment. Of the local population only the Prefect was present, an architect, the owner of a local travel agency and two members of an initiative to found a cultural center in the capital of the island, in Pighadia.

Suggestions from some participants based on experiences with the negative effects of tourism were waved away. The intended discussion about the role of a cultural center in view of development didn't take place; there was, unfortunately, no real intercommunication.

Among the suggestions was the idea that the big touroperators in Europe should become even more aware of the fact that the very treasures which they exploit for their tourists (beaches and sun, culture and beauty), are being threatened by the very touroperators. It implies that if no action is taken, the beaches will be spoiled and become unsuited for tourists because of massive pollution, and that the cultural beauty will vanish due to the negative impact of the tourist industry. Touroperators should try to induce their tourists to respect the natural and cultural heritage of the islands and moreover should invest in the maintenance and upkeep of these resources. Someone cited the example of a British touroperator who supplied hotels with posters addressing the tourists with the slogan "Be careful with water. The next rain may not fall on the island till December".

Another suggestion was to pay more attention to the maritime traditions of the island and acquire a floating museum, a ship that specializes on underwater life, too.

The next day took us by a small boat to the harbour of Diaphani towards the north of the island. From there we went into the mountains along a steep road to the old village of Olimbos, a 14th century village with ancient traditions.

On Tuesday the conference should have moved to the island of Kassos, but as the sea was too rough for the crossing by a small boat, the voyage was delayed till the next day. Therefore the participants undertook a bus-trip to several villages of the island, f.e. to Outhos where they visited a small museum showing the interior of a traditional

house and the gallery of a naive painter, Yannis Xapsis. Another small museum was visited in Arkassa, which was set up on the local orthodox priest's initiative who even built it with his own hands.

The reception at Kassos the next day was wonderful. A large delegation was awaiting us at the quay and bade us welcome. We were whisked away by the two taxis of the island and a big open van to the next village where we visited a women's cooperative engaged in weaving traditional rugs and doing leatherwork. We were cordially received and it was a pleasure to witness the enthusiasm and the involvement of the local population in this project as well as in the restoration of two ancient houses which would soon be opened as museums. Local specialties in seafood were served for lunch and later for dinner before we embarked on the ferry to the island of Chalki where the conference would be organized in a special conference center, built there by our host, the Secretariate of Youth.

We arrived in Chalki just before dawn and had to find our way to the Conference center through back alleys, climbing stairways hewn in the rocks.

Chalki has only one village, which also is the harbour. It has just over 300 inhabitants. There are no trees, there is no agriculture. It is a bare rock, off the coast of Rhodes. Its history is old and written in warfare and poverty. In 1912 the island still counted about 3000 inhabitants, farming the land and breeding sheep and goats. Now, 75 years later, the island is all but deserted. If the sea is so rough that boats cannot reach the island for some days, the inhabitants go hungry.

The situation of the villagers seems desperate. However, some years ago, the Greek government declared the Chalki "The Island of Peace and Friendship for young people from all over the world". Through this programme, initiated by the Youth Secretariate, efforts are being made to develop the island, to revive traditional activities, such as fishing, and develop new ones, especially 'quality' tourism, that is to say tourism which protects the natural and cultural heritage. The intention of the programme is to serve as an example for regions with similar problems, particularly on small islands.

Although the programme has only been instituted in 1983, one senses a reversal in population trends and a revitalisation of the local economy.

MUSEUM AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL ISLANDS

CONFERENCE ORGANIZED BY ICME AND MINOM IN COOPERATION WITH THE SECRETARIATE OF YOUTH/MINISTRY OF CULTURE.

Museum projects on some islands of the Dodecanese, initiated by the Overseas Museum in Bremen together with the Ministry of Culture in Athens on the one hand, and discussions within ICME concerning the establishment of museums in isolated areas or communities on the other hand, brought a number of people together on the theme of Museums and the Development of Small Islands. ICME then invited MINOM, the Mouvement International pour une Nouvelle Museologie, to partake in this conference.

MINOM is at present an affiliated organization of ICOM, comparable to the Maritime Museums, for instance. MINOM consists of more than 100 museologists from 20 countries. They argue that the museum-world go into a crisis of identity during the past decades and that the solution to this crisis can be found in a fundamental rethinking of the nature of museums, their relation to society, their functioning within the community. Ecomuseums, promoted by G.-H. Rivière and H. de Varine in France during the 70s, were among the first expressions of a new approach to community-oriented museum work.

MINOM gladly accepted ICME's invitation to discuss the role of museums and ecomuseums in such marginal societies as the smaller islands of the Dodecanese.

ICOFOM, the International Committee for Museology, had also been invited by ICME. Unfortunately they were unable to send a major delegation to the conference, as their own annual conference takes place in November 1989, in India. Only Professor Chaldea of Rome presented himself as an ICOFOM member.

The Conference opened on Thursday October 20, at 9.00 o'clock in the morning with an address by the mayor of Chalki, Mrs. Stamatia Vassilogeorgis. She spoke about the history of her island and how through the international conferences, organized by the Secretariate of Youth since 1983, a renaissance came and the first bene-

fits have begun to show on the island. She envisaged new developments, new projects such as the establishment of a medical center. She also was proud to refer to a number of islanders who had gone abroad many years ago and who were returning to Chalki in order to rebuild their houses. The mayor announced her plans of establishing a women's cooperative, an improved water supply on the island and a better sewage system.

The President of ICME, Herbert Ganslmayr, introduced the theme of the Conference and pointed out that, to begin with, it would be important to try and define precisely the terms "museum" and "development", as only then one would be able to arrive at a more to the point definition of the workshop's theme. The word "museum" should be used in the sense of the "New Museology", so that it will no longer meet the criteria for the traditional museum, but rather include additional aspects, such as the local people's participation in the setting up and the management of the museum; the collecting of all the cultural heritage, i.e. of the cultural heritage, too, using the collective awareness of the local people as a criterion for what should be collected; or the fact that a museum must no longer of necessity be housed in a single building but may be housed in a single building but may be spreading over a wide area, depending on the site of some particular material cultural heritage: a museum without walls. All these are criteria which are in the first place met by the eco-museums.

"Development" does not only mean economic development, growth of the G.N.P.; it means, most important of all, cultural development, guided by the desires of the people concerned who are also taking an active share in it. Their wishes and hopes are by no means static, nor is their identity static.

What we are asking ourselves now, is: How can museums be of assistance and promote this kind of development? One conclusion certainly is, that the concepts of such museums cannot be static either. The role of these museums from the point of view of smaller islands or limited regions wanting development, has on several occasions been touched upon in discussions held during the Chalki-Conferences of the Youth. But it had never been thoroughly dealt with. Thus the idea came up to make this aspect a subject of discussion at a meeting to be held on Chalki. Another reason

was that in fall 1987 a group of museum people meeting in Esrom, Denmark, had been drafting guidelines for the Third Medium Term Plan of Unesco. And in doing so they had been attaching great significance to the role of museums within their particular social environment; guidelines which have meanwhile been incorporated into the draft for the next Triennial Programme of ICOM.

The results of this workshop may also be of significance for the World Decade of Cultural Development (1989 - 1999) for which the role of the museums has not yet been clearly defined. But they may also be of importance for specific projects, such as the "Core Project 7" in the Third Medium Term Plan of Unesco: Linking Island Communities.

The next speaker was Professor Pierre Mayrand, the President of MINOM, from Quebec. In view of the complexity of the problems with which we are faced, he pointed to the inevitably difficult situation in which the expert, in particular the museologist, finds himself when he is confronted with problems of development determining the future of human beings whose mentality and whose history we know very little about.

How can museums, acting as mediators, initiate a dialogue between the people and the administration? Is this really their task, and who has authorized them to take on this role, if not the organized will of the people, or the authorities, or local associations standing for the protection and preservation of their way of life?

The President of MINOM wishes that we embark upon this Conference without any differentiation between "experts" and "others". Everybody attending is actually in possession of some kind of knowledge worth passing on:

- He may know the local milieu;
- he may know the techniques and methods applied in museological work;
- he may be familiar with the ways and means of international cooperation;
- or he may know all about relations of solidarity between regions.

In his opinion the purpose of the Conference is to have an exchange of information in the spirit of international cooperation in an endeavour to establish friendly and durable relations, as they exist between two bodies belonging to the ICOM,

or among individuals sharing this experience - bringing in their cultures and their awareness of the chance they have been given - in the far-off Dodecanese, one of the birthplaces of Western civilization, a synthesis of diverse currents.

Pierre Mayrand, founder and "animateur" of the "Ecomusée de la Haute Beauce (Québec)", describes the circumstances under which this ecomuseum came into being and, surprisingly, developed. The museum's main assets are:

- its striking appearance, showing all the features of a territorial identity typical for this region (so that the name "Haute Beauce" will live on for this hitherto ignored rural district of farmland and forests);
- the great extent to which the local people have been induced to cooperate;
- its role as a meeting place for national and international exchanges;
- its role as a laboratory in which to experiment with a collective creativity, producing independence, an individual and a regional awareness, self-determination in matters of administration, and an integrated development.

Pierre Mayrand stresses that every ecomuseum constitutes a singular phenomenon, in the specific context of the region maintaining it, and that the evaluation of its "success" must not be based solely on its material realization, as impressive as they may be, but rather on the mental process taking place in the people's hearts and souls and in their way of thinking. He calls this a "regional sensibility", marked by a balanced complementarity between physical and mental processes of development.

On behalf of the "Association des écomusées du Québec", Pierre Mayrand addresses an invitation to everyone participating in the Congress, at the same time expressing the hope that this exchange will be continued at "concrete places of realization", miles away from any microphone.

Dr. Andrea Hauenschild read the key-note paper on "New Museology and Development", a critical overview on achievements and problems of New Museology in relation to community development.

The speaker recalled that in various countries experiences have been made with local and regional museums being in the service of society

and favoring the development of their respective neighborhood or region. Ecomuseums in Quebec, community museums in Mexico and neighborhood museums in the United States were named as examples.

In response to these various experiences and as their common denominator New Museology developed and MINOM came into being in 1985. New Museology offers a concept for a new type of local and/or regional museums concerned with development. That concept defines goals, basic principles, structure and organization, approach and functions of the museum institution in a way that enables the museum to become a useful tool in the hands of the community. Mrs. Hauenschild then identified and explained the basic elements of the ideal model of the "new" museum.

Empirical data from five case studies in Canada, USA and Mexico put the theoretical model into perspective and showed rather clearly achievements and problem areas of the "new" museum. The speaker pointed out some aspects that she considered relevant to museum development in Greece.

Identity - that means historical consciousness, orientation in time and space, feeling of belongingness, self-confidence - represents for "new" museums the base a community can build on in order to manage and control everyday life and future development. In fact, "new" museums have done extraordinary work in the field of identity-building, particularly as far as non-dominant cultures are concerned.

Development as a goal of "new" museums is rather problematic. In practice "new" museums are rarely concerned with measurable social and economic development. The case studies show an important lack of conscious development related strategies and programs.

Why the "new" museum does not take its responsibility as a development agency? Mrs. Hauenschild proposed some possible answers. In order to have a social impact museums have to relate to a human scale entity, a physically, culturally and socially well defined territory. Also, they have to respond to the needs of the population they serve. These conditions are often not fulfilled. Another problem is participation. The influence of the population is in most cases too limited due to communication barriers.

The speaker concluded by pointing out that despite enormous efforts and considerable success, existing "new" museums are far from reaching their full potential and from playing a significant role in the development of society. The "new" museum in itself still remains a goal to be reached.

Ms. Irene Toudassaki read her paper "Theoretical Starting Point for the Ecomuseums in Greece." When the museums got in a crisis in the 1970s, something had to happen. The ICOM Conference of 1971 was the first to mention the concept of an ecomuseum as a response to the problematic situation. But this did not come unexpectedly. It tied in with certain museological traditions, such as of regional museums. Other attempts were made, such as of outdoor-museums. Although they used principles which also underlie the ecomuseums, the two should not be confused. They differ in the way in which the population participates. After H. de Varine had introduced the word, it was G.-H. Rivière who developed the concept. The aim was to connect the cultural heritage of the group (i.e. the future). The cultural heritage does not only include material culture but also the spiritual values of the community. It concerns the identity of the community. It represents the dynamic, dialectic relationship between cultural heritage and the community. The community plays a dominant role in the process, it is an active force in the situation. The community is a crucial factor in establishing the boundaries, the parameters. Therefore, a social consciousness is essential.

After this theoretical introduction, Ms Irene Toudassaki elucidated the situation in Greece with regard to the existing museums. She described the dire need of staff, of housing, of funds. Most of the museums in Greece could not possibly serve the community in the existing constellation. They are unable to meet the crisis in the community, and they cannot respond to it. The rampant spread of tourism increases the crisis in many communities and makes the plight of the museums even more desperate.

How then should the problem be tackled. The speaker suggests that the typical approach of the ecomuseum could contribute towards a solution. After all, the eco-museology is a process which requires an approach different from the traditional museology. The ecomuseums activate the people and give life to the cultural area. Yet the people should never feel as objects of research. The

ecomuseum should function as a bridge of communication.

The next phase of the conference was devoted to a number of case studies in Greece. Ms E. Blana introduced "The Museum of Folk Art in Larissa. Perspectives for the Setting up of an Open-air Museum". She narrated how the Folk Art Society was instituted in the 1950s in response to the loss of traditional culture. It collected museum material and studies cultural life. A museum was established with a permanent exhibition on the pre-industrial period, the production of wheat, animal breeding, fishing.

In a newly to be erected open-air museum there will be an area devoted to agriculture, both past and present forms, but also a central building which will house the historical collections and other samples of material culture.

Ms Smaragda Adamandiadou and Mr. Nicolas Katsikas read the paper of Ms Helen Stamati "The Milies Museum Presents the Even 'Open Village' " at Mount Pilion, 500 km north of Athens. It is a small, but active museum with over 12.000 visitors a year. They reported about the educational programmes of the museum with the help of well selected slides.

Mr. Vassilis Tsaousis introduced the Open-air Museum of Folk Art in Serres. This museum about the Sarakasani, animal-breeders for many centuries, was erected in 1983. One part of the museum is situated in the city of Serres, another part is an open village, up in the mountains about 30 km from the city. Attempts will be made to re-establish some of the old traditions of weaving, spinning, dyeing (with natural dyes), cheese-making (without preservatives) according to ancient recipes. — The community needs a school where the old skills can be taught to the next generations.

PRESENTATION OF THE CASE

The afternoon of the first day was spent with the presentation of the case. In other words, the islands which we had visited in the previous days were introduced and discussed.

Kassos was the first island which was introduced as a case study. Mr. Christos Kondos and Mr. Manolis Perselis presented the results of their re-

search and narrated how Kassos had an economic boom until 1824 when disaster struck the island. Reports about the island in those days speak of agriculture, animal breeding and fishing. They had a reputation as sailors and possessed a large fleet. Later over three thousand islanders partook in the digging of the Suez Canal. But the gradual destruction of the natural environment caused a steady emigration of many islanders, especially the young generation. The migrants who make their living elsewhere in the world, are in a position that they maintain (up to a certain standard) those who stayed on the island.

The island communities get into an ever-increasing crisis. Hence the call for an ecomuseum. This should mobilize the local population. Their participation is essential. They should analyze their situation, their problems. The response by the villagers was positive. A collection was made of old tools and instruments. The contextual information is still available with some of the old people. The establishment of a museum will be part of the process in which people reflect on their problems, their past and their future.

The other island we visited during our pre-conference excursion was Karpathos. Its case study was presented to the conference by Ms Ulrike Tietze. Originally called the dream island, Karpathos has long been considered the opposite of the noisy, restless metropolis.

Greek's central government introduced a programme of economic activities in order to prevent inflation, create jobs and improve the civil service. Therefore, tourism was also promoted as a crucial tool in this programme. At present 30% of the GNP is derived from tourism. But in this same programme smaller islands did not play a role, as they lacked an agricultural basis. The programme, however, is improving this island's infrastructure in order to boost tourism. The local people, on the other hand, were reluctant to realize the amelioration programme because of the wellknown negative effects of tourism. In most cases, however, it was the financial benefits which persuaded island communities to accept tourism into their middle.

This was the case on the island of Karpathos. There was an outspoken fear of the negative effects of tourism. Foreigners started to buy houses and land to build hotels. The first tourists to visit the island were the so-called back-packers. They

spent little money on facilities, they slept on the beaches and ate cheap food. Karpathos did not profit from their presence. — In 1971 there was one hotel. But when the tourists came in larger numbers, the inhabitants started to rent their rooms. In 1983 the existing airstrip was extended in order to provide space for larger planes. Developments went fast. A growing number of tourists, especially from Norway, England and Germany, created more jobs, raised the average income and caused many Karpathians living abroad to come back home to work in the tourist industry. During the tourist season, however, even children have to work hard and for many hours. The sewage system proved to be inadequate, the water supply did not meet the sudden demand. The islanders wish to profit from the economic advantages of tourism but tend to overlook the fact that tourism threatens to destroy the very attraction for which the tourists come to Karpathos.

Ms Helena Methodiou concluded this session with a series of slides and a description of museums and especially local museums which exist already or will be set up in the near future, in the Dodecanese.

After the tea break there were three introductions to international case studies. Ms Annette Fromm (USA) spoke with great intensity on two museums, one in Cleveland, Ohio, the other in Tulsa, Oklahoma, which have had a lot of experience with the participation of the local communities. The first museum organized a major exhibition on the occasion of the Bicentennial in which over 20 ethnic groups living in the area participated, presenting their material culture and historical objects.

The second museum originated from within a small Jewish community in Tulsa. Within the area which is sometimes called the 'buckle of the Bible belt', this community managed to retain its own identity.

Yet in both museums things went wrong. There grew a gap between the museum people and the local population. The groups which were the subject matter of the exhibitions, were not sufficiently involved in the policy making, or left out altogether.

Pierre Mayrand (Canada) spoke a great length about the project in which he is deeply involved, the ecomuseum of Haute Beauce near Quebec.

When in the 70s social unrest in the area threatened to get out of hand, when it became a political issue, even more under pressure of the government's attempts to decentralize power, the idea of an ecomuseum (even if the word was used) came about.

Pierre Mayrand then described the process which he embarked upon together with a number of local people and of which nobody knew the outcome. He considered this to be an essential element of eco-museology. The ten people who set the ball rolling, also contributed financially towards the purchase of certain collections. A house was bought. A museum was established. It became the tool for sensitization. From here people started to the possession of their situation and establish their own identity. They started to realize what they required in order to maintain their cultural and natural heritage. Then they had to prove to the outside world that they were able to achieve something and were able to take responsibility for their actions.

Mr. Miguel Passao (Portugal) related the history of the project: Museu de Conimbriga, with which he is involved. The finding of the area around Conimbriga dating back to the Roman period and drawing many tourists. The area itself has become a site for an ecomuseum, covering several villages. Since there are considerable economic problems, one of the aims of the ecomuseum is to make young people stay in the area, create jobs for them and through that raise the economic standards. Concerns about the maintenance of the natural environment, the promotion of local industry, the improvement of the infrastructure, all play a role in the establishment of an ecomuseum.

A very vast region in the upper regions of the Soviet Union, with Archangel as the hub in the wheel, was the theme of a paper read by Dr. Alexander Davidov. A number of museums in this area, a.o. an open-air museum and a maritime museum, serve the communities in this isolated region. University students are actively involved in the many categories of research undertaken. The local people identify strongly with the many museums and look at these institutions for advice.

A similar situation in Norway was introduced by Dr. Marc Maure and Torbjörn Eggen. The newly established ecomuseum served as a data-base for

the numerous requests for information by the local population. It also functions as a laboratory where the many possibilities for development are being discussed and studied. Both also indicated that the traditional museum in Norway is almost always an open-air museum, but that the majority of the 300 museums lack the staff and the facilities to function properly. An increasing number of these museums is in the process of changing into ecomuseums.

WORKSHOPS OF THE CONFERENCE

The second day of the Conference was reserved for workshops. The participants were divided into two groups, one Francophone and one Anglophone. Each group would discuss the same themes and topics. In view of this approach a number of introductory papers were read in order to set the theme of the discussions in the workshops.

Ms Smaragda Adamadiadou and Mr. Nicolas Katsikas were the first to speak and to introduce the museum of environment "Ecomuseum: An Alternative way of Management especially for Problematic Areas. The Case of Prespae. The Ecomuseum Carrier of a New Conception for an Overall Development of Man." After referring to the ideas developed by G.-H. Rivière and later on by the protagonists of the new museology, they described the crisis into which the world had fallen, the cultural and natural heritage which was being threatened almost with extinction, the degeneration of human values. They claimed that the ecomuseum was designed especially to assist in the task of turning the tide. They referred to a well-known model in which the human needs were structured as layers one on top of the other. After the basic layer of food and shelter, there were the successive layers of sense of security, self-system and articulation. Every human being had to strive after the fulfillment of all these needs, but in the correct order. Not one layer can be skipped, lest the individual become imbalanced. Only if man is able to satisfy all his needs, does he manifest all his potential. A museum, especially an ecomuseum must assist man in his multi-lateral development. It is the ecomuseum which has a holistic view on environment, on the relationship between man and nature. It places man in his environment. — At the same time they admitted that the interpretation of the environment in relation to man poses a problem. Quoting the Chinese proverb "I speak and forget, I listen and

I remember, I do and I understand" they described the ecomuseum as the active factor in the development, as an incentive for development.

Ms Rodoula Stathaki-Koumari described the museum as an alternative educational tool in the handling of tourism. She related her experiences in the Museum of Galaxidi: "The Educational Role of the Museum for an Alternative Tourism. The Museums of Galaxidi and Rethimno".

Mr. George Machairas, who unfortunately could not attend the conference had his paper read by someone else. It made an appeal for the establishment of industrial museums and museums of technology. They should not only collect ancient monuments of technology (industrial archaeology) but also concentrate on the development in technology which are changing the faces of our towns.

A similar approach was made for the museums of agriculture by Marc Maure. He had observed that, much to his regret, too many museums of agriculture refraining from concentrating on present development and instead spent much energy on collecting the past.

Ms Angeliki Haritonidou spoke about the role of her museum which opened 1988: "The Ecological Museum in Folegandros".

Mrs. Andrea Hauenschild drew the meeting's attention to the guidelines which she had drawn up and which she considered crucial for the understanding of what an ecomuseum is.

The Conference broke into two groups which retired for separate workshops. They met for several hours during the rest of the day and reported in a plenary session on the third and last day of the Conference.

The Anglophone group filed the following summary and conclusions:

The group focused on agricultural museums first and argued that in the holistic approach which the new museology had put forward in this conference, there should not be so much emphasis on mono-disciplinary museums, such as agricultural museums. It was also brought forward that the character of a local museum was to be determined by the local population. However, decisions taken elsewhere, for instance in Athens (cultural preser-

vation policy) or even Brussels (E.E.C. seat, agricultural policy), affect the local population. The ecomuseum does not only give background information (data-base) to the inhabitants of the area, it also plays a role in sensitizing the local population, it can act as a guide through forests of problems.

It helps to identify problems and assists in finding solutions. The group spoke at length on the many facets of tourism. Tourism is considered by many as a threat. Others like to have a positive view of it and argue that if tourism can be controlled well, it can be an asset to the local population.

Museums have to adopt new approaches to tourism. They should try to create poles of attraction, protect natural and cultural heritage. They should — in as far as this is possible — contribute to the growing awareness among tourist agencies, both in Greece and in the rest of Europe, of the negative effects of tourism, and of the necessity to preserve the cultural and natural heritage.

In this perspective endeavours should be made not only to find alternative forms of tourism, more appropriate to the needs of the local population, but also to find alternatives to tourism, if the latter would be detrimental to a community or environment. At the same time the group argued that ecomuseums are not only for tourists who frequent an island during the summer months, but are primarily for the local population. When part of the sensitizing process involves problems arising from tourism, the ecomuseum turns its attention to the issue. Part of the solution may be found in developing educational and other methods in order to improve the relationship of tourists with the local population as well as the environment. Among several proposals there was an appeal to concentrate efforts on the emphasis of the maritime nature of Greek cultural patrimony.

The following conclusions were drawn from the discussion:

1. The following guidelines should be taken into account whenever a museum which deals with cultural and natural heritage, is planned and realized.
 - a. identity and development as goals of museums
 - b. participation of the people on all levels
 - c. interdisciplinary approach
 - d. cooperation with other local institutions

- e. linking past, present and future
- f. involvement of experts in the most meaningful and careful manner
- g. a reinterpretation of the classical functions of museums.

2. The museum and more specifically the ecomuseum, offers to tourism in sensitive areas (e.g. National Parks) an opportunity to introduce new quality of activities. This can be achieved
 - a. by means of a fair relationship between the local people and nature which is to be created through the ecomuseum's activities and which will have a positive influence on the relations between visitor and local resident and between visitor and nature.
 - b. by a programme of visitor management which, with the use of different methods, guarantees that their stay will not disturb nature and the local population. Tourism development in sensitive areas is much more a matter of quality than of quantity. The programme of such a development could also form a pilot programme for other areas.

3. A well organized programme interpreting the natural and cultural environment addressed both to the local residents of the museum's territory and to the visitors, forms a tool which a) by strengthening in the resident the awareness of the value of his natural and cultural heritage, strengthens him also as an individual, and b) helps the visitor to know, understand and appreciate the different aspects of the area he is visiting. Such interpretation programme will not only alleviate the cultural approach but also create an atmosphere of mutual respect among the visitor, the resident and nature.

The Francophone group filed the following summary and conclusions:

Introduction

Le travail a commence par un "tour de table" ou chaque participant s'est présenté et a précisé quels étaient ses centres d'intérêt par rapport aux thèmes définis dans la matinée. Nous avons ensuite défini une méthode de travail et décidé d'analyser à la fois

- 1) les missions du musée:
 - son rôle social
 - ses aspects scientifiques
 - la vie associative
 - le développement régional

- 2) les fonctions du musée:
gestion – finances
programmation
communication

Cette analyse serait centrée sur les exemples grecs et en particulier sur les problèmes des petites îles.

I. Chaque région pourrait avoir un Centre Culturel régional au service des musées locaux, puisque chaque île et chaque communauté veulent avoir leur propre musée. Ce centre serait au service d'un réseau de musées locaux.

Contenu

Ce centre serait consacré à l'art folklorique grec qui est un domaine auquel on s'est jusqu'à présent moins intéressé qu'aux domaines archéologiques et byzantins.

Gestion

Il paraîtrait souhaitable que la gestion de ce centre soit assurée collectivement par des représentants des milieux insulaires (élus, associations, musées locaux) afin d'assurer une participation effective de ces milieux et leur implication dans la politique du centre.

Services essentiels dispensés par le centre

Le centre assurera les fonctions traditionnelles du musée, c'est-à-dire:

- 1) recherche: documentation, banques de données, vidéodisque
- 2) conservation/restauration: constitution d'une équipe volante de restaurateurs
- 3) animation/communication: service de relations publiques
- 4) formation en muséographie et animation culturelle.

Il a été souligné l'importance de former des restaurateurs spécialisés dans la conservation des objets d'art folklorique, qui sont très peu nombreux en Grèce, par rapport aux restaurateurs qui se consacrent à l'art archéologique et à l'art byzantin. La création d'une école de restaurateurs a été recommandée.

II. Les musées locaux

Leur contenu: représenter la vie de l'île dans tous ses aspects (histoire, civilisation, langues, habillement, nature, paysage, nourriture, musique etc...)

Le lieu: un bâtiment déjà existant, accessible,

ouvert à tous, reconnu par les habitants comme un lieu de réunion, afin de pouvoir servir de centre culturel.

La gestion

Le musée est conçu et géré par la population qui en fait un musée vivant.

Musée local et développement économique

Le musée peut avoir une incidence certaine sur le développement économique de l'île, en particulier dans sa relation avec le tourisme.

Il pourrait devenir un point d'information et d'animation touristiques, en privilégiant une forme d'accueil qui proposerait un tourisme culturel de qualité (par ex. des visites sur certains thèmes: la piraterie en mer Egée, la broderie dans les îles du Dodécanèse etc...).

Par ailleurs le musée doit entretenir une tradition artisanale de qualité qui pourra être une source importante de revenus. Sur le problème de la qualité de l'artisanat le centre régional pourrait donner des orientations.

Le musée peut faire appel aux habitants eux-mêmes, par exemple à l'instituteur de l'école pour animer le musée.

Muséographie

Le musée doit développer une muséographie spécifique à la tradition grecque et adaptée aux moyens locaux, une muséographie "sans mur" (par ex.: panneaux sur la place, dans la montagne etc...) Cette muséographie doit être imaginée par les habitants eux-mêmes et prendre des formes très diverses (par ex.: sur le bateau Rhodes – Chalki etc...)

Role social

Le musée doit susciter des débats au sein de la population qui sera amenée à discuter, grâce au processus muséologique, de ses problèmes actuels et de son propre devenir (par ex. ses relations avec le tourisme etc...)

As the presentation of the summaries was short and did not require any further discussion, the meeting continued with a panel-discussion on eco-museums, their theoretical basis as well as their practical functioning.

Herbert Ganslmayr, ICME's President, brought the Conference to a close, thanked all the participants for their contributions, the organizers, the translators and the Secretariate of Youth for their financial support and wished everybody a good journey back home.

THE ETHICS OF EXHIBITION

During the meeting of ICME in Buenos Aires in 1986, on the occasion of the General Conference of ICOM, there have been a lengthy and controversial discussion on whether or not museums of ethnography should contribute to an exhibition entitled "The Spirit Sings" to be arranged in the Glenbow Museum in Calgary, Canada, in connection with the Olympic Games. The Lubicon Lake Band, a group of the Cree Indians in Canada, had appealed to the world to boycott the exhibition. Numerous museums followed the appeal, other did not.

The discussion in Buenos Aires had also encouraged ICME to introduce a resolution which was then passed by the General Assembly as Resolution 11:

Participation of Ethnic Groups in Museum Activities

Whereas there are increasing concerns on the part of ethnic groups regarding the ways in which they and their cultures are portrayed in museum exhibitions and programmes.

The 15th General Assembly of ICOM, meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 4 November 1986.

Recommends that:

1. Museums which are engaged in activities relating to living ethnic groups, should, whenever possible, consult with the appropriate members of those groups, and
2. Such museums should avoid using ethnic materials in any way which might be detrimental to the group that produced them; their usage should be in keeping with the spirit of the ICOM Code of Professional Ethics, with particular reference to paragraphs 2.8 and 6.7.

Meanwhile ICME was asked by the Executive Council of ICOM for detailed comments on the relevant paragraphs in the Code of Professional Ethics, in the first place on the paragraphs 2.8 and 6.7:

2.8. Displays, Exhibitions and Special Activities

Subject to the primary duty of the museum to preserve unimpaired for the future the significant material that comprises the museum collections, it is the responsibility of the museum to use the collections for the creation and dissemination of new knowledge, through research, educational work, permanent displays, temporary exhibitions and other special activities. These should be in accordance with the stated policy and educational purpose of the museum, and should not compromise either the quality or the proper care of the collections. The museum should seek to ensure that information in displays and exhibitions is honest and objective and does not perpetuate myths or stereotypes.

6.7. Human Remains and Material of Ritual Significance

Where a museum maintains and/or is developing collections of human remains and sacred objects these should be securely housed and carefully maintained as archival collections in scholarly institutions, and should always be available to qualified researchers and educators, but not to the morbidly curious. Research on such objects and their housing and care must be accomplished in a manner acceptable not only to fellow professionals but to those of various beliefs, including in particular members of the community, ethnic or religious groups concerned. Although it is occasionally necessary to use human remains and other sensitive material in interpretative exhibits, this must be done with tact and with respect for the feelings for human dignity held by all peoples.

As background material for such considerations we are starting in this "newsletter", to print commentaries on the Olympic-exhibition of the Glenbow Museum in Calgary, Canada, and we are asking for views and critical comments on this and similar events, to be published in the next "newsletter" due to come out in May 1989.

Herbert Ganslmayr

Michael M. Ames

BOYCOTT THE POLITICS OF SUPPRESSION!

Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia

How should museums respond to the political implications or the work they do? Is it right to suppress an exhibition because some people disagree with it, and should museums deny access to their collections for political reasons? What are the responsibilities of a museum to those peoples whose histories and heritage are represented in its collections? These are some of the questions raised by the controversies that surrounded the Glenbow's Olympic exhibition, "The Spirit Sings." They are worth examining carefully and discussing fully, for behind them lie conflicting and changing assumptions about who should govern museums, whom should they serve, and how.

Most museum workers probably would agree that professional museum standards should guide the pursuit of their mandate to serve the public, and that much of their public service manifested through exhibitions and related events should be presented as multi-vocal statements in which philosophical, moral, political, historical and aesthetic messages are joined together. Supporters of the Lubicon Lake Indian Band's land claim, on the other hand, challenged this museum professionalism as self-serving, and asked the museum instead to serve their interests which they identified with the broader public good. They wanted also to focus the multiple messages of an exhibition upon the one of political redemption. If the museum is not willing to co-operate then its exhibition should be forcibly shut down through the boycott of loans.

While it can be said about many of the Lubicon supporters that their knowledge of museums is limited, if not naive, and their allegations exaggerated, if not extreme, their concern for the Lubicon is nevertheless genuine and well founded and their criticism of museums is certainly fundamental. Like most other museum personnel I too support an early and just resolution to the Lubicon and other Native claims, and also work for a closer relationship between museums and Native peoples. I disagree with Lubicon supporters on three basic points, however: it is not necessary

(nor even helpful) to denigrate the useful work of museums in order to support the causes of aboriginal peoples, it is wrong to use the plight of one group as justification for the suppression of the rights of others, and it is fundamentally immoral to censor the views or works of those who do not directly support one's own interests. Museums are expected to inform the public about the truths of history through the preservation and interpretation of collections, even if some of those truths are no longer fashionable, and to make available to a broad public a range of educational experiences. It is contrary to their purpose as public educational institutions to use their programmes for other peoples political declarations, just as it would be contrary to the purposes of a university to convert its courses into political campaigns.

To assert that all actions are "political" (the popular slogan of the 1960s) is not to say that we should all act as if we are politicians, that all actions are equally political, or that all must serve the same political ends, or even in the same manner. The Lubicon called for a boycott of the Calgary Olympics including "The Spirit Sings" in an attempt to gain political advantage in their negotiations with the federal government. According to Lubicon chief Bernard Ominayak (Vancouver Sun newspaper, November 28, 1987), "our problem is not with athletic competitions or with cultural displays but rather with that small group of wealthy, powerful interests in Alberta who are trying to wipe us out. . ." Thus the Lubicon wanted to hold the exhibition hostage to get at other people who control the lands they claim. That may have been a useful political tactic for them — it certainly gained wide publicity — but it is not ethically or professionally justifiable for museum or university personnel to conspire in this act of hostage taking of their own colleagues.

The attempt by some university professors and museums to suppress "The Spirit Sings" exhibition through the boycott of loans was unfortunate, misguided and hypocritical. It was an act of political repression disguised as political advocacy, and it displaced responsibility for the Lubicon situation upon those who were not empowered to change it. (They did not advocate a boycott of Shell or the governments, who do have the power to resolve the claim, but chose instead to attack an exhibition which was the product of workers much lower down in the chain of command. They were easy to pick on, since they were hardly in a

position to defend themselves, but it served no useful purpose beyond creating publicity for those advocating the boycott. It was also hypocritical to cite the suppressed state of Indians as justification for their own act of repression.)

Other reasons put forward to justify the attack upon "The Spirit Sings" were based on arguments concerning the content of the exhibition, the degree of consultation, and the source of its funding. While these are important issues, they do not justify the closing down of an exhibition. Criticisms about content, for example, were in most cases not based on knowledge of the actual exhibit but on pre-judgments, which were largely fallacious. Though "The Spirit Sings" displays historic materials (why is history now wrong for museums to discuss?), the messages (political as well as cultural) are certainly contemporary.

It was said that the Glenbow should have consulted with Indian groups before arranging this exhibition. The museum did. But how wide should consultation be, to whom does one listen, when does seeking advice mean taking orders, and what does one do with advice that changes according to external political factors and after contractual commitments have been made? The Lubicon, situated in northern Alberta some distance from the Glenbow, said they were not interested in the exhibition except as a political foil. Treaty Seven Indians, on the other hand, in whose traditional territory the Glenbow resides, participated in the Olympics and the exhibition, while also supporting the Lubicon land claim. What sense does it make for a museum to disregard the advice of those peoples in its neighbourhood while acceding to the demands of a more distant group or political agencies who were only interested in using the exhibition as a bargaining chip in negotiations with other people? It is unreasonable to expect a museum to offer itself up as someone else's sacrificial lamb.

And what about "tainted" money? Because Shell and the provincial and federal governments were accused of exploiting the Lubicon, the Glenbow was held to be guilty because it accepted their aid for "The Spirit Sings". Museums even more than universities cannot operate without government and corporate support, of course. And it any case, the same governments and resource industries support Alberta universities and other public institutions, and the Lubicon received a \$ 1.5 million federal grant to fight its claim (and were

talking with Shell about how to manage the game in the area while also calling for a boycott or the Olympics). So why should only the Glenbow be ordered to refuse this "tainted" money? Let the professors who support the Lubicon first persuade their universities to renounce monies received from governments and oil companies before they call upon a museum to renounce its support. If money is tainted, that taint runs throughout society and is not restricted to those locations advocates find expedient. A call for double standards is not a convincing moral argument.

Who then should govern our museums, and how should museums respond to contemporary issues? Museums must defend their right and responsibility to govern themselves, resisting pressures from political bullies. Museums do not claim immunity from criticism, but they certainly must claim immunity from suppression. They can also benefit from the criticism, for — like universities — they are at the best of times very imperfect institutions. If they rest upon past laurels and administrative traditions they will likely end up as quaint academic specimens themselves. So they will have to change to maintain their relevance (cf. the discussion paper by Ames, Harrison and Nicks in this issue). There is more to be done and much that could be done better, indigenous peoples do have just causes, practically everyone in and outside museums would support closer relations between educational institutions and the various populations they should be serving, and all of us in the safety of our armchairs can easily second guess the ways the Glenbow responded to the boycott. But none of these factors justify cancelling an exhibition.

As citizens of a democratic society we share an obligation to speak out against the repressive tactics of totalitarianism — no matter by whom they are perpetuated, for what cause, or against whom (and why didn't the museum community speak out against this boycott? Were you all hiding, folks?) — while speaking out for people and their civil rights. As for museums, their political role is to seek beneficial change through positive action and closer working relations with all the publics they serve. "The Spirit Sings" attempts to do just that and is having a marked influence on public sentiment. To have allowed its suppression would have been an act of folly, for not only denying the public its rights to knowledge but also for undermining the autonomy of all museums to pursue their rightful mandate.

Julia D. Harrison

THE SPIRIT SINGS: A BACKGROUND NOTE

The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First Peoples opened at the Glenbow Museum on January 14, 1988. An exhibition of over 650 native objects drawn largely from foreign collections, it was organized as part of the Olympic Arts Festival. In keeping with the guidelines of the Olympic Arts Festival, Glenbow decided on an exhibition including some of the earliest material collected from the aboriginal populations of Canada. Such an exhibition would be of significance to the national audience yet of interest to the international community. It would also provide an opportunity to bring to the attention of Canadians — native and non-native alike — the wealth of Canadian native materials held in foreign museums. But most critically the exhibition could serve as an important vehicle to educate the Canadian population about the native heritage of this country.

Work first began on the exhibition by Glenbow staff in 1983 with the formulation of a Curatorial Committee. Six regional specialists were selected to work on the project. After their careful examination of the resources that existed in national and international museum collections, the exhibition, which eventually was named The Spirit Sings, evolved to have three distinct themes: to present the richness, diversity and complexity of Canada's native cultures as they were witnessed at the time of contact; to explore the common threads that link these cultures together which create a distinctive world-view, and to emphasize the adaptability and resilience of these cultures in the face of the dominant influences of European cultures. To complement this historical exploration, a Celebration of Native Cultures was organized to accompany The Spirit Sings which allowed native peoples to present a variety of contemporary cultural expressions to the public.

In early April 1986 a generous grant from Shell Oil was received to allow the project to become a reality. In mid-April 1986 the Lubicon Lake Cree in northern Alberta announced a boycott of the 1988 winter Olympics to draw attention to their unresolved land claim. Shortly thereafter they decided that their boycott would focus on The Spirit Sings as it was an exhibition about

native peoples, was sponsored by one of the oil companies which were drilling in the area claimed by the Lubicon as their traditional lands, and the boycott would likely find support among the museum community of the world rather than the sports people who had little affinity or interest in native issues. Furthermore, athletes in recent years had suffered from the intervention of politics into the olympics and many did not want to encourage this trend any further.

The boycott effort was initiated by a massive letter writing campaign by Lubicon supporters and staff. Organizations such as the World Council of Churches, the European Parliament, some national and regional native political bodies and some members of the academic community added their support for the boycott. None of these organizations contacted the Glenbow directly to verify the statements made by the Lubicon concerning the nature and motivation of the exhibition. The entire campaign was conducted through the media. Every communique which in any way could be interpreted to reflect negatively on the Federal government, the Alberta government, the oil industry, the Glenbow or the Olympics, was distributed far and wide throughout Europe. Several trips also were made by the Lubicon chief and his advisors to muster European support for the boycott. In the end twelve institutions out of the 100 approached supported the boycott and did not lend to The Spirit Sings.

Once funding for the project was confirmed, the Glenbow forwarded to native individuals and organizations on local and national levels an invitation to participate in a Liaison Committee for the exhibition. The Lubicon did not respond to this invitation. Those who did requested the Glenbow to keep politics out of the exhibition and to focus on the cultural dimensions of native life. Glenbow staff and the Lubicon representatives did eventually meet and the Lubicon, at that time, registered no objection to the content of the exhibition but only to its sponsorship and association with the Calgary Olympics which they were boycotting.

The Glenbow exhibition content and theme were in no way detrimental to native peoples; they sought only to further understanding of the first Canadians. For these reasons Glenbow persevered with the exhibition. The staff of the museum fundamentally believed that the messages in the exhibition were socially relevant and that the

production of The Spirit Sings was a socially responsible action. In more global terms the museum was (and is) committed to the idea that museums must remain independent of external political pressures.

And based on the response that it has had since its opening in Calgary, The Spirit Sings has had an impact on the way people think about native peoples. No one exhibition can be the motherhood statement on all aspects of its chosen theme but visitors receive a wide spectrum of messages from the exhibition. Visitors speak of being moved by the cultural richness that they did not know existed; of being chagrined at their lack of knowledge and understanding of native cultures; of their determination to take a more open and progressive posture in their attitudes and support for native peoples claims. Most often the messages that people take away in The Spirit Sings are contemporary even though the objects are historical.

More native people have attended and participated in The Spirit Sings than in any other exhibition mounted at the Glenbow.

The support that the boycott attempted, highlighted the stereotype that museums only spread antiquated messages. It was assumed that The Spirit Sings was only interested in the native peoples of the past. This suggests that museums themselves have not done enough to inform the public and the scholarly community that they are actively engaged in contemporary issues. History has a place in contemporary society and museums do have an interest in current issues. But that does not mean that museums must become for special interest groups who wish to make political mileage.

Museums must be allowed to disseminate information on a wide range of topics. By attempting to hold collections hostage politicians challenge basic concepts — freedom of speech and freedom of representation — that our society claims to hold sacred. Only by actively working to uphold these ideals can museums achieve their goals of public education and the enrichment of the human experience. Only by coming to understand clearly the purposes for holding collections can museums secure an important role in the future. It is time that museum professionals thought about these issues.

Articles by Michael M. Ames and Julia D. Harrison. Published in MUSE Fall 1988; reprinted with permission of MUSE.

Ron Kley

A VIEW FROM CIDOC, 1987

On September 20 - 23 of this year, more than 80 members of CIDOC (the International Committee for Documentation) of ICOM (the International Council on Museums) held their annual meeting at Cambridge, England.

Plenary sessions of the four-day conference featured status and progress reports by representatives of various national and international documentation organizations. The core activities of the conference, however, were the lengthy and productive meetings of CIDOC's several working groups dealing with various specific aspects of museum documentation. A very brief summary of working group topics/projects includes the following:

- Terminology Working Group — working on an expansion of the multilingual Dictionarium Museologicum to incorporate more museological terms and more languages.
- Database Survey Working Group — initiating a worldwide survey of computerized collection documentation projects.
- Data Standards Working Group — to further its concern with the identification and standardization of those data fields most essential for adequate documentation of collection objects, this group is preparing a tentative data model for review and comment by the worldwide museum community.
- Compact Disk Working Group — planning to produce a compendium of Dutch paintings and related documentation for demonstration at the 1989 ICOM triennial meeting at The Hague.
- Vocabulary/Thesaurus Working Group — will develop and circulate for comment a preliminary bibliography of general readings and specific project descriptions relating to vocabulary control for catalog data entry.
- Pictorial/Archives Working Group — developing a list, for circulation and review, of descriptor fields for iconographic documentation of pictorial material.
- Documentation Centers Working Group — com-

piling data on major regional, national and international repositories of museological information, and studying non-museological data bases for potential sources of museum-related information in computer-accessible format.

One of the facts very evident from the number of working groups and the total number of individuals in attendance at the CIDOC meeting is that these efforts, though global in scope and potentially very far reaching in their influence, are being carried forward by small volunteer committees – a context in which the energies and talents of even a single individual can make a major difference. This is an important arena of professional activity in which American museum professionals have been conspicuous by their absence and in which we have ignored opportunities and abdicated responsibilities.

The CIDOC conference participants, especially those attending such a gathering for the first time, could not help but be gratified to learn about the range of projects being carried forward in various parts of the world by governmental agencies, museum organizations or ad hoc museum consortia, and even by individual institutions of various types and sizes.

Implicit in this observation is the recognition that there is an ever-increasing value to be gained from our awareness of and participation in the work of our professional peers – or to be lost if that resource cannot be tapped more consistently and more effectively. It seems tragic that the energy, camaraderie, and free flow of ideas that prevailed at the CIDOC meetings cannot be maintained and fostered through more regular contacts in between these annual meetings. But, alas, the barriers of geography and the demands of routine responsibilities intervene to slow the pace of progress between the annual get-togethers, while the harsh reality of travel cost keeps many dedicated individuals from attending the annual meetings on a regular basis.

Many examples could be cited – mostly humorous, but some more substantive – of misunderstandings of terms and concepts even among those “English speaking” conference participants who shared an allegedly common language. The challenge of extending common understandings across political and linguistic boundaries on a global scale is a formidable one indeed, and offers no quick or simple solutions. Thus, the work of CIDOC

seems at times to progress at a painfully slow rate. On the other hand, however, once the linguistic haze has been cleared away and differences of geographical or cultural perspective have been accounted for, it is often very gratifying to see the underlying strength of conviction and similarity of purpose.

In an intellectual sense, it is no surprise or revelation to find that computerization projects, progress and problems transcend international boundaries, any more than it is a surprise to find that British rivers flow toward the sea as surely as our own. In another sense, however, it is important to confront and affirm that reality at first hand and to flesh out the skeletal concept with the “meat” of specific persons, places and projects. In this way the international commonality of purpose and understanding emerges, not as a large faceless entity, but as a growing circle of close friends and respected colleagues moving by many different paths toward a common goal – and helping one another along the way by the sharing of encouragement, experience, and an occasional pint of good ale.

One very significant characteristic of this year's CIDOC meeting, commented upon by a number of participants, is that we seem, as a profession, to have outgrown a need to claim that “my system is better than your system”. We seem to have accepted the reality that no single system is universally “best”; that no single system is likely to emerge as being dominant within the museum community; that virtually all current systems will have been superseded within five to ten years' time as a result of new hardware and/or software developments; and that it is our data and not our systems whose survival must be the focus of our attention.

Ron Kley, President, Museum Computer Network

Roy Mitchell

THE ICOM-CIDOC-ANNUAL MEETING Barcelona, Spain 26 - 28 September 1988

A Report to the International Committee for Museums of Ethnography

The 1988 annual meeting of the ICOM International Committee for Documentation (CIDOC) was held in Barcelona, Catalunya, Spain 26 - 28 September 1988, immediately following MERCE 88, the Ciutat Vella annual festival. Eduardo Porta Ferrer had put us in the Hotel Rialto in the Bari Goti next to the Plaza Jaume I where the Festival began and ended. Our meetings, graciously run by Sra. Rosa Montserrat, were in the two story patio of the Casa de Caritat across the Ramblas.

The name Catalunya means Gotholania. Catalan seems to have come with ‘les Grec de Marseille’, after the Phoenicians and before the Carthaginians, the Romans and Visigoths. All official speeches begin in Catalan, street signs and newspapers are in Catalan, a language variously spelled between Provençal and Castellano. Beyond modern art, including Picasso, Miro and Gaudi, one can see an extraordinarily rich array of Romanesque art in the Museo de Arte de Catalunya, the museums of Vic and La Seo de Urgel, and in such outstanding examples as La Seo, Ripoll and Poblet, as well as in the hundreds of parish churches, many abandoned, that dot the northeastern Spanish landscape.

Between the opening and summary sessions, almost 100 attendees participated in the various Working Group sessions reported below. Peter Homulus, chairman of CIDOC, is to be congratulated on another pleasantly casual and effective meeting of this very active Committee.

Compact Disk

The currently most sensational project of CIDOC is the production of a CD-ROM disk of Dutch and Flemish self-portraits from museum collections around the world. Dominique Piot of the French Ministry of Culture chairs this Working Group which is contacting 200 museums to get the disk ready for presentation at the ICOM Triennial August-September 1989 meeting in the Hague.

This work bears watching. Projects could be con-

sidered by ICME for similar CD-ROMs on African, Pre-Columbian American, Polynesian, Micronesian or Melanesian art, or on folk art from any region of the world.

Pictorial Archives

This Working Group, headed by Conrad Graham, McCord Museum, Montreal, Quebec, is also concerned specifically with visual documentation. It is developing subject terminology for visual material. The most general (level 1) descriptors and definitions have been completed and work is beginning on the more specific (level 2 and 3) descriptors. Results are to be made available on floppy disk. A dictionary of allegorical terms is also in the works. I would imagine that ethnographers could well have unique input into these projects.

Terminology

This Working Group has produced the scholarly **DICTIONARIUM MUSEOLOGICUM**. Led by Lucas Wuethrich, Swiss National Museum, the Group is proceeding to add more languages to the 20 European languages published in 1986. Japanese has been compiled by Eiji Mizushima, Japan Science Foundation, Science Museum, and is expected to be published in the next year. Translations are being prepared in Estonian and Catalan. Chinese is under discussion. Other languages being considered for inclusion are Arabic, Swahili, Hindi, Sanskrit, Indonesian and languages of multilingual countries such as Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia and the countries of sub-Saharan Africa.

This Group needs support from younger members of CIDOC in order to carry on its expansion plans.

Reconciliation of Data Standards

Whereas the Terminology Working Group functions at the most concrete world level, this clumsily named Group, chaired by Richard Light of The Museum Documentation Association (MDA), Cambridge, England, is concerned with the whole ladder of abstraction of discourse. Efforts are being directed toward an International Standard for Museum Documentation to propose to ISO, and toward an information model to provide a context for the various documentation systems

being independently built by museums around the world. Those wishing to ensure that the particular aspects of ethnographic art are included should contact either Richard Light or Jane Sledge at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC.

Documentation Standards

The third Working group treating words is also chaired by Dominique Piot. Having produced a Fine Arts record form, they are now working on a standardized form for archeological information, specifically defining norms in Egyptology. African archeologists take note!

Terminology Control

From forms to control! Headed by Eleanor Fink of the Getty Art History Information Program, Santa Monica, this Group was organized at the 1987 Cambridge, England meeting. A survey is underway to find out what museums are doing with terminology control. The Group is also comparing the Getty Art and Architecture Thesaurus and the French Ministry of Culture terms. A bibliography will soon be available.

Documentation Centers

There are two CIDOC Working Groups that are not dealing primarily with words or pictures. Andrew Roberts of the MDA leads a Group, which is looking at the repertoire of services being offered by the ICOM Documentation Centre in Paris and by other Centers, such as in Ottawa, MDA and the Smithsonian. A bibliographic data base is being put together.

The J. Paul Getty Trust has given the ICOM Documentation Centre a grant for automation and UNESCO is helping in getting necessary hardware.

Data Base Survey

This Working Group was formed at the ICOM meeting in Buenos Aires 1986 with Carsten Larsen, National Museet, Copenhagen, as chairman and Mary Case as Secretary. At the CIDOC 1987 meeting, specifications were laid down for the beginning of a world survey of computer use in museums for collection documentation. Roy Mitchell, Smithsonian Institution, is coordinating the survey. Data collection has started in the United States, Canada, France, Switzerland,

Holland and Denmark. Surveys in the next year are expected to add the United Kingdom, Argentina, Brazil, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, West Germany, Austria, Israel and Japan.

A report of the results of a Washington DC test study, "Museum Collection Documentation: A Pilot Survey", was published in April 1988. It is available on request from Mary Case, Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC 20560.

Three reports are planned for the ICOM Hague meeting in 1989: A technical report on survey methods and results for the Working Group and CIDOC. Secondly, a report for museums interested in the progress of museum documentation automation, or interested themselves in automating collection documentation. Thirdly, an executive summary for members of ICOM on survey methods, concepts, results and uses.



Chemise of Astypalaia (Dodecanese)
Museum of Greek Folk Art, Athens

THE MUSEUM OF GREEK FOLK ART, ATHENS 70 YEARS

The Museum of Greek Folk Art belongs to the state and is supervised by the Ministry of Culture. It was founded as the 'Museum of Greek Handicrafts' in 1918 on the initiative of the poet George Drosinis, then director of the Department of Letters and Fine Arts, and of the archaeologist K. Kourouniotis, director of the Department of Antiquities at the Ministry of Education. In 1923 it was re-named 'National Museum of Decorative Arts' in recognition of the enrichment of its collections by donations of various objects of foreign provenance. After two further changes (in 1930 to 'Museum of Greek Folk Art' and in 1935 back again to 'National Museum of Decorative Arts'), in 1959 the Museum acquired the name by which it is still known today.

The Museum was housed in Tzisdarakis Mosque in Monastiraki Square until 1973 when it was transferred to the premises it occupies at 17 Kydathinaion Street in the Plaka quarter of old Athens. There are two annexes to the Museum: the one is the Mosque, in which the B. Kyriazopoulos collection of Ceramic Folk Art is displayed, and the other the building situated at Thespis Street, also in Plaka. The Kydathinaion building contains exhibition galleries, the administrative offices, the library, photographic archive and film library, and the Educational Programmes hall and a lecture room. The Thespis Street annex accommodates the Museum collections, the conservation laboratories, and the photography section.

The Museum possesses rich collections of embroideries, textiles, costumes, metalware, silverware, wood carvings, ceramics, shadow theatre figures, masquerade dresses, popular paintings (works by Theophilos Chatzimichail), and a small number of relief carvings in stone. These collections span the years between 1650 and the present time.

This year, 1988, the Museum celebrates its 70th anniversary and is holding a variety of events to mark the occasion.

ICOM '89 MUSEUMS AS GENERATORS OF CULTURE

From August 27 till September 6, 1989 the XVth General Conference of ICOM will take place in the Hague, Holland. The organizing committee of ICOM-Holland has already mailed the first announcement to all ICOM members throughout the world. If you have not received it, please contact the ICME Secretariate in Amsterdam.

The theme of the Conference is **MUSEUMS: GENERATORS OF CULTURE**.

ICME wishes to discuss this theme within its own committee meeting and also in conjunction with other international committees. A first draft for ICME's meeting is presented here with the request to comment on it and submit your name as a speaker if you feel you have a contribution to make.

CAN MUSEUMS OF ETHNOGRAPHY GENERATE CULTURE?

ICME comprises both museums of ethnography, in the sense that they present to their visitors cultures from other countries and societies, and museums that present their own culture to their own people. The answer to the above question should therefore be given on different levels.

In most countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America museums, presenting their own culture, especially newly to be established museums should answer positively to the question: Can museums generate culture? But only then, if and when they follow the guidelines drawn up in the Conference of Chalki, the summary of which has been given earlier in this newsletter.

In other words, new museums should not be conceived as 1) a building, 2) a collection and 3) management, but rather as a process in which museum people and the local people establish an interrelationship, so much so, that the participation of the people is guaranteed on all levels, that the people's identity and development constitute the main goals of the museum, and past, present and future are being linked together.

Are there any museums in the Southern Hemisphere which correspond with these nations? Are there experiments anywhere which are in line with this 'new museology'? Are there plans afoot to establish such museums in Asia, Africa

or Latin America? If so, those involved in such projects are invited to attend the ICME Conference and register with the ICME Secretariate as speakers.

Museums of ethnography in the U.S.A. and Canada (even though they may go by different names) constitute a special category. Many of them possess collections of native Americans and Canadians, which they present to the non-Indian part of the population. In recent years there have been cases in which the Indians objected to the way in which these collections were being used in exhibitions. Can such museums generate culture? Can such museums contribute substantially to a better understanding between people of different ethnic origins? Can they contribute to a more peaceful coexistence, beneficial to all parties?

Museums of ethnography in North America, Europe and the U.S.S.R. which present foreign cultures to their own people, cannot follow the guidelines, drawn up in the Chalki Conference. After all, the community which is being represented in the museum or in the exhibition cannot participate on all levels in the realization of the museum or the exhibition. Also, many of the museums of ethnography in the Northern Hemisphere are institutions, solidly established in tradition, housed in pompous buildings, tied financially and politically to their governments. Such colossuses cannot really be changed, unless with the greatest effort.

Yet, when it comes to the generation of culture, one might think of the application of the above-mentioned guidelines in a different manner. An increasing number of museums of ethnography has adopted the principle of working for target groups, i.e. the museum organizes an event (exhibition, educational programme etc.) for a specific target group. It involves a specific use of collections, text-labels, audio-visual programmes et cetera.

Applying the guidelines, however, one could consider the target-group as part of a local community. In conjunction with the museum people, this group should analyze its situation, its needs, its development in the context of a much larger, an international world. (Why are so many non-whites living in our cities? Why are non-whites considered a threat to 'our' culture, 'our' identity, 'our' nation?) From this point of view certain events and exhibitions in the museums of ethnography

can make a substantial contribution to the improvement of intercultural relations in the cities and the industrial areas of the northern continents. This aspect is especially stressed by our colleagues from the Scandinavian countries, and they asked us to take up also the presentation of the situation of immigrants and asylants in museums of ethnography.

Are there ICME Members who have experience with this approach? We invite them to attend the ICME meeting in order to share their experiences with others. If you wish to present a paper on this subject, please write to the Secretariate in Amsterdam.

We would like to invite MINOM (the Movement for New Museology) to attend one or two of the ICME meetings and participate in our discussions.

ICME ELECTIONS

As usual, ICOM's general conference also marks the occasion on which ICME members elect their new executive board. Of the present board, Mr. Harrie Leyten (ICME's Secretary) and Mr. Lawrence Foanaota have served two terms and are therefore no more eligible.

Members of ICME who are willing to serve on the board, are kindly invited to register as candidates. If you know of suitable persons, ICME members, please contact them and ask them to register. In the next ICME Newsletter, due out in May 1989, all information about the ICME Conference will be published.

THE MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD PRESENT THEMSELVES — Annette B. Fromm

I was born in 1950. My degrees are in African studies & textiles and folklore. My field research and work has been with the issues of ethnic identity in Northern Greece and among ethnic groups in the U.S., as well as material culture.

My interest in objects and peoples are what led me to museum work. I entered the field at the bottom of the ladder at the Children's Museum in Indianapolis where I spent a summer cataloging backlogged accessions. Through this work I learned the importance of thorough research and documentation of collections. Next I spent three years working in the ethnic communities of Cleveland, Ohio, a rich field for the exploration of ethnic traditions as well as inter-ethnic, urban interaction.

The Fenster Museum of Jewish Art is a unique type of museum of history and ethnography. Contrary to common belief, our audience is primarily non-Jewish. They bring a naive curiosity to the museum and leave with a bit of understanding. This is an unusual setting to experiment with exhibitions and educational programs developed from the ethnographic view point.

I have been active with ICOM & ICME since 1980. One of my concerns is the need to enhance communications between traditional ethnographic museums and museums representing folk culture. I believe that some of our assumptions and approaches towards interpretation overlap.

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