

Words from the President

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Issue 80

Dear colleagues, dear friends,

First, on behalf of the ICME Board (2016-19) let me wish you all a very healthy, successful and creative 2017. Three ICME friends in Hong Kong also send their very best wishes for the forthcoming year.



You may recognize me in the middle of the group above. My wonderful colleagues Professor Richard Sandell and Dr Vivian Ting are sitting with me, around this time last year, in January 2016.

Today I am writing from the peace of my home in Leicester. Here we are enjoying winter sunshine. The birds are swooping for the peanuts hanging in our garden trees, teasing my fat cat Tim, who is stalking nearby. I hear children, of all faiths and no faith, playing happily together in the local schools. In my local area, Stoneygate, we have good shelter; we are warm, well fed and clothed. I am fortunate to live in a comfortable and safe part of our globe.

Safety, sadly, is not universal nor something that we can take for granted. One of the local schools that I pass on my way to work each day has a campaign to safeguard children who are endangered by cars parking illegally on the double yellow lines, in the rush to drop off and pick up the children at the school gates. In 2016 the school erected a series of 'child bollards' to

prevent this selfish action. These concrete children are multiracial and seem to be creatively addressing the problem most effectively with good humor.



I wonder how other countries tackle the problem of traffic and the danger to children from bad driving. Some of us may recall the dense traffic in Hanoi where whole families, and often a pig or two, are transported in one vehicle. Those of us at the 2015 conference will also remember the street vendors who transport incredible loads on bicycles, which the wonderful Women's Museum and the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology both represent so brilliantly, not simply showing the aesthetics of this culture and shying away from the danger, but observing, head on, the social hardship that underpins and endangers human lives.

In October 2016 I was privileged to speak at the 5th Art Forum for Curators of Chinese Art, in China. This international group meets every two years and it presented an excellent opportunity for us to publicise ICME as well as an inclusive approach to cultural learning that a number of us are working within. The event was sponsored by the Bei Shan Tang Foundation and generously hosted by the extraordinary Palace Museum in Beijing.

The Anniversary Issue!

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In my panel, Art Meets the Public: Knowledge and Experience in Museum Education, speakers discussed questions of collaboration, digital heritage and learning more generally. My paper addressed 'how museums can become inclusive sites for learning and understanding about self and others through museum collections' with a focus on ethnographic collections. Despite weather warnings to stay indoors because of high pollution levels, the conference was a great success and I certainly learnt a lot in my panel. Dr Wang Fang introduced us to the tremendous educational programmes she is developing with her learning team at Guangdong Museum and Stephanie Norby outlined how the public are engaged and gain digital access to Museum Collections at the Smithsonian Institution.



Events such as the Art Forum point to the possibility of cross-disciplinary collaboration. They show and fruitfulness of border crossings in the safe yet critical spaces that ICME has so long cherished.

The end of 2016 saw global safety threatened. The toxic press in my country, in part at least, contributed to Brexit – the anti-immigration vote to leave the European Union - and in America, the election of a misogynist, racist, President Trump. How can those of us who hold liberal views and live relatively affluent lives understand the economically disadvantaged who are swayed by populist governments? What actions can we take in our workplaces, ethnographic museums and heritage sites, to uphold human rights and progress social justice?

Our ethnographic collections, both historical and those developing through contemporary collecting, are entangled with histories of injustice that linger today. We do not work in isolated bubbles but are all involved with wider regimes of oppression and discrimination that is increasing at local and global levels. Injustice is too often unacknowledged within our museum walls.

Yet, as we heard at our 2016 conference, ICME members are engaged in astounding examples of best practice around the globe. Our members are working tirelessly to understand and address contemporary concerns for human rights even though their museums do not have a specific mandate to work in this field and we applaud these efforts. We are also working hard to disseminate in detail, through conference and publication, the diverse social justice projects that concern ICME.

2016 saw two key ICME publications. In July the academic journal *Museum and Society* published a special edition highlighting projects in Qatar, Denmark and Canada, with an introduction to the work of ICME by Annette Fromm and myself (<http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/museumstudies/museumssociety/volumes/volume-14-2016>). At the end of the year we saw the publication of *Museums and Innovations* by Cambridge Scholars Press. This volume, edited by Zvezdana Antos, Annette Fromm and me, is drawn from the 2014 ICME conference that dear Zvezdana and her team organized with such imagination, grace, good will and efficiency.



Museums and Innovations is dedicated to the memory of our dear ICME President (2004-2007) Daniel Paguga, whose life was so tragically cut short by pancreatic cancer in 2015. Daniel's partner of 14 years, Dr Lidija Nikocec, Director of the Ethnographic Museum in Istria, has been working with us on this lasting memorial to our friend Daniel. The volume presents sixteen thoughtful essays, which address innovative ways to present cultural heritage primarily in ethnographic and social history museums through recent permanent, temporary, and mobile exhibitions. The essays prompt critical debate about new ways of thinking and working in museums of different sizes, with regard for how we might work collaboratively towards a more equitable future (<http://www.cambridgescholars.com/museums-and-innovations>).

Let me end these president's words for January 2017 by echoing *Museums and Innovations*, in hope for an equitable future. Equality, human rights and social justice have long been major concerns of ICME at conference and in publication. The timely theme of migration and building connection through diversity is one that spoke to the contemporary work of our members across the globe in Milan last year. This year our annual meeting and conference will be in Washington DC and we will continue the conversation on this topic under

the theme Migration, Home, Belonging (17-19 October 2017). You will remember that board member Martin Earring is leading the 2017 ICME meeting and conference, which is generously being hosted by The Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI). Martin will update us in due course about the call for papers

and the post-conference tour to New York (20-22 October 2017). So, keep an eye on forthcoming ICME News and our ICME Facebook site, where the call for papers and fellowships will be announced. Meanwhile I share with you an image from my last visit to NMAI in 2010.



The Aging of the Age of Migration

Brittany Wheeler

I attended ICME this summer in transition mode. As I was introduced to an inimitable troupe of marionettes and marionettists in Milan (The Compagnia Marionette Carlo Colla Milano)...



...to Hopi material culture tucked into yet another pocket of the European world in Genova (Castello D'Albertis Museum of World Cultures in Genova)...



and to the still-marginalized ethnographic collection behind the headliner exhibits at MUDEC, I was dual-channeling. I was 'ending' a chapter of museum work spent effectuating repatriation at a natural history museum, and 'beginning' a PhD in Geography—but in reality, I was doing neither in absolute terms.

The impact and legacy of past, accumulated areal knowledge and categorization is robust, interdisciplinary, and spread over time, and is certainly found

both within and beyond museum spaces. The 'Age of Migration' we sought to explore via our paper presentations and conversations this summer in Italy located us nowhere so much as within the complexity of the unsettled present. As members of the museum sector we continue to grapple with the historical dimensions of power and movement, removal and accumulation. How can we build a world that understands and embraces the complexity of migration, past and present, rather than one that feels threatened by its implications?

As we surveyed the results of a familiar collection history at the Castello D'Albertis Museum of World Cultures, the streets just beyond it bore graffiti reading *La polizia tortura imigranti a Ventimiglia* (The police torture immigrants in Ventimiglia), a town a handful of kilometers from Genova on the train line. Sara Chiesa of MUDEC spoke of the fight to bring a conversation about the unrecognized ethnographic past into a corporatized museum space consumed with another focus, and up against more general critical disengagement with historical responsibility in Italy. Ralf Mencin presented important advocacy work done by those at the Slovene Ethnographic Museum with asylum seekers during their temporary residence in Slovenia, in a museum that also

examines historical relationships Slovenes have had with their neighbors. Annette Rein spoke of scrapping her original paper topic and instead issued a strong critique of museums holding on to their 'vanishing other,' calling for unapologetic and overt political action—a critique increasingly apt given the narratives that surround asylum and securitization in Germany.

In the paper I presented in Milan, I firstly critiqued the idea that we can use the museum as a graveyard for any thought or thing. This is especially important to (re)consider as we embrace museums as places where information and objects do not flow unidirectionally, and as places where important working relationships cannot be told to unfold on a particular schedule. We can no more retire 'historical' objects to a museum space than we can disengage from 'contemporary' societal problems like the 21st century versions of the fear of or fascination with the other. Our thoughts on both relate intimately to the materials and narratives enclosed in and emanating from museums. We can, however, do work that is underpinned by a willingness to believe that there can be substantive engagement with past practice while also addressing forward-looking work.



I am fascinated by the futures the museum may contribute to enacting, so long as they do not replicate tired conclusions about the possibilities of tangible and intangible heritage, or fail to

embrace the difficulties alongside the successes inherent in migration processes, or assume a linear improvement of evolved thinking by those employed in museums. There is still much work to be done and much to unlearn. How can we best avoid “modern equivalent[s] of a cabinet of curiosities” (Merritt), “outreach programme[s] disguised as contemporary collecting,” (Rhys) and “relationships created by

seriality” (Pearce)? What might we create instead? The ICME fellowship generously allowed me to explore my ‘museum orientation’ not only at my first general ICOM meeting, but in Europe more widely. This has lent an array of initial answers and blockades to the question I face now as a geographer: Where is justice?



ICME Fellows Report

Sarah Gamaire



Earthquake, Italy, 24th August 2016 : In memory of the victims and their families, for the heritage destroyed.

First of all, I would like to thank ICME for trusting me and offering me this great opportunity.

Thanks also to ICOM for organizing such an event.

Rather than detailing all I have done during the Conference, I prefer to present you my experience in two parts:

First of all, I sum up the schedule of all my activities during the General conference.

Then, through a short diary, I focus on some ideas presented during the Conference which marked me. I will retain them and would like to share them with my colleagues.

And finally, I propose a visual overview of the different places discovered by images (all images by the author).

May this humble report help us to not forget that Milano, Genova, Brescia and Italy in general are amazing heritage places.; where both Ancient history and contemporary/urban

art can be discovered in each street.

One Picture a Day - A Timetable

Monday 4th

Inscription, opening ceremony, ICME + Costume Opening Party



Tuesday 5th

Keynote speeches to Genova



Wednesday 6th

My presentation, Elections, Puppet Theatre, Duomo Concert, Museums downtown



Thursday 7th

MUDEC Visit and Conferences



Friday 8th

Brescia and Garda Lake
Excursion



She tried as much as possible to talk to people, to let them tell their story
Ralph about exhibition on refugees (ICME):
He follows the concept: "Nothing about us without us"

4th July

Keep on discussing



Some colleagues from the Costume Committee have quite a rigid view about societies. It was really useful to debate together to about the concept of cultural dynamism.

Saturday 9th

Pallazio di Brera, visits, Last Supper, Closing Ceremony at Triennale



Tuesday 5

Be sensible

Michaella de Lucchi (Key Note speech) :

Ideas to retain

4th July

Arrival to the Icom Conference

What an immensity: a huge building, the long queue for an inscription, full up with people a full room for the opening ceremony.

More than the number, the diversity: colleagues from all over the world with their languages, religions, clothes. Really stimulating to feel connected to the world.



She remarks that we do not teach young architects to be sensible, however, it is most important for her.

6th July

Keep alive

4th July, 7th July

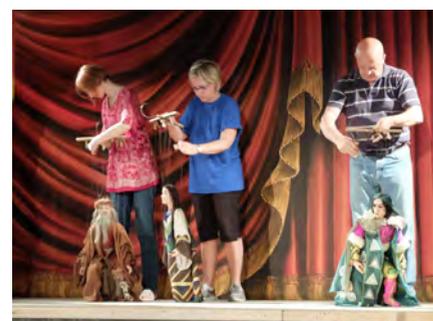
With and about people

Orhan Pamuk, talking about his Museum of Innocence (key note speech):

He prefers "stories rather than history" and asks "small museums" to not be afraid/ to be close to people. He advises us to focus "more on individualities"

A colleague talking about about an exhibition on child abuse (ICTOP) :

Puppet theater :



There is a wish to keep alive all this (intangible) heritage, even the oldest parts of the collection, to bring them on the stage in order for the audience

to discover them being "active"

8th July

To open

Brescia Capitulum



The curators choose to not close the space. No physical barrier, as shown on the picture, to create a stronger link between visitors and their heritage

4th July, 5th July

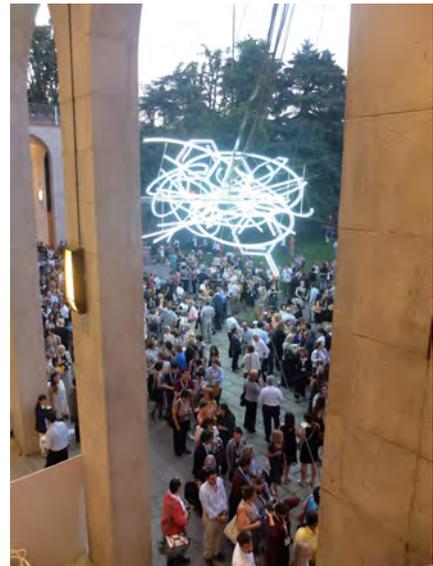
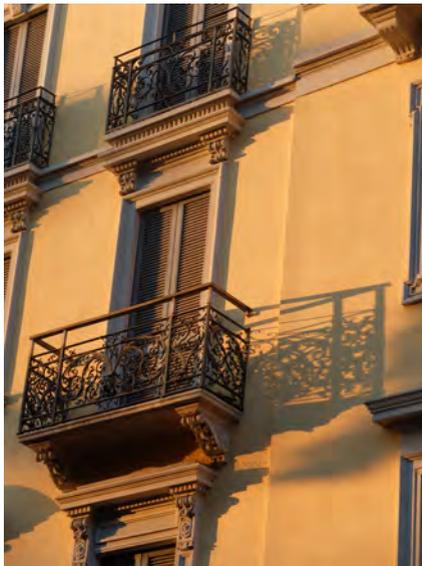
Future

Different speakers (Key note speeches): encourage us to think about the next generation

Nkulanda Luo (Key note speech) :

She wished that Africa's heritage would be more considered by the world and that a great development of museums would occur there in the future, and why not: perhaps a General Conference in Africa soon?

Visual Overview





The Courtyard Collection in the National Museum of Indonesia: End of an Era (1868-2016)

Jonathan Zilberg



For almost 150 years now visitors to the National Museum of Indonesia, at least those who are interested in history and culture, have been enthralled by the vast collection of stone sculptures on display in and around the main courtyard, in the antechambers, and especially in the front rotunda and the back vestibule. The courtyard collection is now closed for renovations. It will apparently not be re-opened to the public until September 2018 to coincide with the opening ceremonies for the Asian Games and the 150th Anniversary of the Museum. (For the first published architectural plan and rationale for the expansion, see "A National Museum for the 21st Century" in *Treasures of the National Museum*, ed. Suwati Kartiwa, Jakarta: Buku Antar Bangsa, 1997, pp. 10-11. Also see therein the following essay by Wardiman Djodjonegoro, "The History of the National Museum," pp. 12-28).

Future such photo-essays will illustrate and describe the courtyard and this and other Indonesian museums in greater depth. But briefly, to begin, I have spent much of the last

decade studying select Indonesian museums through using museum photography as a central research tool. In this first photo-essay in this larger project, I will focus only on the rotunda through which one used to access the courtyard, unless one entered it through the back atrium via the ethnographic wing.

My goal for this audience on this 80th issue of *International Committee for Museum Ethnography* is to project a sense of the old aesthetic of the courtyard collection through considering one key part of it, the rotunda as it was. In addition, I briefly comment upon the larger context of the modernization of this museum in the text through reference to a few specific sculptures, though I do not provide the relevant photographs for those sculptures for reasons of space and considering they are well enough known for those interested in Indonesian art history, particularly the famed national treasure Prajnaparamita (Goddess of Wisdom) from Singosari. (For the most well known, recent and best illustrated texts concerning this collection in English, see Jan Fontein with R. Soekmono and Edi Sedyawati, *The Sculpture of Indonesia*, Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1990 as well as Marijke J. Klokke and Pauline Lunsingh Scheurleer eds., *Ancient Indonesian Sculpture*, Leiden:

KITLV Press, 1994. Also see, Haryati Soebiado ed., *Pusaka: Art of Indonesia*, Singapore: Archipelago Press, 1992, trans. John Miksic. As regards, subsequent research on the Sumatran specimens and their context, see Francine Brinkgreve and Retno Sulistianingsih eds, *Sumatra: Crossroads of Cultures*, Leiden: KITLV Press, 2009. For East Java, see Ann R. Kinney with Marijke J. Klokke and Lydia Kleven, *Worshiping Siva and Buddha: The Temple Art of East Java*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003. Also see, Robert Wessing ed., *The Divine Female in Indonesia*, in *Asian Folklore Studies* LVI, 1997).

Some of the sculptures in the rotunda and the courtyard collection were smaller and of lesser quality and if one did not know why they were important they might have seemed insignificant, even unworthy. Many are large and even monumental and the most exceptional are of exceptional quality and immense art historical importance. Consider, for instance, the fast degrading replicas of the so called "demonic Buddhist" sculptures from Singosari at the back of the courtyard in the vestibule, the originals being in Leiden. (For the most current discussion and illustration of these sculptures, see Natasha Reichle, *Violence and Serenity: Late Buddhist Sculpture from Indonesia*, Honolulu: University

of Hawai'i Press, 2007. For a more general over-view of relevant developments in Indonesian art history, also see Natasha Reichle, "Continuities and Change: Shifting Boundaries in Indonesian Art History," in *Producing Indonesia: The State of the Field of Indonesian Studies*, ed. Eric Tagliacozzo, Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program Publications, Cornell University, 2014, pp. 69-79). Above all consider again the most famous stone sculpture of all, the national treasure also from Singosari - the Prajnaparamita mentioned above which used to be in the Treasure Room just above the rotunda and which is now in the new wing on the 4th Floor, as I will comment upon further below.

Throughout the collection, interspersed between the figurative sculptures of mainly Hindu Gods, linga, makharas (elaborate protective monsters guarding the entrances to temples) and nandi (Shiva's bull mount), the many varied water spouts and other stone sculptures and architectural features, there were a substantial collection of enormously important inscribed stele. The stele were mainly kept in the wide drains on either side of the front rotunda belying their extraordinary epigraphic interest if one actually knew why they mattered so much. Remarkable sculptures lined all the walls around the courtyard. Along the wall on the right hand side at the lower end were a number of baked clay sculptures and doorway lintels,

parts of temple friezes, Kala heads and elaborate scenes from the Ramayana and such. An exceptional open laboratory and classroom, for those few who have considered it as such, the courtyard has for a long time now provided the public access to a sensational and wide ranging collection of Hindu and Buddhist material collected from across the archipelago and dating from the 6th through 14th centuries. (I thank Janneke Koster for sharing her observations on the symmetries to be found in the rotunda collection. For an exceptional record of the courtyard collection as it was, see *Stone Statues, Rotunda: Archaeological Collection of the Museum Nasional, Jakarta: Indonesian Heritage Society, Museum Studies Group, 2016* and *Stone Statues, Courtyard South: Archaeological Collection of the Museum Nasional, Jakarta: Indonesian Heritage Society, Museum Projects, 2016*).

I think it fair to say from many years of close observation that the vast majority of visitors came away with very little knowledge of the importance of these works, the esoteric knowledge they invoked, the archaeological sites from which they were taken, or anything else - though my work has been strictly observational. What was really needed to improve the situation in this and other museums was an understanding of what were the unique qualities and successes and failures of each museum. What was needed above all was

the provision of information that the viewer needed to appreciate the historical, religious and political value of these de-contextualized objects.

Naturally, this excludes the very few exceptional museums such as the new UNESCO assisted museum of human evolution at Sangiran near Solo, the old Wayang museum in Kota Tua in Fatahila Square (Old Town, Jakarta) before it was ruined, and the leading museum in the country in my estimation, the Geology Museum in Bandung. But that is for another time and place. In the following few pages I would merely like to memorialize things as they were in the case of the beautiful rotunda in the National Museum with its extraordinary collection of some of the highlights of the remains of the Indonesian Hindu-Buddhist period.

For reasons of brevity and focus, the photographs that follow were taken exclusively in the rotunda collection. As noted earlier, though, I will also further comment upon the entirety of the courtyard including the rear atrium, and something of the importance of the old context of the old Treasure Room just above the Rotunda and the Bronze Room at the rear end of the courtyard. By doing so, with an overwhelming sense of nostalgia, I provide this critical commentary and minor record for the members of ICME of the way things were.



With the upcoming completion of the massive additional wing of the National Museum and the renovation of the courtyard, it is said that half of the courtyard sculptures will be moved. The remainder will be left in the courtyard area and re-arranged in new configurations to provide a less cluttered and more focused viewing experience arranged along a “story line.” It is possible, one imagines, that some specimens deemed of insufficient interest might be placed in storage. Whatever the outcome, it is the end of an era. For the historical record in this context,

Figure 2 shows things as they were as one entered the rotunda if one stepped to the right. The large sculpture in the center front is the Ganesha (Inv. No. 186b/4845) from the Banon Temple near Magelang which is close to Borobudur. It is dated to the 7th-10th Century. The two large standing sculptures to the

Ganesha’s left and right in the background are both from Candi Banon (of which no trace remains). To the left is Shiva as Mahadewa (Inv. No. 23a/4341) and to the right is Vishnu (Inv. No. 18e/4847) both being dated as from the 8th-9th Century.



Figure 3 is taken on the other side of the Ganesha providing a view of the central left section of the rotunda. To the right of the Shiva sculpture is the Cane Inscription (Inv. No. D 25) which was King Airlangga’s first edict dated 27th October 1021 and probably from Surabaya. To the right of the Vishnu sculpture is the Biri inscription (Inv. No. D 1) probably from South Kediri and perhaps from the late 12th century.

Though I have never seen any attention paid to these inscription stele during classroom or other visits, they are of extraordinary importance considering their historical contents as are those on the other side of the rotunda and outside the rotunda also on both sides. I take it as a given that in effective museum education programs the knowledge that does exist about these sculptures and the inscriptions including the information that does exist about the archaeological sites and regional historical contexts they come from should be used in

tandem. (See Ninie Susanti, Titik Pudjiastuti and Trigangga, eds, *Inscribing Identity: The Development of Indonesian Writing Systems*, Jakarta: National Museum of Indonesia, 2015. Also see, Ann Kumar and John H. McGlynn et. al., New York: Weatherhill, Inc. in association with The Lontar Foundation, 1996).

Ideally, Indonesian students and adults should have been developing a sense of their pre-Islamic Hindu-Buddhist history through the knowledge that could have been imparted through more effective educational programs and use of relevant existing publications. To some extent this situation has improved, especially with the high school guide program and a few highly qualified school teachers who use the collection to teach Indonesian history. One can only hope that in the future the educational function of the museum and the dissemination and use of research on the collection will be more effective than it has apparently been in the past. And as I emphasize below, the museum’s web site, though at first glance useful, is content poor. Content rich on-line data and applications will be critical for any future positive transformation of the museum no matter the nature of the modification of the displays.

The photographs which follow below (Figures 4 through 6) provide three views of the right hand side of the rotunda as it was. In Figure 4, taken of the right front corner, the figure to

the left of the Ganesha sculpture is Agastya, the teacher of the South and manifestation of Shiva (Inv. No. 63b/4846), also found at Candi Banon in Central Java and dated to the 7th to 10th Century. The stele to the right is the Kawambang Kulwan stele (Inv. No. D 37) which is from Sendang Kamal, Masopati in Madura, East Java. It was inscribed during the reign of King Dharmawangsa Teguh and dated to 991 C.E.



Figure 5 presents a view of the center right section with the three large standing sculptures from right to left being the Agastya from Banon, a sculpture said to be that of Queen Suhita of the Majapahit Kingdom (Inv. No. 6058). From Padi Jebuk in Punjul, Kelangbut, this sculpture is dated to the 14th to 15th Century. It is especially well known because of the typically careful Majapahit period depiction of jewelry and textiles, hairstyles and other accoutrements - and in this case especially for the high relief botanically accurate carving of lotus plants on the

back side of the sculpture. On the far left, the third large standing sculpture is a representation of Brahma (Inv. No. 15). It is also from the temple at Banon and dated to the 13th to 14th Centuries.

Figure 6 (below) provides the former view of the center right section taken from just behind and to the side of the Vishnu sculpture from Banon. To the far left of Brahma in the center is the Avalokitesvara sculpture (Inv. No. 247/D 216) from Musi Ulu, Palembang, South Sumatra which is dated to the 14th-15th Century. The large inscription stone between the two, only the top of which can be seen, is the Patakan Inscription (Inv. No. D 22) from Surabaya, East Java.



As these photographs hope to convey, there was a classical grace and sensitive symmetrical organization to the collection. As a time capsule it had a historical value in and of itself for it was a splendid example of how such collections were displayed in museums in the 19th century. It is not as chaotic and jumbled as the casual observer might first think. Indeed, if one observed the lay out closely, there were symmetries and rhythms, in essence, a careful and erudite curatorial logic at work. (Again, for an excellent discussion of this, see Janneke Koster's analysis in *Stone Statues*, Rotunda: Archaeological

Collection of the Museum Nasional, Jakarta: Indonesian Heritage Society, Museum Projects, 2016, p. 7). Hopefully the reader might be able to gain some sense of this from the above photographs and in those that follow, though analyzing the logic of the lay-out is beyond the scope of this brief account of things as they were.

In the high modernist era, the viewer's gaze has become increasingly controlled so as to focus on singular objects presented as unique art works sparsely placed in glass boxes with minimal information. For critics, this approach, verging on a new aesthetic religion, has become so highly stylized and codified that it affects a cold and clinical mode of disembodied secular worship. Severe, polished and controlled, austere and hushed, oppressively guarded spaces, some of us have come to abhor the new global hegemony of the white wall and the glass box. For that, at least for myself, the courtyard was a very much loved place. I doubt very much that I am alone in this overwhelming sense of having come to an end of an era – to *les temps perdu*.

Perhaps I am old fashioned. Yet regardless of that let me voice my concern here to those who might be of a similar frame of mind and deeply appreciated things as they were for what they were. Take, for instance, the previous display of the Prajnaparamita at the entrance to the main Treasure Room upstairs. Placed at the front of the exhibit on the courtyard-side

room at the top of the stairs above the rotunda, it invited one into a warm and intimate setting. It was an exhibit rich with context and the density of history. Those two treasure rooms were relatively masterful exhibits. They were beautiful and informative.

People tended to linger there is a state of awe not only because of the quality of the collection but because of the way it was presented in an informed, and to again emphasize what has been lost – an intimate and warm information-rich space. In stark contrast, the new dispersed displays of the gold collection and above all the display of the Prajnaparamita in the cavernous mall-like fourth floor of the new wing on the other side of the museum is a perfect instance of what is, in my view, an unnecessary and minimalist modernist transformation. Be that as it may, returning to the rotunda, I have chosen the following figures to give one a sense of the former joys of what one could discover and experience in such a lovely and diverse collection – and which might yet still be the case when the rotunda is opened again.

Figure 7 (below) shows the alcove behind the Biri stele, again perhaps from South Kediri and perhaps from the 12th Century.



Next, Figure 8 shows the view from the Biri stele towards the back left corner alcove of the rotunda. And it is in that context that Figures 9 and 10 provide close ups of two unusual sculptures though I could have chosen any number of others. The point here is to bear in mind that it is precisely such lesser works that tend to get passed over in publications and research though they are of exceptional interest in many ways in their own rights, even those of the roughest or unaccomplished sort.



Figure 8 provides a view of the left back section of the rotunda just right of Figure 7.

Figures 9 and 10 (below) provide close-ups of Shiva as Khala and a Ganesha sculpture from Ambarawa. In Figure 9 we see what to my eyes is a wonderfully whimsical Shiva as Kala or Mahakala (Inv. No. 77) dated to the 7th to 8th Century. In Figure 10 I have chosen to highlight an undated remarkably unusual Ganesha sculpture from Ambarawa, Ungaran, south of Semarang (Inv No. 199f/4373) which is one of a pair as can be seen above in Figure 8.

Figures 9 and 10 are, I think, classic examples of the value of having so many sculptures on display in close proximity. The small Kala sculpture is

interesting to me for its expressive qualities, while the Ganesha presents a case of extraordinary plasticity setting it and its partner apart from the many other Ganesha sculptures in the courtyard collection. It is precisely the enormous range and the nature of the setting that allows for this kind of constant and growing appreciation.



As it was in times past, the wide scope of this amazing collection displayed in such a hospitable and classical setting with its fine natural lighting, careful lay out and varied spaces has allowed generations of interested people a remarkable opportunity. For example, I have been studying this collection for a decade for hours at a time. There is no occasion on which I have not seen many new details that I have not previously noted despite my continuous surprise that it should be so.

The point I want to make here is that if and when very fine exhibits such as these are closed and re-conceptualized the results can be heartbreaking. In Europe, for instance, despite the positive changes, many of us still regret what was lost when the collections of the Musee de l'Homme were completely re-conceptualized and re-situated. As for the example of Jakarta's puppet museum, the damage is done. There is no way to recuperate what has been lost there. There is no way to re-create what made it such a compelling and successful museum or to rebuild the rich connection that people had with that remarkably interesting and successful museum so rich with history and character. It is now a very fine mortuary-like modernist space. The much beloved performance areas are transformed, closed-off, and now functionless multi-media spaces. The gamelan, instead of being used as it had for generations of performances which gave the museum its spiritual and emotional

connection to society, has been turned into a lifeless exhibit witnessed in silence as one grandly exits the new museum down a splendidly expensive ramp.

And as for Jakarta's most important museum in the country, we have already long since bid farewell to the two Treasure Rooms which were intimate and highly refined exhibits created at considerable donor expense - as were the bronze rooms at the rear of the courtyard. They were all well conceptualized and professionally executed and provided a wonderful setting for some of the finest objects in the museum.

I have an overpowering sense of nostalgia - and I know I am not alone in this. Over the last several weeks there has been an unusual amount of traffic in the courtyard. People have heard about the impending closure and transformation and have been coming to say farewell and take photographs of the way things were and might never be again.



Conclusion

Natural Lighting and Historical Settings: The Antithesis of the Modernist Transformation

Figures 11, 12 and 13 (above) are relatively close up photographs of sculptures for which the details have already been provided earlier in the text. From left to right they are as follows - the Majapahit kingdom's Queen Suhita who ruled from 1429 through 1447, and the Vishnu and Brahma sculptures both from the temple of Banon which are dated very roughly between the 7th and 10th centuries.

Thanks to the natural lighting, the beautiful architectural setting and the sheer magnitude of the collection, careful observers at the National Museum will have spent many hours studying the expressions and the attributes, the jewelry and clothing depicted on these extraordinary sculptures. In time they would have developed an ever increasing appreciation for the remarkable skill of the artists who carved these devotional works and of the diversity of materials in the collection. What has been lacking is information and significant educational consequence.

The most important point in my mind for museum educators is that in this day and age, especially in Asia, high quality information about such collections should be available as digital data. For instance, in my ideal view there would be applications for visitors to

access and study the collection. Through QR codes for all these sculptures one would be able to instantly access the necessary information. And, ideally, that information would provide far more than simple descriptions as would have been found on some of the labels in the past.

For instance, there should be photographs of the archaeological site at which such specimens were originally found. There should be site maps and architectural drawings indicating exactly where each sculpture was found in which temple where such information is known. Moreover, one should be able to easily and immediately determine which other sculptures in the courtyard and other objects in the collection originate from the same sites or related sites. In addition, it would be useful if bibliographies and PDFs of relevant publications were available as an open access on-line research library. Having organized and easier access to such information, particularly to the published materials, would revolutionize the visitors' experience to this museum and its educational function. Above all, the database should be searchable and for those who are not digitally inclined the library should be far more easily accessible for the public and arranged and integrated into the school tours and a plural national history curriculum in a manner which facilitates study of the collection.

Figures 14, 15 and 16 below are extremely powerful works of art

of enormous historical value for Indonesian history though they are, by and large, yet mute to the observers.





Visitors to the museum should not be walking by without the faintest clue as to their significance if they have even noticed them while focusing on the enormous sculpture with which I conclude this photo-essay further below.

Figure 14, dated to the 14th-15th Century, is assumed to be a sculpture of Avalokitesvara from Musi Ulu, Palembang in South Sumatra. Identified as such by the Amitabha in the niche in the hair-dress it represents the creator of our present cosmos. Figure 15 (Inv. No. 6123), dated to the 13th through 14th centuries, depicts a tantric dancer with a bull's head from the site of Candi Pulo, Padang Lawas in North Sumatra. (See Fifi Wardani, Hartanti Maya Krishna and Nandan Chutiwongs, "Hindu Buddhist sculptures from Sumatra I: Collection of the National Museum (Jakarta)" in *Sumatra: Crossroads of Culture*, eds. Francine Brinkgreve and Retno Sulistianingsih, Leiden:

KITLV Press, 2009, pp. 53-70). Lastly, Figure 16, the remarkable head from an unknown sculpture from Dieng as seen in Figure 1 at the opening of this photo-essay must probably remain an eternal enigma, forever mute but no less powerful for that.

Yet sadly, as I have observed it, most of these sculptures are routinely passed by and in any event, for most of the collection, even specialist knowledge is yet relatively scant in depth despite the many publications that do exist. That being said, the collection provides a multitude of examples of the very great range in quality of sculpture from that period. They provide an invaluable base for comparative research on such things as aesthetics, master carvers and their workshops, and variable levels of expertise in the production of ritual sculpture and in the carving of inscription stele. In many cases they provide instances of local traditions as of yet relatively unexamined and in cases even of deities so far little considered in the literature on Indonesian art history. The collection provides vast research potential for training young museum professionals, art historians, anthropologists and archaeologists, especially epigraphers. In all this, and as regards public education in general, as far as I have been able to ascertain it has been under-used; to put it mildly.

My point then is simply this. By having so many interesting specimens on display, at least

as they were, the curious visitor was enticed to explore, to ask questions, to make connections, to ponder relations and significances that might not have come to anyone's mind otherwise. At this watershed time in Indonesian art history, epigraphy and archaeology in which we are suddenly achieving critical mass in the study of esoteric Tantric Buddhism, it is precisely this kind of complexity that we need as we move into a new era. (See Andrea Acri, ed., *Esoteric Buddhism in Mediaeval Maritime Asia: Networks of Masters, Texts, Icons*, Singapore: ISEAS, 2016. And for an excellent up to date overview of the larger historical context for the courtyard collection, see Paul Michel Munoz, *Early Kingdoms: Indonesian Archipelago and the Malay Peninsula*, Singapore: Editions Didier Millet, 2006, reprinted in 2016. For the most recent overview and critical reconsideration of Southeast Asian history, see John Miksic and Goh Geok Yian, *Ancient Southeast Asia*, London: Routledge, 2016).

Hopefully sufficient complexities will remain and more information will be provided. One hopes for the best. While there have been some improvements in some aspects of the new exhibition halls, particularly as regards the front part of the epigraphic collection, all in all the success so far has been very mixed. Nevertheless there is a pregnant air of hopeful expectation for the new museum amongst some

members of the Indonesian anthropological community. But I for one await the opening with an intense sense of trepidation. At the end of the day, whatever the outcome, it will be a museum for Indonesia of Indonesia by Indonesians. Perhaps that is all that matters.

By way of farewell then, I offer to ICME readers the final photograph below of the monumental standing figure on a base of skulls from Sungai Langsat, Padan Roco. The sculpture which overlooks the courtyard is understood by some to be a portrait sculpture of King Adityawarman as a Bhairawa or “demonic” form of Siva, but as of yet the interpretations given to the various iconographic elements of this sculpture remain essentially hypothetical and largely inconclusive. (See *Stone Statues, Rotunda: Archaeological Collection of the Museum Nasional, Jakarta: Indonesian Heritage Society, Museum Projects, 2016, pp. 52-53*. Natasha Reichle more cautiously describes it as best characterized simply as a Buddhist Bhairava” in *Violence and Serenity, op. cit., p. 189*. There Reichle significantly extended prior analysis of this sculpture through bringing it into iconographic relation to other important sculptures from that immediate period and larger context, see pp. 191-209). So to conclude, just as the ritual knife held by this figure could represent the cutting of the bonds of ignorance, my hope is that in the future the National Museum will make the fullest

educational use of such remarkable sculptures and stele. There, such museum specimens could be very effectively used to advance the national mandate of pluralism after a decade of largely unchecked and rising religious intolerance. In that context it will be fascinating to see how the completely transformed museum rebrands itself and to what long term effect. (I can think of few essays more pertinent to the future comparative analysis of this transformation than Annie E. Coombes reprinted article “Museums and the Formation of National and Cultural Identities,” in *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts, ed. Bettina Messias Carbonell, Oxford: Blackwell, 2014, pp. 231-246*).



A review of the exhibition “Macedonia-Thrace: Traditional Costumes 1860-1960” in the Folklife and Ethnological Museum of Macedonia-Thrace in Thessaloniki (Greece)

Zoi Tsiviltidou

I entered the exhibition hall with a twinge of anticipation, feeling both curious and reassured as if someone had got me by the hand. The permanent exhibition “Macedonia-Thrace: Traditional Costumes 1860-1960” in the Folklife and Ethnological Museum of Macedonia-Thrace in Thessaloniki (Greece) was mounted eleven years ago, and I re-visited it after I donated my great-grandmother’s authentic traditional costume to the Lyceum Club of Greek Women of Thessaloniki (see last issue’s tribute by the same author). The personal connection to the content admittedly influenced my interpretation efforts because of memory excitation and imagination activation.



The collection houses fifty-five Greek traditional costumes from Macedonia, Thrace, Eastern Rumelia, the Black Sea and Asia Minor littoral areas, and is a masterfully woven mix of garments, jewellery and accessories as well as cloth-making and cloth-finishing machines and photographs. The exhibition presents the morphology and function of the

late 19th and early 20th century dressing modes and the ways of cloth-making, explaining the symbolism they carried. The cloth-making and the dressing modes of the people of Macedonia and Thrace in pre-industrial Greece were as much dictated by oral history and tradition as by the trade-and-weather affordances of the time. Both were essential parts of the cultural identity of the communities and helped people tell the age, gender, occupation, ethnicity, religion and family status of one another, just by looking at one’s garments.



The semiology was well-known and respected by the people, who appreciated it as a carrier of local social and cultural values. People got dressed –for work or special occasions e.g. weddings- in many layers of cotton, wool and/or silk clothing with embroidered motifs, not only to protect themselves from cold, heat and/or injuries, but also from whimsical evil spirits which bring bad luck. Eye-captivating accessories such as shiny metallic

threads, sequins, coins and jewellery were worn not only for decorative purposes but also to ward off evil.

The exhibition touches upon the transitions traditional garments underwent and the influences of the past –mostly ancient Greek and Byzantine influences- in the use of material, design and cutting techniques. The discussion about trade and its role in the financial growth of the communities is also prevalent. Cloth-making technological equipment and sewing machines arrived in Greek households in the late 19th century, and gradually replaced the work of the tailors, embroiderers, colour dyers, goldsmiths and silversmiths, resulting in changes in style and social norms.

From a curatorial perspective, the museum builds on the evidential nature and aesthetic value of the collection to portray the richness of folklife culture and ethnographic heritage in a delicate patchwork-like manner respectful to the diversity of styles of each region. The exhibition design is in chronological order, comprehensive and thoughtful on the part of the visitor who walks around the hall to explore the particularities of each region’s dressing style including the backdrop stories of the

people's everyday life and customs through personal letters and photographs. Nonetheless, since the majority of the authentic traditional costumes preserved were the ones worn for special occasions, the visitor does not have the opportunity to see which clothes people used to wear every day to perform mundane tasks. The exhibits are visible from all sides –front and back- even though lighting could play a more supportive role. It would be very interesting to have on display extra pieces of cloth or uncut fabric for the visitor to touch and feel the weight, and somehow get a deeper sense of what stories each garment tells.

Even though there was no call to adventure or apparent confrontation, the storyline gave me an insight into the endogamous communities of Macedonia and Thrace at the time. It was a reiteration of the dressing mode's role as vehicle of the shared Greek identity and a sense of belonging. I wonder if the transitions in the fashion industry led to the socio-cultural and ideological shifts in later generations, or the other way around?

The author would like to thank Ms. Eleni Bountourelis, curator and art historian, for her feedback.

A tribute to the Lyceum Club of Greek Women of Thessaloniki (Greece) and an interview with the President, Mrs. Kaiti Tsiotra Zoi Tsiviltidou

The Lyceum Club of Greek Women of Thessaloniki (Greece) was established in May 1939 as the first non-profit organization of women interested in preserving and promoting the folklife culture and ethnographic heritage of Thessaloniki and northern Greece. To meet the mission, the LCGW runs the following departments: Folklore, Literature, Wardrobe, Library, Celebrations and Receptions, Press, Community Service, Traditional Instruments, National Traditions and Dances. I met the President, Mrs. Kaiti Tsiotra, when I approached the LCGW to donate to their collection an authentic traditional costume which belonged to my great-grandmother's family for over eight decades. My initiative was welcomed and our collaboration sparked an interest in their work. My interview with Mrs Tsiotra is below.

ZT: Tell me a few words about the history of the LCGW.

KT: The LCGW first came to life in 1915, but the Balkan Wars did not allow the members to continue their work. Then, in 1922, the idea was revived, but the Fall of Smyrni and the unstable political situation made its operation once again difficult. The official body was established in 1939 and since then, for 76 consecutive years, the LCGW has helped the local

community in every way possible. For example, during World War II, the LCGW trained volunteer nurses. We have preserved very nice letters from soldiers who thank the nurses for their help and notable service.

ZT: Could you elaborate on the mission and activities of the LCGW?

KT: The LCGW has helped those affected by earthquakes, floods and fires as well as contributed with clothes and medicine to welfare for refugees. The activities we run extend from teaching traditional dances and music to organizing scientific lectures about anthropology and ethnography, and artistic events to promote the folklife culture. It is important to note, at this point, that we host dance classes for the women who are fighting cancer. And we should not forget the blood drive initiative we run. It has always been our mission to preserve and promote our ethnographic heritage and to work with people against women's illiteracy. The LCGW used to offer courses in sewing and cloth-making alongside its work of collecting traditional costumes and mounting exhibitions. Our collection houses 1,000 authentic and original copies of garments, accessories and jewelry from Macedonia and northern

Greece. We are lucky because we are in Thessaloniki, and we collected beautiful garments from towns nearby too.

ZT: How do you engage the audience and people unfamiliar with your work?

KT: Our dance classes for children are very popular and every year with our activities for religious and national holidays, like the "Gaitani" and "Lazarines" dance events, we try to promote and share our work. We regularly organize performances and we participate in festivals about folklife culture too. The variety of the dances as well as that of the traditional costumes, the perfection achieved in the performances of musicians and singers create the uniquely welcoming ambiance. By no means should we overlook the well-elaborated stage presentations which make the shows unforgettable and the audience fervent followers of the performances in Greece and abroad. The LCGW is a member of the CIOFF -the international council of organizations of folklore festivals- too. And we are well-represented. Our team has been awarded many prizes.

ZT: What is your vision for the future?

KT: We want to have a choir singing traditional music to accompany our dancers. Above all we want to continue the long-lasting work our founders started. Currently, we have 24 members in our Board, loyal and devoted, and we all work to elevate and support the woman and the children, to enliven our traditional customs and to promote the richness of our ethnographic heritage. Every initiative, every partnership with local as well as international organizations and authorities, is serving our mission to share and communicate our incessant passion for the folklife culture of Thessaloniki, Macedonia and northern Greece. I believe we will continue with the same strong will to register our contribution. – END of interview.

Despite the hardships of wars and natural disasters, the LCGW has been and remains to this day a body of women with a strong sense of philanthropy and a service-oriented attitude towards society. On December 30th 1991, the LCGW received the prestigious Academy of Athens Award for its service to the preservation of the Greek history, folklife culture and ethnographic heritage of Thessaloniki.

In place of a conclusion:
A few words about the Museum
of the History of the Greek
Costume in Athens (Greece)

The Museum of the History of the Greek Costume (a member of the ICOM since 1997) opened in March 1988 and houses approximately 25,000

pieces of clothing –mainly authentic regional traditional costumes, accessories, jewelry and objects of cloth-making and cloth-finishing craftsmanship. The idea for having such a museum belonged to Mrs. Callirrhoe Parren, founder of the LCGW in Athens, who back in 1911 wished to protect and preserve traditional Greek costumes and started a collection which was later enriched by donations and purchases. Since then, the museum has expanded its role beyond the collection, preservation and delivery of thematic exhibitions to include the study and promotion of the history of Greek costume with educational programs for schools and guided tours. The museum's mission remains the same: to present the rich variety and diversity of Greek regional dressing manners, and demonstrate how materials and designs, including decorative motifs, were representative of a shared cultural and social identity.

The author would like to thank Mrs. Kaiti Tsiotra for agreeing to the interview.

Royal Ontario Museum apologizes for racist 1989 African exhibit (Originally posted by Annette Fromm on the ICME Yahoo Group)

They waited 27 years for an apology.

And on Wednesday night, the African-Canadians who had decried the Royal Ontario Museum's 1989-1990 exhibit, Into the Heart of Africa, as racist and demeaning finally got one.

The show featured artifacts taken from the continent by Canadian missionaries and soldiers.

“... Into the Heart of Africa perpetuated an atmosphere of racism,” ROM deputy director of collections and research Mark Engstrom said to a crowd of dozens who attended the reconciliation between the museum and the Coalition For the Truth About Africa, who had protested the exhibit in 1989 and 1990.

“The ROM expresses its deep regret for having contributed to anti-African racism. The ROM also officially apologizes for the suffering incurred by the members of the African-Canadian community.”

CFTA chief spokesperson Rostant Rico John accepted the apology.

“We want our community to know: the ROM did not slip or slide, nor hide. They came forward and showed themselves and worked with us,” John said,

explaining that the reconciliation process began back in 2014.

“... I would like to formally accept, on behalf of the African community in Canada here, the apology of the ROM,” he said to applause and cheers.

The event, which opened with a Ghanaian priest in traditional robes performing a group prayer, also saw speeches from CFTA members Afua Cooper and Yaw Akyeaw, who flew in from Ghana, where they recalled protesting Into the Heart of Africa outside the museum and the hardships demonstrators faced when they spoke out about the exhibit, including arrests and racism.

Both accepted the ROM's apology and commended the museum's effort in righting a wrong.

The event also gave a peek into what was to come; ROM director and CEO Josh Basseches said that over the next five years, the museum was committing to several initiatives to improve its relationship with the African-Canadian community, including introducing two internships for black youth interested in museums and creating more programs that focus on African or diaspora themes.

The ROM will also mount a

“major exhibition,” planned for 2018, that “addresses the exclusion of blackness from mainstream Canadian historic narrative” through the work of seven contemporary black artists, Basseches added.

Into the Heart of Africa, which featured 375 cultural artifacts taken during the turn of the century, was met with backlash from African-Canadians after it opened in November 1989.

Among the criticisms was that the exhibit glorified colonialism and those partaking in it while not fully exploring the damage it inflicted on Africa and Africans; that it reinforced harmful stereotypes about Africans by using descriptors such as “barbarous people” and “savage customs” in text accompanying displays, and that illustrations, including a British soldier on horseback stabbing a Zulu warrior in the chest with a sword and a group of African women on their knees doing laundry while a white woman looks on approvingly, were demeaning and “devastating.”

“(The exhibition) makes Africans look small or like inferior people,” Coalition for the Truth About Africa spokesperson Ras Rico said at the time. The coalition began holding weekly demonstrations outside the museum in mid-March of 1990, demanding the museum close

the exhibit and apologize.

During one protest, a confrontation between 35 police officers and 50 demonstrators resulted in two demonstrators being charged with assaulting a police officer and assault with intent to resist arrest; at another, nine people were arrested on a total of 20 criminal charges after a crowd of about 45 people came to the aid of a man arrested following an assault on a police officer at an earlier demonstration.

At the time, museum staff including director Cuyler Young and his replacement John McNeill, associate director Robert Howard and guest curator Jeanne Cannizzo defended the exhibit.

“If we thought (the exhibit) was racist, we never would have mounted it,” Howard said in May 1990.

“(Into the Heart of Africa) offers a critical examination of the role played by Canadians in the European colonization of Africa in the 19th century, while highlighting the rich diversity of African cultural practices and artistic traditions,” Cannizzo wrote in a piece that appeared in the Star in June 1990.

“The exhibition does not, as has been alleged, promote white supremacy or glorify imperialism.”

The ROM also successfully sought an injunction from the Supreme Court of Ontario to prevent protestors from

picketing within 15 meters of the museum’s entrance.

Following the controversy, four other museums — two Canadian, two American — went on to cancel their showings of the exhibition.

The museum stayed mostly silent about the fallout until 2013, when it launched its Of Africa project. A “multiplatform and multiyear project aimed at rethinking historical and contemporary representations of Africa,” Of Africa was the most public acknowledgment of the damage caused by Into the Heart of Africa to date.

“It really stems from the desire to show the public that we have transformed and want to do things differently,” Silvia Forn (ICME participant) in 2014.

“We want to start a different conversation about Africa that is mindful of the past. We cannot forget what has happened here, and that, yes, we are that museum, but we also want to look at the present and the future while we recognize that there were serious mistakes made here.”

The new ICOM logo. Its history and its hidden messages¹

Anette Rein

The history of the ICOM logo

The founding of ICOM – The international Council of Museums – in Paris in November 1946, has to be seen in the context of the founding of two other institutions one year before: The United Nations² and UNESCO. After the two World Wars, it was their shared will to establish peace worldwide.

The newly founded ICOM needed a convincing visual icon, to be easily recognized at first sight and to be printed on letter paper, press kits and name cards. The use of a digital version of the logo, as indication of international partnerships on websites, came about 50 years later.⁴

The history of the different ICOM logos seems to be closely connected with the specific political and cultural development and social transformations of the world, in which ICOM is active. Sharing the same values, the first visual identity of ICOM was strongly influenced by the UN's model "the circular logo featured the image of a map of the world in polar projection".⁵ There was not one Nation shown as a political or cultural centre on the map – but the area of concern to the United Nations. The olive branches symbolized peace. Thus the main purpose: peace and security were represented in this UN logo. ⁶



The constituent assembly of representatives of 14 nations chose for the first ICOM logo the colours black and white.⁷ A circle surrounded the acronym ICOM, written in fat lengthened letters and positioned underneath the outline of a world map. The two larger letters "CO" of ICOM allowed the annotation of community in the centre. Thus, the original role of uniting museum professionals from across the globe around the shared objectives of preservation, conservation, exhibition and communication of cultural objects was understood by the museum community.

In 1966, ICOM was celebrating its 20th anniversary and it was decided to develop a new logo. The black and white circle became a blue square and the acronym ICOM was printed in light blue letters. Above it, the world map was changed to an abstract circle, but still representing a world map, now also featuring as a pupil of an eye. With this design, ICOM reflected the geopolitical context of the Cold War – still promoting the cause of a global museum community under the roof of a strong neutral and universal institution.⁸ It is not further

explained how the ICOM community could recognize in this logo through "The precision and minimalism of the design [which] clearly reflected the geopolitical context of the Cold War".⁹

In 1972, the acronym, again in black and white, was isolated and surrounded by two half circles for two years, which reminded of the former eye.¹⁰ The world map had disappeared. In 1974 another new logo was created. Elements of the second design from 1966, the eye and the world as its pupil, were picked up again. Now, lightly changed, they were incorporated in the acronym as the ICOM-O. For the next 21 years, this forth logo in black and white represented the International Council of Museums.

In 1992, ICOM started to revamp its identity again and published a new key visual in 1995. The reasons given were the calmer geopolitical context marked by the end of the Cold War and a substantial growth in its membership.¹¹ The colour blue was back (together with a contrasting white), associated with international working institutions. For the first time, the acronym was additionally explained as "International Council of Museums" under it (first in English and French¹²; since 2001 also in Spanish). There were several associations combined with

the different letters. The “I”, with its parallel lines should symbolize the array of ICOM committees. The big “O”, again a central element in the logo as in 1974, was accentuated by a semi-circular comma, somehow a quotation of the former eye and globe. Now, it should emphasize the universality of a network whose activities span the globe.¹³



Since April 2016, each of the three ICOM e-newsletter until June was announcing the presentation of a new visual identity on July 6, 2016 during the 24th General Conference in Milan. This new logo would again emphasize ICOM’s fundamental values of community and universality. The e-newsletter community was kept in suspense – the members, however, were not invited to participate in this project.

The process of developing and publishing of the new logo

The actual redesign initiative began already back in 2014 as part of the celebration of ICOM’s 70th anniversary when a new strategic plan for the 2016-2019 period was launched. The rebranding project was driven by the ICOM Executive board, the Secretary, in collaboration with colleagues

from the ICOM network.¹⁴ As mentioned above, the info-campaign for the new visual identity for ICOM started to be announced in the e-newsletter from April 2016. In the June e-newsletter, the first two teasers were announcing the great event for Milan.¹⁵ The last sentence of the newsletter promised “A number of surprises await to go hand in hand with the change. Get Ready!” No individual invitations to journalists were distributed, no special press conference for the presentation on the logo happened and no special announcement in the first press kit could be found.¹⁶ A real mind-blowing surprise seemed to be planned.

In the printed programme of the General Conference on p. 194, the presentation of the logo was announced for July 6, 2016, 10.40 a.m. to 11 a.m. This special event was advertised with a simple couplet without any special accentuation through design, letters or a different colour. On July 6, 2016, according to project manager Bastien Noël, the conference schedule was so delayed and many of the colleagues had to leave for their own committees, that the EC decided to repeat the presentation as a short reminder three days later on Saturday (!) at the end of the meeting of the Advisory Board. However, here again the schedule was so delayed, that the presentation concentrated mainly on showing the logo video clip without any time left for further discussions.¹⁷

After the official presentation on Wednesday, several photo sessions took place and the new logo was distributed being printed in blue on white fabric bags. These bags contained a USB drive.



At 3pm on July 6, ICOM published on Facebook a picture collage together with the complete film as a visual documentation of the new logo.¹⁹



This collage was carefully prepared. One month before the conference, 19 members from various backgrounds and active on social networks, were picked by ICOM and asked to take a picture together with the new logo combined with the request to maintain silence over the project.²⁰

A few weeks after the conference, the new Graphic chart together with the concept book and the colour system free to chose were sent by e-mail to the international committees to make their choice of colour for the new key visual.²¹

Comments on a matter of no major concern

During these two presentations at Milan, there was no opportunity to have a longer discussion on the new design and to explain the underlying concept. At the end of the advisory board meeting it became clear by questions from the press that the international committees would not receive any financial help to implement the new logo in their printed and digital media, and that there would not be a strict time table of implementation. Bastien Noël explained later, “the implementation period already started and will last up to the end of 2016. We invited committees to use their logo digital media, and to implement it as stationary material is gradually replaced. We know that some of them already ordered documents, publications or business cards using the old logo. This is not a major concern. During the transitional period, both the old and the new logo of ICOM can be used. We worked a lot upstream in order to ease the work of committees. We prepared all the logos, both in English and in the local languages of committees, in various formats (both jpg and vector) ... My major concern all

along this project was to make things as simple as possible for committees

... We will not send new cards to ICOM members. However, it is planned that annual stickers will soon be replaced by annual membership cards for ICOM members. We will use the new logo on these new cards.”²²

The deeper meaning behind the 2016 logo

In the introduction of the concept book of the new visual key the following sentences explain the idea behind the logo: “Our approach was to look for a graphic element that would be a synthesis of ICOM’s values, as enhanced in the new ICOM’s strategic plan: independence, integrity and professionalism. This symbol must be global, largely understandable and fit all cultures and beliefs. We like to imagine this symbol as a rallying cry. It has to gather a strong community, which commit to improve and stand for museums, rather than a disparate sum of individuals. Going straight to what is essential, the new ICOM’s identity gathers the strengths and expresses the role of the organisation. The monogram stands solidly. It is stable and trustworthy, a little monumental; but also modern enough to be future driven. It also embodies intelligence and creation.”²³ After this declaration the book continues with an interesting overview of the word “museum” around the world and shows examples from 84 languages, in which the translation of the word

museum “highlights the linguistic root [MUS]”.²⁴ How museums may be called in the other 54 countries, which are members of ICOM too, is not mentioned in this book.

The chosen languages resp. the translations for “museum” were grouped in six columns with 14 languages each. 29 languages show no similarity with the word “museum”, whereas the rest of the languages start with a big “M” or they have as the first three letters “MUS” in their words naming the institution. As the next step for finding a new key visual, all the translations were superposed with the result that the letter “M” appears as the most common root which can embody the full term.²⁵

Under the headline: “The body, the serif and the vertical line”, associations between pillars, a serif in the reale style and the Louvre, both created in the 17th cent., shall signal a strong base, elegance and modernity.²⁸ In the chapter “The calligraphic gesture. A human link“, the loop is explained as strengthening the links between people. “It expresses a weave, a network.”²⁹

Interestingly, variations of a loop have been used since centuries as key visuals for different contents. Just to mention a few examples: beginning with the Christian Ichthys in the first century AD until the sign of Airbnb founded in 2008. Referring to these associations, the loop in a key visual shall express the dedication to an ideology, a network and a

community like the Red Ribbon, created in 1991 as a symbol of awareness and support for those living with HIV. 30



This possible shared conceptual tradition of loops was not mentioned in the concept book of ICOM. Here, the authors started from the art perspective and interpreted the loop as “the calligraphic [Islamic] gesture”, created by an artist as a manuscript gesture “why it embodies culture, humanity and civilisation”.36

For the new key visual the colour blue was chosen, as a

sign for internationality, like other global players. Blue, as the colour of our planet, symbolizes “peace, serenity, continuity”.37 Under the headline: “The typography. A multi-cultural system” the fonts “Georgia” for the logotype and “Arial” for common compositions were chosen because of their availability on most computers.38

On the last pages the monogram and the logo with different try outs together with the last, official key visuals were presented.39



Like the loop, the “M” as a single monogram has a long tradition. It is used in Christianity as the symbol for the Virgin Mary – as the two art historians Dr. Adelheid Straten and Dr. Christian Müller-Straten independently from each other observed, when they saw the new ICOM logo for the first time.43 It is used in several symbolical contexts, often combined with an “A”, with a loop or cross, or as a counter symbol to IHS: “This symbol consisting of the intertwined letters A and M is called Auspice Maria, a monogram of the Virgin Mary. Auspice Maria is Latin for ‘Under the protection of Mary’ and is commonly found in Catholic religious art, on churches, and inscribed on jewelry. It is sometimes (incorrectly) referred to or used as a stand-in for the salutation

‘Ave Maria’”.44



Without discussing if the new ICOM “M” has to be seen as “plagiarism” of existing commercial or religious logos/ monograms or not, one may say that the new ICOM key visual (the looped “M”) has indeed very strong connotations with one of the main traditional Christian symbols, which since centuries shall mediate the contemplator the confidence to be a member of a global network, which successfully shares and stands for its worldviews, interests and duties.45

The introduction in the concept book announces a graphic element, which “We like to imagine this symbol as a rallying cry” being “the synthesis of ICOM’s values, as enhanced in the new ICOM’s strategic plan”.46 The purposes of this strategic plan have been encapsulated in three following key words: INDEPENDENCE / INTEGRITY / PROFESSIONALISM as explained in the Working Papers of the 31st Ordinary General Assembly. 47 There, on one and a half pages the three keywords are further exemplified. If one compares some of the used words in this explanation with the text in the Concept Book, one discovers only a few corresponding words like: museum and international,

which are mentioned several times in different contexts. The three key words of the strategic plan: independence, integrity, professionalism together with heritage and members are mentioned on p. 3 only. Words like cultural, ethic, illicit trade, tangible and intangible as further basic words in the strategic plan of ICOM, are not mentioned in the explanations of the Concept Book at all. It remains open, how far the new key visual in its aesthetic and symbolic appearance mirrors chosen ICOM values in accordance with the strategic plan 2016-2022 at all.⁴⁸

Why? The perspectives

To develop a new key visual for an association like the International Museum Council with over 36,000 members in 138 countries is a very ambitious and challenging project, while the former logo (*1995) is internationally distributed and well known. It is a time-consuming project for all participants. But why at all a new logo was needed and why was it to be published in this very moment?

1) An “inexpensive” birthday present?

One reason for the new key visual was the idea to celebrate 70 years of ICOM together with the 24th General Conference in Milan with a new logo as an appropriate (not exactly cheap) birthday present. As the former President Prof. Dr. Hans-Martin Hinz together with the ICOM Director General, Prof. Dr.

Anne-Catherine Robert-Hauglustaine expressed in their foreword in the Annual Report 2015: “In 2016, we celebrate the dedication, integrity and professionalism of our members, who have allowed ICOM to come this far and be as active, ambitious and extensive as it is today”.⁴⁹

2) An urgently needed sign of Independence?

However, this was not the only official reason to create a new logo. According to the Chair of the Advisory Board, Prof. Dr. Regine Schulz: “With the new key visual the International Council of Museums will strengthen its identity as an own institution, independently from the UNESCO with which ICOM was closely connected since its foundation in 1946. In the meantime, ICOM has developed many international programs for museums independently from the UNESCO. We choose the ‘M’ as a single monogram to express our strength for our museum community which means more than 36,000 members in 138 countries and territories”.⁵⁰ As the Director General of ICOM at the end of the advisory committee meeting exemplified: the new key visual was created as an expression of the new strategic plan (2016-2022). Actually, it seems to be unclear in how far the new key visual may represent and emphasize ICOM’s fundamental values of “community and universality” as announced at the end of the ICOM e-newsletter from April 2016. In the Concept Book, “universality”

is not mentioned once and “community” several times on p.3 only.

3) A stronger emphasis on "Museum"?

According to the Director General, during the next three years there will be another intensive work for creating the ICOM-story behind the new logo as a visualisation of the new strategic plan – besides the content MUSEUM.⁵¹

Notes:

- 1 Thanks to Bastien Noel (ICOM Hq.) who answered many questions concerning the conference and the history of the six logos (email August 4, 2016). The different stories behind the first five logos can be found under <http://icom.museum/news/news/article/new-visual-identity-for-icom-the-saga-of-icom-logos/> (accessed August 4, 2016). But, on the website of ICOM the different logos are not published together with the text.
- 2 The constitutional meeting happened in Lake Success, New York, on October 24, 1945.
- 3 UNESCO was founded in London on November 16, 1945.
- 4 The first website was online in 1990.
- 5 ICOM e-newsletter of April 2016. The information about the history of the ICOM logos are referring to the three ICOM e-newsletters (April-June 2016) which were meant to serve as attunement of the members to the presentation of the new visual identity in Milan.

The design of the UN logo is “a map of the world representing an azimuthal equidistant projection centred on the North Pole, inscribed in a wreath consisting of crossed conventionalized branches of the olive tree, in gold on a field of smoke-blue with all water areas in white. The projection of the map extends to 60 degrees south latitude, and includes five concentric circles”.

<http://www.un.org/en/sections/about-un/un-logo-and-flag/index.html> (accessed August 6, 2016).

6

<http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/malib/flag.htm> (accessed August 6, 2016)

7 These 14 nations were:

Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK and US. (E-newsletter April 2016)

8 E-newsletter Mai 2016

9 ICOM e-newsletter April 2016

10 In the e-newsletter from May 2016, this third ICOM logo was not mentioned. Thanks to Bastien Noël, who sent me all the logos as pictograms together with the years of their creation.

11 ICOM E-newsletter June 2016

12 The video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FvTgKLs4EFU> (accessed August 4, 2016) shows aspects of the development of the logo in 1995.

13 E-newsletter June 2016

14 Noël explained the process of a selected participation of ICOM members as follows:

First, I worked with ICOM International Committee for Marketing and Public Relations. Then I addressed an email to National Committees and asked them to suggest names in order to gather a kind of informal rebranding working group. All along, I was working with Michael Ryan, President of the Working Group Committee on ICOM Strategic Plan". (eMail August 19, 2016). Noël will publish an article about “How and Why we rebranded ICOM” on the website of ICOM (e-mail of August 4, 2016)

15

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eLsafjX13yl&feature=youtu.be> (accessed August 4, 2016) published on June 14, 2016.

The second teaser can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=id8D3AUS2vM&feature=youtu.be> (accessed August 4, 2016).

16 I received the first press kit for the conference per e-mail on June 27, 2016 from the ICOM Milano 2016 Registration Department, c/o K.I.T. Group GmbH. In the printed press kit, which I picked up in the press office during the conference, the info about the presentation of the new ICOM identity was added as the last lines under the heading “Content and Highlights”. Whereas, in the press release for journalists the “launch of ICOM’s new visual identity” was only mentioned without any date or time.

17 The Story of ICOM’s new logo. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rdTpPREtics> (accessed August 9, 2016), published July

6, 2016 (1:30 min.).

18

https://c2.staticflickr.com/8/7294/27537873613_6945631904_b.jpg (accessed August 4, 2016)

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/143526034@N06/28153126295> (accessed August 4, 2016)

19

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rdTpPREtics&feature=youtu.be> (accessed August 4, 2016)

20 Thanks to Soeren La Cour Jensen, who participated in this pre-photo shooting. (Noël, e-mail of August 4, 2016)

21 The mentioned design agency on these two documents is c-album, Graphic design studio, www.c-album.fr, which, however, until August 4, 2016 did not mention this project on its own website. “Each committee can choose a particular colour except the blue range.” ICOM’s new identity. International Committees 2016, p. 2

22 Noël, e-mail of August 4, 2016

23 Concept book 2016, p. 3

24 *ibid.*, p. 6

25 *ibid.*, p. 8

26 *ibid.*, p. 9

27 *ibid.*, p. 10

28 It was the Louvre housing the constituent assembly of ICOM in 1946. Concept book 2016, p. 10

29 Concept book 2016, p. 10-

11. According to Noël, the designers “created the loop basing their work on the oriental [!] calligraphic gesture” (e-mail of August 4, 2016).

30 “The red ribbon is the universal symbol of awareness and support for those living

with HIV. The red ribbon has inspired other charities to utilise the symbol, for example breast cancer awareness has adopted a pink version". <https://www.worldaidsday.org/the-red-ribbon> (accessed August 8, 2016)

31 https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rote_Schleife (accessed August 8, 2016). This loop exists also in different colours for different opportunities.

32 This Christian symbol was used primarily amongst Christians in early history (1st and 2nd century A.D.) https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/86/Ichthys_symbol.svg/2000px-Ichthys_symbol.svg.png (accessed August 8, 2016).

33 Airbnb is a private online marketplace that enables people to list, find, then rent vacation homes. [Airbnb.de](https://www.airbnb.de) (accessed August 8, 2016)

34 Noël reads the loop as "an ampersand" (e-mail of August 8, 2016).

35 Concept book 2016, p 13

36 Concept book 2016, p. 12

37 Concept Book 2016, p. 16

38 Concept Book 2016, p. 14-15

39 Concept Book 2016 pp.20-31

40 Thanks to the K.I.T. Group in Berlin, who sent me the single logos. K.I.T. was the organizing secretariat besides the organisers ICOM and ICOM ITALY, responsible for the organisation of the conference.

41 Concept Book 2016, p. 27

42 <https://www.etsy.com/market/avemaria> (accessed August 9,

2016)

43 "The new ICOM-M, which was invented to raise the attention more to 'M-words like Museum' is not a new compelling symbol, it's a plagiarism. It is — except for a negligible detail — the looped 'M' standing for the Virgin Mary, which is commonly known in the Catholic world... By a simple online picture research anyone can find today lots of examples; but there are even more undigitized in emblematic religious art." ["Das neue ICOM-M, das angeblich den Bestandteil „Museum“ stärker hervorheben soll..., ist ein Plagiat. Es ist (bis auf ein unerhebliches Detail) das seit dem 19. Jahrhundert im katholischen Raum bekannte, im Mittelteil verschlungene Mariensymbol M... Durch einfaches Bildgockeln kommt man jederzeit auf genügend Beispiele... " Christian Müller-Straten by e-mail to the German Museum discussion list [museums-themen] and to the new ICOM President Suay Aksoy (July 21, 2016).

Graphical artists have shown in an additional discussion on the new ICOM "M" on Twitter that it copies the looped M of several products and firms (http://www.underconsideration.com/brandnew/archives/new_logo_for_icom_by_album.php#disqus_thread): Monocle, MARTIN + OSA, and La Società del Marketing (accessed August 16, 2016)

44 <http://symboldictionary.net/?p=2255> (accessed August 9, 2016)

45 To speak with Bastien Noël

words, the ICOM design of the monogram "can be read according to your own sensibility". (Noël, eMail of August 8, 2016)

46 Concept Book 2016, p. 3

47 "Working Documents", p. 62, online p. 8. http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/Strategic_Plan/ICOM_STRATEGIC_PLAN_2016-2022_ENG.pdf (accessed August 11, 2016)

48 Of course, the blue colour is of the key visual is mentioned as signalling internationality — one value of ICOM. Concept Book 2016, p. 16

49 ICOM Report 2015, p. 3. http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/Activity_report/ICOM_activity_report2015_eng.pdf (accessed August 12, 2016)

50 Schulz, eMail August 16, 2016. "There was also a need for clarification in the ICOM network. Year after year, ICOM's committees and programmes started to develop their own identity and it resulted to a visual chaos. We needed a new system (more than a logo, the logo is less important than the system). Also, ICOM past logo fit badly with partners' visual tags, especially those of museums which rebranded themselves these past years. This entire framework leads to dissonant brand architecture". Noël, eMail of August 19, 2016

51 Many thanks to my colleagues and friends Marie-Paule Jungblut and Ralf Ceplak for their helpful comments.

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newsletter/e-newsletter2016-4_eng.html (access August 8, 2016)

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http://network.icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/minisites/icom-colombia/pdf/ICOM_IdentityConceptbook.pdf (access August 8, 2016)

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http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/Activity_report/IC

OM_activity_report2015_eng.pdf (access August 12, 2016)

Words from the Editor

Jen Walklate

I think it's safe to say that this is a pretty hefty edition of the News.

But that's OK! Happy 80th Issue, ICME News! I'll have some wine later, to celebrate.

I think I'm still slightly in that post-Holiday fugue. Leicester is beautiful, from about October to early January, with Eid, Diwali and Christmas all crammed in together, all the lights and excitement. When I was unemployed, one of my favorite cheap activities was to sit on the bus going along the Golden Mile from the City Centre during that time of year - the shops for which the road is named were only enhanced by the decorations which navigated the street lamps high above. Gold and frost glinted together in the darkness.

Fortunately, we have Chinese New Year to look forward to - more lights and fireworks. What a wonderful gift it is to live in a city such as Leicester, with its manifold of cultures, jostling and bustling together and making something especially unique and wonderful.

It's a new start for me this year too. I'll be taking up a position as a Teaching Fellow at the School of Museum Studies, so expect to hear a lot more news from that corner of the discipline very soon.

In any case, what of this issue? We've had Fellows Reports, explorations and interviews, expressions of curatorial nostalgia - even grief, perhaps - an apology, and an explanation. A whole swathe of experiences which can be felt in museums, particularly ethnographic ones. It seems only apposite for such a special issue.

And you'll have noticed that I've debuted our new logo as the header in this issue. I hope you like it - I do. And with Anette's discussion, it's only become even more interesting.

I wonder what webs we will weave this year, what loops and connections we will make. I think it's safe to say that the actions each and every one of us takes, in our personal and professional lives, have ramifications far beyond what we can imagine. We are

all entangled with each other, and in this time of fear and ignorance and cruelty, I think it's important that we make those actions kind, generous, tolerant and meaningful.

You, out there, and me, in here - we all have the power to make change. Even in the little things.

Eve: Tell me now about entanglement. Einstein's spooky action at a distance. Is it related to quantum theory?

Adam: Hm. No I mean, it's not a Theory it's proven.

Eve: How does it go again?

Adam: When you separate an entwined particle and you move both parts away from the other, even at opposite ends of the universe, if you alter or affect one, the other will be identically altered or affected.

Eve: Spooky. Even at opposite ends of the universe?

Adam: Yeah.

Only Lovers Left Alive, Jim Jarmusch, 2013

This Newsletter is published every three months. You can contact the News with anything you think the wider ICME/Museum Ethnography Community would like to hear! Please email jenny.walklate@gmail.com with anything you'd like to include.

The website is: <http://network.icom.museum/icme/>

See you next time!