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Museology at a crossroads

abstrakt | abstract ▷

The museum world is crossed by important changes. The economic crisis led indeed a number of museums to rethink entirely their relations with their environment. The (small) museology world appears to be in front of a crossroads. If we are to believe different papers and reports on the future of museums, these establishments seem indeed to turn into social environments. But two other plans may be also considered: on a geopolitical level and on an epistemological level. In geopolitical terms, the museum future appears to be Anglo-Saxon. At another – epistemological – level, one could question the very nature of museology. Since the late 60's, an important amount of museums theorists believe that the way of conceiving museology does not stand in the practical application of recipes on museums operations. Does the "specific approach of man to reality" show a clear program for museum research? Is there another possibility to consider museology?

Muzejní svět prochází v současnosti obdobím důležitých změn. Ekonomická krize přiměla mnohá muzea kompletně přehodnotit svůj vztah k okolnímu prostředí. Zdá se, že muzeologie stojí v současnosti na důležité křižovatce svého vývoje. Jak vyplývá z různých studií a zpráv týkajících se budoucnosti muzeí, tato zařízení se skutečně mění ve specifické sociální prostředí. O problému je možné uvažovat také ve dvou dalších rovinách – geopolitické a epistemologické. V geopolitickém smyslu se budoucnost muzeí jeví jako anglosaská. V epistemologické rovině bývá často zpochybňována samotná podstata muzeologie. Už od konce 60. let 20. století značná část muzejních teoretiků zastává názor, že muzeologická teorie neobstojí při aplikaci svých postupů v muzejní praxi. Nabízí „specifický přístup člověka k realitě" nějaký jasný program pro muzeologii jako vědeckou disciplínu? Existuje vůbec nějaká jiná možnost, jak uvažovat o muzeologii?

The museum world is at a crossroads. After several years of continuous growth of the museum population, some doubts arise about the future of the institution. Of course, the British museum is not supposed to be falling down, but the future of smaller establishments seems more uncertain.[1]

The economic crisis that unfolded across the West since 2007 has resulted in dramatic changes in many countries in terms of funding for museums. For the first time in many years, museums in western countries faced relatively large budget cuts. Several reports are betting on the fact that these measures are not transient but form a structural trend.[2] In parallel, the museum world is also transformed by two trends. The first is related to globalization and increased trade flows or transactions and visits around the world – including the development of tourism. The second trend, the development of digital technologies, is transforming the whole communications landscape, and indirectly museums.

Museums appear increasingly divided into two separate groups, the first consisting of larger institutions – the famous superstar museums welcoming millions of visitors and developing their brand[3] – and the other consisting of a large number of very small organizations struggling to attract the public and to fund some exhibition projects or even avoid bankruptcy. It is in this latter perspective that was seen, particularly in Britain, the emergence of the participatory and community museum, focused on targeted publics, largely based on local initiative groups, less based on their permanent collections.[4] It is in this context that the idea of a museum without objects – in fact no permanent collection or no collection at all – might develop, as in Japan.[5] Collections thus appear to be less important than the relationship with the public, the latter becoming the main concern of museums.

It is appropriate in this context to examine the future prospects of museums. Whatever definition given to the term "museum", the museum concept is changeable, and related to its time. The museum world seems highly susceptible to change, but what about museology? Is the discipline also evolving and if so, in what direction? This is the question I would like to tackle in the following pages. Such a reflection was initiated during the preparation of the *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de muséologie*, and should be obviously considered as a work in progress...[6]

On few trends influencing museums and museology

If there is a *Center for the future of museums*,[7] there is no Center for the future of museology, although the idea would be very interesting to explore. The Center for the future of museums, established in the United States since 2007, has chosen to focus on three broad trends that influence the museum world: demographics, education, and the evolution of mobile technologies. We could certainly discuss these three trends as sources that influence museology, considering the much smaller population of museum thinkers, but these three trends affect in much the same way the whole academic system. Generational change occurs, leading to a generation that was

[1] The following reflection was started some months ago in a previous article: see MAIRESSE, François. La muséologie à la croisée des chemins. *Complutum* (Madrid),2015, vol. 26, no. 2, pp. 29-37.

[2] See for instance MEIJER, Max, Siebe WEIDE and Marieke KRABSHUIS. *Agenda 2026: Study on the Future of the Dutch Museum Sector* [online]. Amsterdam: Nederlandse Museumvereniging, September 2010. 20 p. [cit. 2015-10-01]. Available from www: <http://www.museumvereniging.nl/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=jEC-ghnfc3A%3D&tabid=244>. For the first time since the 1970's, the budget of the Ministry of Culture in France faced some important cuts, especially for the heritage sector.

[3] FREY, Bruno S. and Stephan MEIER. The Economics of Museums. In GINSBURGH, Victor and David THROSBY (eds.). *Handbook of the Economics of Art and Culture.* Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2006, vol. 1, pp. 1017–1050.

[4] *Museums 2020 Discussion Paper* [online]. London: Museums Association, July 2012 [cit. 2015-10-01]. Available from www: <http://www.museumsassociation.org/download?id=806530>.

[5] MORISHITA, Masaaki. *The Empty Museum. Western Cultures and the Artistic Field in Modern Japan.* Farnham: Ashgate, 2010. 149 p. See also CONN, Steven. *Do Museums still Need Objects?* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010. 272 p.

[6] DESVALLÉES, André and François MAIRESSE (eds.). *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de muséologie.* Paris: Armand Colin, 2011. 776 p.

[7] Center for the future of museums. In *American Alliance of Museums* [online]. [cit. 2015-10-01]. Available from www: <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/center-for-the-future-of-museums>.

the most influential gradually fading: a teacher, having retired (around 65–70 years), might be still active usually ten or fifteen years afterwards (e.g.: the working generation in the years 1980–1990, for example Susan Pearce, Zbyněk Stránský and André Desvallées continue after retirement), but new very active generations are already emerging, formed with other views and developing new research topics. The education of new museum professionals differs from those of their "fathers": the university sphere has changed considerably with the two university mass revolutions of the 1960's and 80's, which influenced very much the ways of thinking, teaching, and evaluating. Information technology and communication now enable the rapid development of global education methods through MOOC (massive open online courses) and other forms of learning.

But two other important trends contribute perhaps more to the transformation of the way of thinking within the museum field. I would link the first with languages, and the second with the weight of the market economy in the operation of museums.

Globalization and Language

Until the end of World War II, the French language, despite a gradual decline of its influence, continued to maintain a very high level as a vehicle of a certain idea of culture, especially in the world of museums (the journal *Mouseion*, published by the International Museums Office, was in French).[8] The years following World War II still saw the important influence of France in the museum world, for example through the work of the first director of ICOM, Georges Henri Rivière (director 1948–1966) and his successor Hugues de Varine (1967–1974). Articles published by the latter, in particular in the journal *Museum international*, as well as courses in museology given by Rivière in Paris, contributed to developing the influence of a specifically Latin museological thought, including the movement of the French Nouvelle muséologie.[9]

Another source of influence at the same time were the Eastern bloc countries, through the emblematic figures of Jan Jelínek (ICOM President and first president of ICOFOM) of Awraam Razgon or Klaus Schreiner, and of course of Zbyněk Stránský. The two issues of *Museological Working Papers (MuWoP / DoTraM*: 1980–81) present a particularly interesting overview with an inventory of the ways of thinking at that moment. The publication was bilingual (English / French), but many authors had already favored Shakespeare's language (the phenomenon would continue with the publication of *ICOFOM Study Series*). However, we could observe how at that moment the concepts of the museum were already fundamentally different among different countries.

After the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, English was widely adopted across the world as a vehicle for international trade, to the detriment of French or Russian. One can only appreciate the opportunity for everybody to communicate with the world. The choice of a common language, in this perspective, was at the least decisive. English, the *lingua franca* of contemporary times, has undoubtedly established itself as the vehicle more or less mastered by the rest of the world.

The transition from one language to another, however, is not without influence on the expression of a thought, or the conception of a discipline. In the museum field, the simple choice of a term: museum studies *versus* museology, already tells us a lot about the differing guidelines on teaching contents and modes of thinking,[10] and if words like "museal" or "muzealisation" appear relatively familiar to a Latin or Eastern audience, they sound at best very exotic in many other languages.

In addition to this language gap, it is worth noting the difference (or divergence) of philosophical training among countries, conditioning epistemological thinking (e.g.: how to envisage museum work and its methods). This viewpoint would emphasize the importance of Rationalism or Hegelian idealism in France and Germany, which offer some world views and ways of approaching problems that differ widely from British empiricism and later to American pragmatism. The American conception of museum work, which tries to find answers to some very practical questions based on experience, as explicitly affirmed by Burcaw[11] (and totally denigrated by Stránský), can partly be explained by this theoretical background.

Changes of economic models

More than language, it is probably the economy that has most directly influenced museology. The influence of the growing Anglo-Saxon capitalist model on the rest of the world is actually reflected, above all, by a preponderance of the market economy, such as developed in North America. In a generation, the apparently relatively stable balance of power between the Soviet model, based on planned economy, and the principles of capitalism and the social democracies of Western Europe on the other hand, were abruptly challenged. The fall of the Berlin wall and the implosion of the Soviet bloc led to rapid developments of liberal market policies, as implemented in the Anglo-Saxon countries. A drastic reduction of public policies started throughout the whole Western world, in favor of free markets and the *homo œconomicus* whose search for maximizing the market's usefulness appears to be the key to market efficiency.

These changes produced significant transformations of the museum world. Somehow, the change of economic model was gradually reflected through the turning of museums to commercial solutions in operation at this time, inducing the progressive transformation of consumer behavior, and to the idea that museums could have an economic impact on its region. The most famous example of this logic, as its inauguration raised a large number of comments, sometimes enthusiastic, sometimes very critical, is the creation of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao. The crowd of visitors and their influence on the local economy gave it an immediate political recognition.[12] The growing popularity of the museum phenomenon, fueled by the opening of such facilities with spectacular architecture – Including many contemporary art museums such as the Tate Modern in London, the new MoMA in New York, the Centre Pompidou in Metz, and also other types of museums, including the Jewish Museum of Berlin and the Musée des Confluences in Lyon – partly led the museum world to split into two separate parts, as mentioned above, to the advantage of "millionaire museums" (in number of visitors and also as revenue generated by the intense activity that follows). The economic crisis influenced greatly the museum world in Western countries, inducing some very significant cuts in funding for these institutions.

[8] I discussed this idea more precisely in: MAIRESSE, François. Le musée inclusif et la muséologie mondialisée/ O museu inclusivo e a museologia mundializada. In *21 encuentro regional, Termos e conceptos de museologia: museu inclusivo, interculturalidade et patrimonio integral.* Rio/Petropolis: ICOFOM LAM, 2012, pp. 17–52.

[9] *La muséologie selon Georges Henri Rivière: textes et témoignages.* Paris: Dunod, 1989, 402 p.; VARINE, Hugues de. *L'initiative communautaire. Recherche et expérimentation.* Mâcon: W. et M.N.E.S., 1991. 265 p.

[10] See also GOMEZ MARTINEZ, Javier. *Dos museologias. Las tradiciones anglosajona y mediterranea: diferencia y contactos.* Gijon: Trea, 2006. 341 p.

[11] BURCAW, George Ellis. Réflexions sur MuWop no 1. In MuWoP: *Museological Working Papers: L'interdisciplinarité en muséologie.* 1981, no. 2, p. 87.

[12] See the website Scholars on Bilbao, that references the academic literature on the Bilbao "revolution": *Scholars on Bilbao* [online]. [cit. 2015-10-01]. Available from www: <http://www.scholars-on-bilbao.info/>.

From that perspective, two ways to define museums and museology can be identified. The first can be found in a large number of publications[13] and relies on the social role of museums. The museum institution is here seen as a means of mobilizing the local community, and thinking about its identity and development. This idea is not new and includes the French Nouvelle muséologie of the 1970's, and even a number of initiatives dating back to the nineteenth century.[14] It can be found particularly in MINOM (Mouvement international pour la nouvelle muséologie), in the *Cadernos de sociomuseologia* and critical museology,[15] and is also developed by many Anglo-Saxon contributions associated with the social work of museums (Silverman), social inclusion (Sandell) or participation (Simon). This trend is increasingly popular – maybe cyclically so[16] – posing as the major way of thinking about the museum sector. The idea behind participatory museums is that it is not the State but the community itself that will support the museum in a sustainable manner, an idea that could already be found in John Cotton Dana's writings.[17]

Sociomuseology (or social, community or participatory museology) is based on a largely internal current of museology. But another way to conceive the museum has instead developed outside of museum curricula. Much of the role and the concept of museums are largely influenced by an unstructured language established from a touristic, diplomatic, economic and urban perspective. The fact that the museum generates substantial indirect revenues affecting the economy or quality of life of a particular region is a relatively old principle that dates back at least to the eighteenth century and to which we frequently find references throughout the nineteenth century.[18] Rarely, however, have museums been built – and organized – primarily for this purpose. Yet it is, in a way, more from outside opinions, those of economists, architects, urban planners and diplomats that the way to design and manage museum is seen here. Overall, this "museology" plans the museum from its outermost characteristics: a relatively conventional vision of the museum (not really participatory), but moreover about its image (a remarkable architecture), the quality of its exhibitions and attendance (hence its economic impact on the region). The basic functions of the museum – preservation and research, general administration, or education issues – are therefore relegated to secondary issues. The economic point of view, to integrate museums in the market economy, led to the application of performance criteria and economic decisions in the equation to manage and subsidize museums. From this perspective, it is no longer the sentence "a museum that does not acquire collections is a dead museum" (old conservative saying) that prevails, but "a museum that does not attract visitors does not deserve to be subsidized".

In any event, regardless of the approach of the term "museology", the museum field is *de facto* thought from a wide range of disciplines, such as sociology, economics, art history, architecture, information science, etc. In most countries, the teaching of this discipline is partly based on a vision still largely conditioned by the museum of the 1990's but incorporating social questions (sociomuseology). However, it also relies less on the logic of a dedicated academic discipline. Moreover, relatively little remains concerning the study of a "specific relation between man and reality", the famous proposal of Zbyněk Stránský.[19]

New areas of research

The definition proposed by ICOFOM in *Key Concepts of Museology*, suggests that museology is defined as an open field integrating all concepts and critical theories related to the museal field.[20] That definition does not seek to induce a real research program, as one might perceive in the writings of Stránský or from the PhD dissertation of van Mensch (the best synthesis developed from the ideas of Eastern museology[21]), but it rather seeks to broaden a debate about the museum field in order to analyze its structure, as the *ICOFOM Study Series* has tried to do for thirty years.

Between the classic definition of museology given by Rivière and still largely quoted by standard textbooks,[22] the more specific definition based on the social role of museums, and the one more implicitly occurring in the economics, there seems to be little room for a more accurate approach to museology, such as the one derived from the "study of a specific relation between man and reality". Is the future of museology constrained to the development of cookbooks and other formulas of museum development? Or would it be encompassed by other disciplines, such as economics or urban studies? The work of the sociologist Bruno Latour, which focuses on the analysis of the development of scientific fields, can be of help to apprehend the place of museology in the academic system.[23]

The possibility of developing a scientific field

The traditional view – that was followed by Stránský – considers the formation of a science from its inner structure (a distinct object of knowledge, a vocabulary, some specific ways of investigation, etc.).[24] From this approach, all the work that was pursued during the last fifty years should progressively allow museology to emerge as a real and distinct discipline, able to guide and refine museum work. We know this concept is too simple to work. For Latour (who never wrote about museology), these efforts only offer a possible "binder" linking more important issues, but there needs to be some additional supports. **(1)** The first, which Latour calls "mobilization of the world", encompasses all the instruments, collections, expeditions or surveys that were made in order to accumulate some knowledge about the discipline. If we think from a strictly museological perspective (and not from the point of view of museum collections that attract the interest of other disciplines), the result is somehow meagre: there are not that many museological laboratories and major museological libraries (about less than a dozen world-wide, compared, for instance, to the hundreds of such institutions specialized in sociology or cinema),

[13] BLACK, Graham. *Transforming Museums in the Twenty-first Century.* London: Routledge, 2012. 288 p.; SILVERMAN, Lois H. *The Social Work of Museums.* London: Routledge, 2010. 208 p.; SIMON, Nina. *The participatory museum.* Santa Cruz, California: Museum 2.0, 2010. 352 p. Available from www: <http://www.participatorymuseum.org>; SANDELL, Richard. *Museums, society, inequality.* London: Routledge, 2002. 268 p.

[14] MAIRESSE, François. La belle histoire – aux origines de la nouvelle muséologie. *Publics & Musées*, 2000, no. 17-18, pp. 33–56.

[15] LORENTE, Jesús-Pedro. The development of museum studies in universities: from technical training to critical museology. *Museum management and curatorship*, 2012, vol. 27, no. 3, pp. 237–252.

[16] I wrote specifically on this topic in: MAIRESSE, François. L'économique et/ou le social? Quel rôle futur pour le musée?. In BARRERE, Anne and François MAIRESSE. *L'inclusion sociale. Les enjeux de la culture et de l'éducation*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 2015, pp. 117–143.

[17] DANA, John C. *A Plan for a New Museum – The Kind of Museum it Will Profit a City to Maintain.* Woodstock: Elm Tree Press, 1920. 65 p.

[18] MAIRESSE, François. *Le musée hybride.* Paris: La Documentation française, 2010. 208 p.

[19] STRÁNSKÝ, Zbyněk Z. *Muséologie Introduction aux études.* Brno: Université Masaryk, 1995. 169 p.

[20] DESVALLÉES, André and François MAIRESSE (eds.). *Key concepts of museology* [online]. Paris: Armand Colin and ICOM, 2010. 87 p. [cit. 2015-10-01]. Available from www: <http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/Key_Concepts_of_Museology/Museologie_Anglais_BD.pdf>.

[21] MENSCH, Peter van. *Towards a Methodology of Museology.* Zagreb: University of Zagreb, Faculty of Philosophy, 1992. Doctor's Thesis.

[22] BURCAW, George Ellis. *Introduction to Museum Work.* Walnut Creek, London: Altamira Press, 1997. 237 p.; ZUBIAUR CAREÑO, Francisco J. *Curso de museología.* Gijón: Trea, 2004. 394 p.; GOB, André and Noémie DROUGUET. *La muséologie. Histoire, développements, enjeux actuels.* Paris: Armand Colin, 2014. 352 p. (this last edition also quotes the Dictionnaire encyclopédique de muséologie).

[23] Latour's bibliography is very important. A good introduction can be found in: LATOUR, Bruno. *Le métier de chercheur. Regard d'un anthropologue.* Paris: INRA, 2001. 103 p.

[24] I already used this approach for the Introduction of Peter van Mensch's Ph D dissertation that has been translated into Russian: MAIRESSE, François, 2014, *О БУДУЩЕМ МУЗЕОЛОГИИ: несколько замечаний к русскому изданию диссертации Петера ван Менша* (on the future of museology), *ВОПРОСЫ МУЗЕОЛОГИИ* (The problems of museology), 1 (9)/2014, pp. 6–14.

or major databases, nor "museums of museums", etc. **(2)** Latour speaks then about "research empowerment", a mix of professionalization of the sector, with international congress organizations, and the like. A sector needs to gather enough colleagues to form a genuine assembly in which they can work together (in networks), read papers and criticize them. Even in ICOM, specific international groups such as ICOFOM or ICTOP do not form a real platform on which to engage a wide and critical exchange of views. Real "scientific" periodicals on museology (regularly published journals, with a double blind peer review, listed in citation indexes) can hardly be counted on the fingers of one hand. **(3)** A discipline cannot develop alone; it needs allies. Latour underlines the major role of industries, the military, politicians etc. This point of view may remind us that some of the "friends" of museums, that have done so much in recent years to develop those institutions, have also closer ties to actors on the political scene than to curators or museologists: managers, town planners or politicians have of course other agendas than the development of museology, and the museums they "bought" or helped to develop were far from those that care about objects as data carriers. Finally, **(4)** Latour sees in public relations and "showmanship" a valuable resource for a discipline to be accepted (and finally paid) by the public (with taxes or generous gifts). Somehow, this last context is certainly not negative for museologists, as museums seem to be more and more popular. But museum popularity is not enough to foster the development of museology.

Latour's approach might appear cynical, but it gives a general overview of the effort that would be necessary if museology is to become an internationally recognized discipline. But who cares? Is it really important that museology be recognized as an autonomous discipline? Well, for those who would participate in the training and brainstorming of the people in charge of museums, it might be of importance. And it remains a fact that the Anglo-Saxon school of museum studies, although not based on a specific methodology, much fuzzier and pragmatically managed, enjoys a wider audience around the museum world than any other school of thought for conceiving museums. Because of its British origin, and although not being "museological", the museum studies field appears much more connected to the academic world than does museology.

However, as Stránský understood it implicitly, museology/museum studies, if only linked to the museum phenomenon might not develop as well as it would if based on a broader topic (the specific relation of man to reality). A bright idea, but so disconnected to the "real" world that it did not really inspire people working in museums, nor that many scientists. Put in another way, Stránský insisted on the museum as a research institution (he was not the only one[25]), which was partly the case during the 1970's, but which it is definitely not anymore for most museums (with of course some notable exceptions).

I would like to suggest here another possible direction for museological research, very much associated to Stránský's ideas, but maybe a bit more linked to museum practical work and especially the two other functions of the museum: preservation and communication.

Museology as the study of the spatiotemporal organization of knowledge

Bernard Deloche describes the specificity of the museum field by two irreducible characteristics: the sensory display (which distinguishes museums from text) and the marginalization of reality.[26] The first characteristic is directly related to the exhibition function of the institution: that is to say to the display of objects in space, so that they can reveal their particular content or form (knowledge or aesthetics). The second feature – directly related to the action of musealization – stresses the timeless principle of the museum: when musealized, an object is removed from its primary context (and a well-defined spatiotemporal reality) to be placed in another space (the museum, different from other profane spaces) symbolically recognized by society as timeless (an *uchronia*). The symbolic distance to the object that the museum offers by separating it from reality (the primary context), allow us to classify it, to analyze it and to imagine it otherwise.

The visitor's museum experience seems directly related to this double feature: on entering such a place, visitors apprehend, spatially, a certain reality presented to them out of "profane" time and space: several objects thousands of years old are available to them as well as very contemporary ones. It should be noted that this time suspension remains a lure: museums and movable objects continue to deteriorate despite sophisticated preservation policies. Some of them that were preserved a century ago are no longer displayed or available. The museum spatial display structure, in this sense, constitutes the structure used by museums to communicate with visitors and, in general, to categorize reality. The museum temporal organization is more generally based on museum conservation policies: what the establishment decides to acquire and maintain, what it had once and not anymore, etc. The specific characteristic of museums lies in their way to represent reality following this particular spatiotemporal model, and organize knowledge from this spatial (communication), and temporal (transmission) logic. By defining museology as the study of the spatiotemporal organization of knowledge (or supports of knowledge),[27] we may both consider museology as the study of museum organization (with its traditional functions: preservation, research, communication), and also open it to new perspectives of knowledge organization.

On one hand, this principle brings the museum to other fields of study that are particularly challenging now, including exhibition studies, expology[28] and the display studies that grow widely in art history.[29] As suggested earlier, the evolution of museums, as reflected in many books[30] is supposed to go to less collection-oriented institutions, and more to public oriented institutions: what about the spatiotemporal organization of museums if they would no longer house permanent collections? Well, the relation between the public, the objects, and the museum remains and still continues to constitute the heart of tomorrow's museums. The spatial organization would remain the key to their success or failure. It should be noted, moreover, that if such research aims to better understand the museum phenomenon, its practical applications are equally important, as they allow a better feedback on practical display and current conservation measures.

On the other hand, the space-time study of the organization of knowledge encounters

[25] See for instance: NEUSTUPNÝ, Jiří. *Museum and Research.* Prague: National Museum, 1968, p. 164. Georges Henri Rivière was very much influenced by Neustupný and the Eastern museologist's conceptions of research.

[26] DELOCHE, Bernard. Muséal. In DESVALLÉES, André and François MAIRESSE (eds.) *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de muséologie.* Paris: Armand Colin, 2011, pp. 235–250.

[27] It should be noted that this proposal also incorporates completely ancient history museum thinking, the Museum of Giulio Camillo or the *Museo Cartaceo* of Cassiano del Pozzo, these authors, as well as ancient *mouseion* conceptors, have all worked on the principle of spatial and temporal organization of knowledge.

[28] CHAUMIER, Serge. *Traité d'expologie. Les écritures de l'exposition.* Paris: La documentation française, 2012. 111 p.

[29] STRANISZEVSKI, Mary Anne. *The power of display: a history of exhibition installations at the Museum of Modern art.* Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001. 371 p.; ALTSHULER, Bruce. *Biennials and beyond – Exhibitions That Made Art History.* London: Phaidon, 2013. 402 p.; NEWHOUSE, Victoria. *Art and the power of placement.* New York: Monacelli Press, 2005. 303 p.

[30] MORISHITA, Masaaki. *The Empty Museum. Western Cultures and the Artistic Field in Modern Japan.* Farnham: Ashgate, 2010. 149 p.; *Museums 2020 Discussion Paper* [online]. London: Museums Association, July 2012 [cit. 2015-10-01]. Available from www: <http://www.museumsassociation.org/download?id=806530>.

concerns largely shared by other organisms related to heritage and knowledge, as proposed in terms of heritology (Tomislav Šola). Increasingly stronger links might connect these institutions, as outlined by Peter and Leontine van Mensch.[31] The principle of the organization of knowledge is related to the so-called information and communication sciences, which generally include archival, library science and museology (but also communication and information sciences in general). If the spatial dimension is sometimes widely considered in many of these approaches (library or archive classification, reporting), the space-time binomial, combining communication and preservation – the proper of the museum – seems much less taken into account.

Finally, the future of museology may reside elsewhere, via the Internet and the so-called cybermuseums or virtual museums. More generally, the billions of websites and blogs on the Internet constitute a world of growing importance, but its exploration, too, is becoming more complex. In the same way that museums are presented as models of the reality that surrounds us, what we might call the museums of tomorrow may be required to process and present what is now known as "big data", billions of data on our reality that make up what we see on the web. What the American National Security Agency (NSA) is doing today, tomorrow museums might have to put on the top of their agenda, for the benefit of all.

The field of investigation to which I refer here is not intended to replace the current research in museology (community or economy based) but to explore other ways that could attract the interest of the scientific community. If one wonders about the future of museums, it is clear that it would appear appropriate to reflect on future museum forms, and therefore on future supports of knowledge. These will certainly continue to pass through collections of objects. But new types of more complex objects could also be expected, such as microparticles or kilobytes of information, including databases linked to increasingly complex technologies (nanotechnologies, digital technologies). This part of reality may constitute the challenge of twenty-first century museums, and also of many other institutions related to the development of knowledge. It is important that museology relies on all of these approaches, both on the earth and on the web, in order to fully develop in the coming years. ■

[31] MENSCH, Peter van and Léontine MEIJER-VAN MENSCH. *New Trends in Museology.* Celje: Museum of Recent History, 2011. 119 p.

Keywords:

theory of museology – future of museums – concepts of museology – transformations of museological discourse

Klíčová slova:

teorie muzeologie – budoucnost muzeí – pojetí muzeologie – proměny muzeologického diskursu

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