European City Museums

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European City Museums

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Ajuntament de Barcelona

Part 3:
City museum themes

Introduction

Tim Marshall and Joan Roca i Albert

> "What is a city without a city museum?"
> (quote from Friends of the Museum of Gothenburg).

This book is intended to help understanding of the development of European city museums, their current transformation and their potential as a response to urban and continental changes and disruptions. The text argues for the need for an urban approach to Europe in a fast-changing world, focusing on the role of city museums in helping citizens to explain their cities.

The book surveys the renovations of city museums under way in Europe, presents discussion of central themes raised by the current phases of museum transformations, and disseminates city museum experience.

This chapter discusses contemporary pressures on city museums, and then analyses responses to these pressures, concentrating on the work of the Barcelona-based City History Museums and Research Network of Europe. The contents of the rest of the book are then introduced, before final reflections on prospects and questions for European city museums.

Contemporary pressures

Museums are under considerable contemporary pressures. Naturally, the same can be said of other social institutions such as schools or universities or health systems. But, as a differently placed institution, in a sense less central in the public policies spectrum and sharing this lower profile with other facets of cultural policy, museums face a distinct gamut of pressures. Whether city (history) museums have been under more or less pressure than other museum types (art, science, technology) is unclear but, in any case, this no doubt varies enormously by place. Of course, city history museums have always responded to a specific set of questions which underpin their existence. These questions are about explaining the narrative and thematic history of the specific city, what is special about it, what makes up its identity. But we can see that these "eternal questions" have acquired extra elements over the last two decades or so.

Over that time frame, this can certainly be seen as especially related to a lack of resources, but this is only part of the story. No doubt the resourcing question has been particularly acute in many countries and many cities since the 2008 crisis, but this is aggravated by the deep divisions regarding the purposes of museums in general, and especially city (history) museums. This

exacerbation of the divisions over museum missions, values and directions may be seen as having two components.

The first component involves the deepening ideological chasms affecting the world, and in particular Europe. The rise of far-right (strongly nationalist or, in certain cases, proto-fascist) parties in European politics has been an insistent trend over a 20-year period, and this has been a factor in fracturing the — to some degree — long-established consensus about the roles of public policy and of states and municipal governments. This has been strongly related to the history of migration into Europe in recent decades. From liberal and progressive ideological currents have come new demands pointing normally in quite opposite directions from those of far-right political groupings. These have been around issues of gender and identity, and movements for decolonising fields of cultural policy, as well as perhaps more long-established drives for maximising social accessibility, democratic engagement and thematic diversity — opening up museums to users, widening the topics covered, connecting explicitly and strongly to the present and future of cities. The right and far-right agendas clash with liberal and progressive agendas. Museums cannot avoid being buffeted by these increasingly choppy political currents, because of their normal place in local municipal politics and their public visibility (to varying degrees).

A second component of the current turbulence is technological, in the widest sense, above all marked by the rise and rise of digitalised societies. This again affects public policies across the board, but before 2020 it was already having a strong impact in the museums world, as almost every museum, perhaps especially city museums, adopted a variety of digital strategies. Whilst this can be seen as creating massive opportunities, rather than generating pressures, it interweaves with the tensions boiling up from the ideological faultlines — in the world of Twitter and Facebook, differences of perspective can always escalate. In addition, digitalisation eats up resources and drives modernisation strategies. Even museums showing strong tendencies towards continuity in their renewal programmes, such as the renovated Carnavalet in Paris, feel obliged to keep up with recent digitalisation demands. But there can be big differences of opinion about how far, or where, the digital reality would best take city museums.

These division issues have exhibited themselves very publicly within the global museums community, with long-running debates over the most desirable definition of museums still alive within ICOM (the official global body dealing with museums). Arguably, these definition debates have been less visible and certainly less acute within the specialist body representing city museums, CAMOC, but they are certainly present, as they are even within such a small European network as the City History Museums and Research Network of Europe. A sense of the strongly differing positions within the definition debates can be found in academic articles. The same basic issues could be applicable to the

city museums world. Thus, Sandahl makes the case for the radical change of the *museums* definition — a position many CITYHIST members would be comfortable with, injecting a strong normative element into the purpose of having museums.[1] Sandahl comes from the city museums part of the museums world. But the reservations of many museum professionals and academics were clear. For example, there was the view of John Fraser,[2] seeing the proposed formula as an over-reach pushing many museums away from being able to choose their own path, probably representing mainstream US liberal positions. Another critical view came from Karen Brown, a UK academic, and Francois Mairesse, an influential Belgian museums academic. They argued that there is a "hybrid reality" in the museums world, making it very hard to encompass this wide spectrum of practices within a single, renewed and strongly progressive definition.[3]

Since 2020, there have been additional developments which must also be factored into the museums challenge. The global pandemic hit museums, like most parts of the cultural sectors, very hard, althought the result was extremely varied between countries and even between cities. The most dramatic impact has been, it would appear, on digitalisation strategies, giving further impetus to debates about the digital museum. Chapter 17, on museum formats, enters this particular minefield, but at least we can say that the majority of museums have devoted more resources than previously to supporting remote museum visitors. But the pandemic will no doubt have other impacts, some working themselves out over a number of years.

Then, as the pandemic subsided in Europe, war returned to the continent, in Ukraine. At the time of writing, it is too soon to say how this will impact on museums, beyond the already dramatic effects in Ukraine and no doubt in different ways in Russia. The interaction with the swirling ideological and political currents described above will be important, especially the relationship to nationalism in each European state, to militarisation (or at least rising military budgets) and to EU and wider European political decision-making processes. Other than the solidarity efforts already seen in the museum sector, we cannot say how this military disaster will impact on museums' agendas. But this must already be adding to the disorientation forces set in motion by the pandemic, making it harder for politicians and professionals to feel secure in adopted narratives, both historical and contemporary. This may seem more

1. Jette Sandahl, "The museum definition as the backbone of ICOM", *Museum International*, 71 (July 2019), p. 1-9.

2. John Fraser, "A discomforting definition of museum", *Curator. The Museum Journal*, 62, 4 (October 2019), p. 501-504.

3. Karen Brown and Françoise Mairesse, "The definition of the museum through its social role", *Curator. The Museum Journal*, 61, 4 (October 2018), p. 525-539.

difficult to focus on in western Europe, but imagining ongoing changes in the Russian frontier states such as Poland or Finland can make the point clearer.

Overall, how may this mix of political and technological forces have been impacting on city museums in particular? It can be argued that, there, the effects have been enormously variable, with some museums struggling to ride the currents and being forced to close or cut back considerably. Some may have dedicated scarce resources to the more visually flashy side of digital techniques, with possibly poor returns to be expected over the mid term. But other city museums may have been able to manage well, maybe more effectively than some of the big art, science or technology museums, by wiring into the zeitgeist created by the above pressures. They may have been helped, precisely, by not being connected directly to the state or nation within which the cities are located. This can help to keep at bay some of the high-temperature politics of national identity which may affect some national museums. This depends on circumstances in each city, with, for example, some city museums getting involved in decolonisation issues in the same way as their national museums — treatment of slavery in a number of cases being one dimension of this. But, even there, a city museum may be able to retain or nurture a locally managed public sphere, partially fenced off from the big ideological battles, given its nearness to citizens in its daily operations.

In particular, city museums have been using a wide spectrum of digital technologies to promote democratisation agendas, in digitalising collections, exhibition information, education and research (also enabling multi-lingual access), so that both their "traditional" users and new groups can have improved access to more of what city museums can offer. And more of that access can be free of charge, even if in some cases entry to some or all of the museum buildings may be via payment of a (usually very low) fee. This works remotely (as emphasised during the pandemic) but, perhaps most importantly, can generate out of the whole package of museum infrastructures (of all kinds — buildings, objects and so on) a more powerful overall vehicle.

Searching for responses: the role of the City History Museums and Research Network of Europe

Major challenges certainly existed for city history museums in, say, 2000, if arguably they were less sharp-edged. But the question was emerging, as to how museums which have been traditionally based in some sort of city history niche should respond to the changing times. It has been suggested that further pressures have been layered onto that question. And city museums have indeed responded, so that the period since 2000 may be seen as a sort of golden age of city museum innovation, in some senses. New practices have escalated across a wide range of cities, and one task of this book is simply to document this process of change, in however limited a way: a large-scale Europe-wide research project would be needed to do this job to a much more adequate degree. But we do know that a host of city (history) museums have been engaging with fresh debates across many themes, including contemporary collecting, forming new narratives, increasing the participation of diverse publics in museum activity, and digitalisation.

But, more specifically, this book flows from one line of work in searching for responses to these pressing problems. This is that of the Barcelona-based City History Museums and Research Network of Europe. This Network was set up in 2010 by the city museums of Barcelona and Amsterdam. By means of regular meetings of its approximately 20 members[4] it has debated current challenges faced by this type of museum, in an informal and small-scale setting. This has been quite different from the formal meetings and networks in the ICOM institutional frameworks, especially of CAMOC, set up in 2005. In the early meetings, the decision was taken to combine city museums with centres of research on urban history, as the core of their work, as against basing the perspective on other possible disciplinary lines such as ethnography or anthropology, typically related to more micro- or community-oriented approaches. This explains the continued presence in the Network of academics from universities or research institutes, and the involvement in meetings of the European Association for Urban History (EAUH). This supports a continued emphasis on broad urban historical narratives, working on and presenting the big-picture analysis of urban change.

The responses of the Network do not map onto the pressures described above, they emerge rather from the whole city history museums questions package (meaning the "eternal questions" which generate the raison d'etre for this type of museums, plus the above ideological and technological turbulences). We may note, too, that the membership of the Network is not representative of European city museums generally (nor is it meant to be), even though some element of geographical balance has been sought from the start. The museums attending have generally been from larger or better-resourced cities, and from political contexts less impacted by the rise of far-right politics than some other urban contexts — both of which factors could mean that responding to those two turbulences may have been, so, far, less tough than for some other cities. In any case, larger cities in Europe are, in general, somewhat more liberal or left-leaning politically than their national governments (think of London or Paris,

4. Members of the network have come from the following cities (the membership changes over time, with some previously involved not now active, and others joining recently): Amsterdam, Antwerp, Barcelona, Basel, Berlin, Bordeaux, Budapest, Copenhagen, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Helsinki, Kraków, Lisbon, Liverpool, Ljubljana, London, Luxembourg, Lyon, Madrid, Marseille, Oxford, Riga, Rome, Rotterdam, Stockholm, Turin, Vienna. Some members represent universities and research institutes interested in such museums, not the museums themselves.

or the cities in Poland, or Munich in Bavaria), so the typical philosophies of the purpose of European municipal government may be more comparable to the philosophies within the Network.

During the eight general meetings of this Network (2010-2019), all the above emerging themes, and more, have been the subject of discussions, and a range of joint projects have been developed, for example on migration, port cities, football, creative cities, or digital strategies. In some cases, extra meetings on these projects have been held between the main meetings. Extensive information sharing has taken place on all the topics which are the normal bread and butter of museum directors at this type of museum. One output sought to publicise more widely the perspectives developed, resulting in the publication, in 2013, of The Barcelona Declaration on European City Museums, later published also by ICOM/CAMOC.[5]

There will be no attempt to detail the work of the Network, beyond the brief comments just given above. But the Network's name gives some clues to its response to the challenges facing city museums. Europe is at the forefront, as there is a strong feeling in the Network that European pasts and presents can most fruitfully be seen in comparative forms across the continent, and that continuous dialogue between cities will illuminate matters of common concern. City museums can learn from different traditions and experiences, and may well do this most effectively in small networks which span Europe, rather than globally — although the global discussions within CAMOC have great value, in different ways.

This is linked to a philosophy stressing the value of cities as the building blocks of a cross-national European consciousness, or at least cooperativeness. The sense is that it is as valuable for the museum directors of, say, London and Berlin to talk to each other, as it would be for them to chat over issues with colleagues in, say, Manchester or Stuttgart. The commitment to the role of cities may go further than this, drawing on the books of social scientists such as Benjamin Barber[6] and Göran Therborn,[7] or more academic surveys such as that of Oosterlynck et al.[8] Barber argued that cities would do better in "ruling the world" than states, and that city government level is the one most key to building up democratic living. Cities are seen as the best forums for democratic citizenship, even though states, and within most of Europe the EU, will clearly

5. See text at https://cityhistorymuseums.wordpress.com/ and as appendix at end of this chapter.

6. Benjamin Barber, *If mayors ruled the world. Dysfunctional nations, rising cities*, Yale University Press, 2013.

7. Göran Therborn, *Cities of Power*, London, Verso, 2017.

8. Stijn Oosterlynck, Luce Beeckmans, David Bassens, Ben Derudder, Barbara Segaert, & Luc Braeckmans (eds.), *The city as global political actor*. London, Routledge, 2019.

remain critical in such a process. In the city museums world, this perspective has been particularly important in dealing with issues of migration — new citizens arriving in cities across Europe over the last two decades and more. This challenge of relating to new migrants is hardly likely to subside in the current circumstances of warfare. At any rate, big cities can be big actors.

A third element is highlighted by the word Research in the Network title. Some city museums emphasise their work in stimulating and coordinating research at a range of levels and in varied forms. This includes collaboration with local universities, with citizen groups such as specialist and local societies and trade unions, as well as with other city museums in some cases. The city museum is not seen as just a container of past knowledge and collections, but as an active generator of new knowledge — the current term of *co-creation* catches some of this outward looking and cooperative tendency, linked to the now almost universally agreed value of public engagement — however varied practices in this field may be. The emphasis is on critical approaches to history, the social sciences and current urban issues, and stressing academic levels of rigour in addressing these issues. So the more traditional focus of some museums on researching the objects held by the museums has featured much less on the Network agenda.

What is to be found in the book chapters

It should be noted that chapters were completed at different moments during the preparation of the book, and revisions have not necessarily taken on changes which have occurred during the collecting together of the chapters now presented here. After the present introductory chapter, the book is divided into three Parts.

Part 1: European city history museums and city museums today

This Part provides the foundation for understanding how and why city museums came into being in the late 19th century, and gives some idea of their historical development across a range of varied European contexts, including the transformative turns of the last 20-30 years. Part 1 concludes with an analysis of some of the big questions discussed in the CITYHIST network over recent years.

So, to give a little more detail, chapter 2 offers a historical overview of the development of city history museums in Europe, revealing the patterns of change in different periods and parts of Europe, based on a survey of all cities over a certain size in Europe (as defined here in geographical terms, broadly the EU plus the UK). The next chapter brings the story up to date, tracing the way in which many museums evolved into different sorts of animals, often calling themselves *city museums*, from the 1990s. Chapter 4 goes into a little more detail by presenting case studies of 12 significant museum projects, supplementing the longer studies of big museum transformation projects discussed in Part 2. Then Chapter 5 introduces the normative discussions around the purposes of these museums in the creation

of a new dimension in public space and in the public domain, with a social and participatory facet, as seen by the Barcelona city history museum director.

Part 2: Major transformation projects in six city museums

This Part consists of six case study chapters of some recent and current transformative projects. These are selected for their interest and variety, and because they have been active in the Network: Barcelona, Berlin, Copenhagen, Frankfurt, Lisbon and London. These are city museums with large projects either completed, under way, or in the planning stages. So in the briefest terms, Barcelona is both reforming its central location in the Gothic Quarter and progressing ambitious new projects, mainly in the more working class and (ex) industrial areas in the northeast of the city. Berlin has both made a major city-oriented contribution (Berlin Global) to the Humboldt Centre museum project in the reconstructed Hohenzollern palace, opened in July 2021, and is completely revamping its historic central museum building as well as extending this into an equally large building across a public square. Copenhagen has brought its city museum back to the city centre, forming a completely new permanent exhibition. The new site opened in 2021. Frankfurt redeveloped its centrally-located main museum (mostly dating from a 1960s redevelopment) over a period of years since the early 2000s, with the newbuild element opening in 2017. Lisbon is in the midst of renewing all the permanent exhibitions on its main museum site, alongside a number of other projects. Finally, London is creating a new core museum, about a kilometre from the existing museum built in the 1970s, using parts of the central wholesale markets building. Though somewhat delayed by the pandemic, opening is expected in the middle of this decade.

It will be noticed that these projects show very great variety — not surprisingly. The dates of opening are likely to range from 2017 up to the mid 2020s. Some involve massive new building projects, some are more limited in consisting of less major renovation of existing buildings and renewal of permanent exhibitions. Budgets vary accordingly. The philosophies behind the projects also naturally vary, though some common themes will be picked up by readers of these chapters, representing some of the core themes discussed in CITYHIST and CAMOC forums alike over the last decade or more.

Further contrasts can be developed by laying the projects alongside the thumbnail sketches of 12 other significant projects presented in chapter 4. Some of those schemes, such as the major redevelopments in Vienna or Munich more or less equate to the biggest presented in these project chapters, whilst the major renovations and remaking of permanent exhibitions in, say, Lyon or the Carnavelet in Paris may be more in the same league as the work in, for example, Lisbon.

Above all, what we see, is the considerable dynamism on display in this museum sector. Despite all the resource pressures and the often profoundly difficult challenges posed by the developments discussed above, major European cities are pushing ahead with once-in-a-generation transformations of their city (history) museums. In almost all cases, there has been, or will be, some delay effect caused by the maelstrom of stresses of recent years, especially of the pandemic. But it would appear that these projects, planned mainly in the early 2010s, are all going to be completed, at least in their essence, even if cuts and compromises may be made. They will join others not discussed here (though visible in the overview in chapter 3), whether the frontrunners which opened before the current wave (in Antwerp, Ghent and Liverpool) or others still struggling through local decision-making processes but likely to make major investments in the coming years.

Part 3: City museum themes

This Part is thematic. At the meetings of the European Network since 2010, a wide range of topics has been debated, partly coinciding with the discussion underway in many forums (especially CAMOC) on the core purposes of city museums, and how these can be achieved in the diverse variety of real world circumstances around Europe.

This Part has eight chapters. It will be noticed that, though the broad themes chosen are those which emerged from Network discussions and therefore constitute what are seen as essential to any discussion of current challenges, the precise treatment has been left to the choices of the authors asked to write the chapters. As a result, there is nothing at all textbook-like in the coverage, nor is in intended to be comprehensive — apart from anything else, authors were asked to write quite brief texts. All authors give their own take on the theme, generally focused largely on where they are working, using these experiences to provide examples. So, the chapters on heritage and interpretation are both by writers based in Barcelona and, whilst not confining their discussion only to the city, provide several examples from there. The heritage chapter reviews how heritage has been created in cities, going back to 19th-century pioneers in France, so pointing to the extensive interaction with both the imaginaries presented within city museums and the often heavy overlap of the museum building and its surrounding "heritage space". The "itinerating" chapter draws on the experience of running a Master's course in urban interpretation, preparing students in part to lead urban itineraries related to city museum operations. This involves urban walking tours as essential elements in getting to know a city, and therefore as integral to the work of city museums. One topic covered, as an example, is the role of water in the development of Barcelona, showing how topics like this can be excellent ways in to understanding the dynamics of urban change and overlapping with issues of the museum's work in education.

The research chapter is based on the experience in just one museum, the Historical Museum Frankfurt. It shows neatly the range of kinds of research,

from citizen-led or mediated research as the museum reaches out via its Citylab, to more expert-led work on provenance, particularly in relation to returning Nazi-period stolen objects, or for exhibitions stage in collaboration with universities, such as on changing women's fashions. The formats chapter focuses primarily on the issues raised by the digital museum, drawing examples from Italy as well as elsewhere in Europe, and necessarily picking up parts of the debates which developed during the pandemic — how the digital and in-person dimensions of city museums can be made to work best from now on.

The participation chapter recounts the experience of one museum, in Rotterdam, which was at the forefront of involving citizens in a range of projects. It shows how successful this could be in developing new kinds of experiences and exhibitions, but equally is open about the challenges in pressing ahead quite firmly with a participatory agenda. Ultimately, the city council withdrew so much funding from the city museum budget, that the main museum was forced to close in 2020. Participatory work is continuing in the city in non-profit form, but until the city council decides its future steps in relation to its main city museum, this will represent a rather minor area of activity.

Two chapters are included on the work of creating narratives in city museums. These contrast the very different circumstances of designing such narratives in contemporary England and Poland — the view here is not of just the cities from which the authors write, London and Kraków, but pays some attention to matters elsewhere in the two countries. The weight of history is felt in both cases, if in very different ways, and the varied approaches to dealing with that weight (loss of statehood, loss of empires, migrations, wars) is explored. The chapters may be used to think through what can be safely said in different circumstances, and about the scope for open engagement on the most difficult topics.

Finally, the chapter on collecting surveys the contemporary changes being made by many museums in their collecting strategies, looking at some of the controversial political issues which this raises. As the author has been at the forefront of the global debates on the revision of the ICOM museums definition, she is well placed to tune in to these issues of controversial decisions within the real world of currently existing museums.

Looking forward

The book content must speak for itself, and it is risky to look forward or even to attempt to sum up the present position for city museums. Here we simply pose some questions and comment on some markers for progress.

In terms of progress, it will be fascinating to see how the present generation of museum transformation turns out, as more of the projects are completed and local reactions may be catalogued. Some of these very big projects, such as Berlin, London, or Vienna, may be expected to have rather large impacts — but they will depend to a significant extent on how the museum leaderships carry through the programmes associated with the physical transformation, where resources for running the museums are dedicated, and what values are embraced as most important.

The ever-present issues of how success will be judged will no doubt be at the forefront of the discussion — the assessment of visitor numbers and the amount of money raised by museum operations, the weighting of different sorts of education, outreach, research activities, the perspective of politicians on what they want from city museums. All these are forms of evaluation, and all will condition the next period of management for this kind of museum.

How far will museums be able to advance what may be seen as the primary goal, of making city museums into essential parts of contemporary urban management and governing, of a core element of a municipality's raison d'être? Will the goal of many museums of being an important part of the promotion of an informed and positive citizenship be realisable, or will this remain as an aspiration still to be achieved? What will be the implications for parts of the museum making and running task, for collecting objects or other items, for formulating new historical narratives, for involving users or citizens in what happens in and outside museums?

Put into more academic analytical terms, how will city museums fit into the wider field of cultural policy? Such cultural policy will no doubt continue to be pulled in multiple directions, as it has been especially in the last 30 years or so, with all the pressures of being part of a city's economic development effort (neoliberal urban entrepreneurialism), including promoting the tourism drive, or towards more humanistic or social development goals, in wider cultural and educational terms.[9] And how will all that relate to the goals of many radical activists in the museum field, in transforming museums in relation to decolonisation and major contemporary issues of identity? Such demands often come from university circles, so that is also partly about the relationship between city museums and local universities.

There are therefore numerous challenges facing European city museums, which can benefit from shared discussions between museums. These challenges are as demanding as when the City History Museums and Research Network of Europe was set up in 2010, and so the case for the existence of such a Network remains as compelling.

Finally in this introduction, we wish to express our gratitude to all those who have contributed to this collective work, both the chapter authors and those who have helped the process with images and other elements. We thank you all warmly.

9. David Bell & Kate Oakley, *Cultural Policy*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2014. OECD/ICOM, 2019, Culture and Local Development: Maximising the Impact. A Guide for Local Governments, Communities and Museums, OECD/ICOM, Paris.

Appendix:
Barcelona Declaration On European City Museums
Barcelona, 8 November 2013

In Europe today, many cities fulfil important economic, political, administrative, social and cultural functions. These are often the result of a long historical tradition that sometimes even dates back to Antiquity. Cities in Europe are bearers of a unique urban history, tradition and culture. They also are places of creativity, innovation and change, crucial aspects for the economic and social future of Europe.
The Barcelona Declaration intends to contribute to a clearer definition of European City Museums and foster a growing and enduring mutual recognition. City museums are characterised by their diversity, so it is impossible to establish a single typology. Large and small, old and new, their collections vary considerably. Whether they display artistic, historical and archaeological objects, or photographs and intangible heritage, they all aim to play a key role in society, by favouring civic dialogue, provoking unpredicted opinions and emotions. As places visited by residents and tourists alike, they reflect on the very concept of the city as a source of heritage and of future growth, to be cherished and shared. From this common ground, such museums can promote and visualise the role of cities in the future.
The Barcelona Declaration on European City Museums intends to offer a common profile description for the various types of city museums. After all, what they have in common is their main theme and object of study: cities and their citizens.

History and Heritage
City museums collect and keep the tangible and intangible heritage, past and present, of their cities and citizens. By shaping the chronicled and living memory of towns, these museums contribute to the dynamic process of writing and rewriting the city's history, actively involving citizens, who provide their own definitions of their urban history and heritage within a single historical framework.

Academic Platform
City museums carry out fundamental and applied research in a wide range of disciplines related to their mission of collecting, displaying and interpreting historical narrative. To do so, they collaborate with professionals working in different fields, such as urban historians, archaeologists, sociologists, ethnographers, art historians and museologists. Academic standards are crucial for the reputation of city museums as genuine and dependable institutions, capable of stimulating the academic world to link their research programmes to social urban issues.

Urban Network
A city museum is concerned with the history and heritage of the city as whole. This implies that it needs to cooperate with other related institutions such as archives, archaeology and monument departments, etc. On a more local level, neighbourhood organisations that play an active role in the conservation and interpretation of heritage and history should also form a part of such collaborative networks. The democratic and public task of a city museum must be guaranteed by a free-flowing relationship with local authorities.

Educational Function
A city museum involves citizens in its work in a number of ways. To begin with, both the museum building and the urban areas in which the museum is active should be welcoming spaces that arouse the interest of residents and visitors. This is a way of favouring citizen participation, increasing awareness and enhancing the quality of citizenship. Urban history is thus viewed from a new perspective that contributes to social cohesion in our modern multicultural societies. The website of a city museum and its links to other urban sites can be important virtual tools.

Meeting Point
A city museum acts as an open platform and meeting point for citizens and visitors. Within its walls, critical and intercultural discussions can favour a new understanding of the city's history and heritage, of the large and small stories that configure its meaning, prompting new ideas that can trigger present and future transformations — in short, a city museum can become an urban laboratory.

R+D+i centres
As places of research and cultural production, city museums work as R+D+i, centres, which are in a good position to connect heritage and urban economy in various cultural and creative sectors.

Tourism
As an institution with a scope extending beyond its actual building to include the entire city, a city museum can offer innovative sightseeing strategies and help to develop more profitable and sustainable tourist programmes. City museums can contribute to interpreting the fabric of a city, its monuments and its architecture, in new and stimulating ways.

City Museums and European Identity
Over the course of their history, cities have always played a key role in defining Europe. Moreover, cities played the lead in the most significant transformations of modernity. Therefore, city museums need to act and be recognised as relevant organisations in the construction of European identity.

This declaration is proposed by several European city history museums and other centres linked to history and heritage: This is an informal and non-institutional group, City History Museums and Research Network of Europe, that meets regularly in Barcelona to debate about museums, cities and heritage.

On behalf of the network,
Joan Roca i Albert
(Museu d'Història de Barcelona, MUHBA, Director of the Network)
Renée Kistemaker
(Amsterdam Museum, Secretary of the Network)

Part 1:
European city history museums and city museums today

City history museums and city museums in Europe: a survey

Tim Marshall

This chapter presents a simplified overview of the emergence of city history museums (CHMs) and most recently city museums (CMs). This will provide a foundation for more analytical reflections in the following chapter. Those reflections will be talking through the causal factors involved in the phenomena uncovered here. The division between factual presentation and analysis is by no means hard and fast, as during the presentation of the data here, various reflective commentaries can be conveniently introduced.

The chapter has five sections, beginning with further discussion of definitions and museum landscapes. This is followed by a survey of larger European cities and their possession (or not) of city history museums and city museums. Then comes a section on the pathways taken by such museums since their foundation, followed by discussion of the developments in a few European states. A final short section is on the way different themes have been tackled during the life histories of these museums.

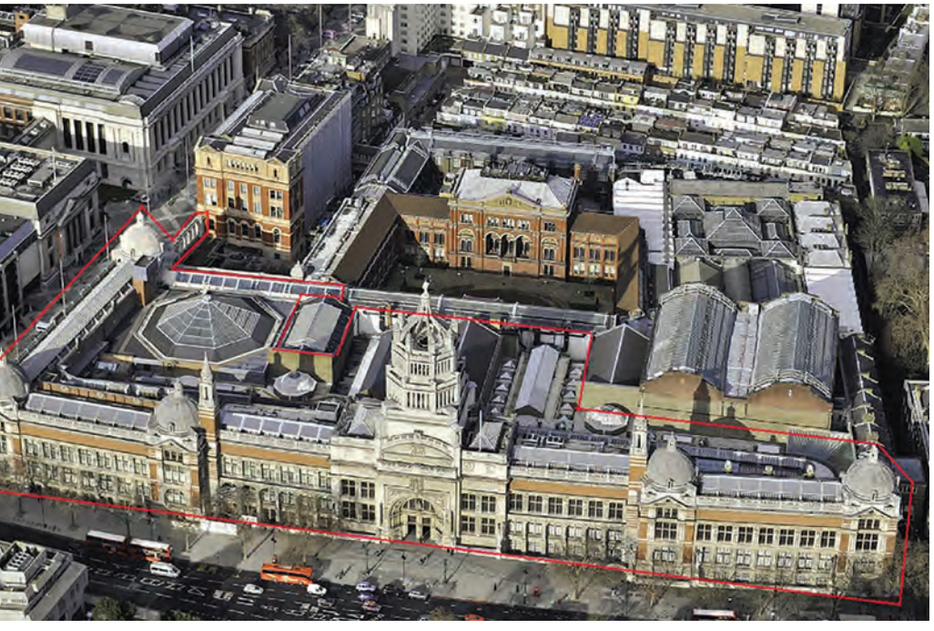
Definitions — The museums landscape

It is important to be aware of the spread of types of museums and how these work together or differentiate themselves, how this forms what is often called the museums landscape. This is generally analysed by subject — art, history, natural history, science and technology, and so on. Another important feature is scale — national, regional, city, local. Given that the subjects may be combined — it is common enough to have multi-purpose museums, particularly below the national level — this gives an extensive array of different kinds of museum, some large, some small, some free to enter, some with significant entry charges, alongside many other defining characteristics.

National museums

Of course the real heavyweights in any museum landscape in every country are the national museums. These were fully explored by an EU sponsored project (EuNaMus), which published its results between 2010 and 2013.[1] Similar

1. This draws mainly on Peter Aronsson & Gabriella Elgenius (eds.), "Building National Museums in Europe 1750-2010" EuNaMus Report No 1, Linkoping University (2011), but there are also national reports for each state.



Overview of Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Photo: Victorian and Albert Museum

work on the history of urban-, and perhaps regional-level museums in Europe would be an interesting project, but perhaps unlikely to attract equivalent funding. EuNaMus revealed a richly varied history of national museum emergence (and non-emergence) and the core impacts of wars and national and ideological struggles on the ways these museums were managed in the 19th and 20th centuries. Many cases were found of intense recent and current debates on how to treat national self-understandings via museums. Countries such as Austria and the Netherlands argued back and forth as to whether a national history museum was desirable, with city and regional museums contending in both cases that they did as much as was needed, in a "distributed national history" formula. The same was argued in Germany by some of the federal states, but there the formation of a German History Museum in Berlin was agreed in 1987, and this has attracted praise, from at least liberal quarters, for its open and questioning approach to Germany's history. Unsurprisingly, Belgium's national museums are essentially royal in origin; they do not tackle Belgian nationalness, and focus on safer zones of art in most cases. The complexity of the Belgian Constitution means that all cultural politics is difficult; Flanders and Wallonia have pursued much investment in museums, but not exactly in "national history" ones.

At least with this type of museum, it is quite clear that the nature of the approach will be deeply ideological, a subject of continuous political struggle in many cases. It is revealing that, in a good number of cases, the decision to form national history museums has been repeatedly put off, or at most diverted into some less threatening form. In many countries, there has been an alternative tendency to support regional museums — obviously in federal states, but also in unitary states such as Italy, Poland and Portugal. I have not carried out an updated survey of such national history museums, but I am sure that several countries remain without such museums, including France, Italy, and Spain. The UK and England have no such museum, though Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales do, in very varying forms. Scandinavian countries have managed to form such museums, playing down national narratives. Romania was unable to move beyond the strong "Communist nationalist" approach of the 1980s, finding closing of difficult museum sections easier than moving to create new narratives, and the same seems to have been occurring, again unsurprisingly, in Serbia, with an inability to tackle the question of Yugoslavia.

The message we can take for city museums from this properly researched account is that museums territory is potentially dangerous, where history is involved. Certainly there can be a safe path for city history museums, one that has often been taken. This would involve avoiding issues of identity beyond those of local or municipal patriotism, and avoiding zones of strong political or ideological contestation, or at least trying to "show all sides of the story". But this path, though effective probably in many cities, always risks resulting in bland and partial histories, unable to engage with the profoundly unsettling and difficult histories of most if not all European cities. Wars, revolutions, intense political struggles especially around class and ethnic questions, all these have been central to urban histories, alongside the many "less political" themes which museums also rightly explore — leisure, consumption, sport, creative arts, infrastructures and so on. The national museums may indeed have a more difficult challenge to create shared and consensualised narratives, but it is helpful to remember that cities have some of the same issues. City museums are now precisely interested in turning this to their advantage — as do the more confident national history museums such as the Berlin German History Museum. City museums often wish to seek out contemporary relevance.

Finally, though, it is worth highlighting some differences between national and city museums. National museums are often based on royal collections, often of a very grand nature. Whilst some city museums have some equally important collections, they are not generally on this grand scale. Secondly, the resources available to national museums, both from national governments and from private sources, are normally of orders of magnitude greater than for city museums — a few cases such as London and Paris may moderate this difference, but only to some extent.

Ecomuseums

At the other end of the size spectrum are very local museums, in some countries called *ecomuseums*. The ecomuseum idea was promoted by Hugues de Varine, a director of ICOM, and taken up by the French environment minister in 1971, with most activity in France at first and then from the early 2000s, taking off in Italy and many other places around the world. One definition "compares an ecomuseum with a classic museum: essentially a cultural process, identified with a community (population), on a territory, using the common heritage as a resource for development, as opposed to the more classical museum, an institution characterised by a collection, in a building, for a public of visitors" (H. de Varine, 1996). Peter Davis (P. Davis, 1999, *Ecomuseums: a sense of place*, Newcastle, Newcastle Univ. Press) states that the degree to which a museum demonstrates true ecomuseum characteristics might be gauged by the amount of overlap in a three circles model (community, museums, and the social, cultural, natural environment) and in its ability to capture a sense of place." (osservatorio ecomusei.net, retrieved 22 June 2020).

This book has to leave aside treatment of such local museums, but it is worth noting three issues related to city museums. One is that some of the city museum philosophy overlaps with the aspirations of the ecomuseum movement, both related to the new museologies from the 1970s. Another is that in some countries, such as Italy, the ecomuseum movement may have taken some of the energy which elsewhere was channelled into city museums since the 1990s. The third is that all city museums face the question as to whether and how they interact with such local museums within their city. This will be touched on further in the discussion of scale questions in chapter 3.

City museums

This chapter is largely a survey of city history museums, as against the post-2000 phenomenon of city museums, but this is because it is essential to see the process of evolution from one to the other — where this has occurred. It is not possible to categorise city museums by types. Beyond the basic criterion of being about cities, there is a wide spread of actual forms and possible forms. It would be interesting to imagine some of the possible forms which have not yet been developed.

Postula[2] has argued that there is no firm definition of the city museum formula created in the 1990s, and that this formula is simply evolving. Lanz comes to a similar conclusion, arguing that this is in particular due to their

2. Jean-Louis Postula, *Le musee de ville*, Paris, La Documentation francaise, 2015.

specific characteristics and close linking to their fast-evolving object, cities, less pressing for most other museum types.[3]

The Barcelona Declaration on European City Museums of 2013 considered that: "City museums are characterised by their diversity, so it is impossible to establish a single typology. Large and small, old and new, their collections vary considerably". However, the Declaration did aim to offer a common profile for the varying types: "what they have in common is their main theme and object of study: cities and their citizens". Though extremely general, this does start from a different perspective from other types of museums, and it has certainly proved sufficient since 2005 to carry the development of the now thriving division of ICOM representing this kind of museum, CAMOC — The International Committee for the Collections and Activities of Museums of Cities. CAMOC's website gives its very broad take on its role:

"We are a forum for people who work in or are interested in museums about the past, present and future of cities... CAMOC owes its origins to changing attitudes to museums of cities, museums which were in the main museums of city history and guardians of city treasures. The idea that these specialised museums could have another dimension and reflect the living city around them gradually took shape, and in 1993 a meeting of city museums was held at the Museum of London, perhaps the first of its kind". [the latter led to the founding of the International Association of City Museums (IACM).[4]]

However there are still considerable areas of overlap with other kinds of museum, and so tensions do exist when it comes to saying whether a museum falls into this category or not. The survey described below had to accept this element of subjective judgement, as to whether a particular museum was judged to be a city (history) museum or not. The defence is that, in most cases, I believe that those familiar with city museums now would recognise such a museum when they see one, even if we lack a firm definition. There will be borderline cases. One example is the virtual museum created in Turin in 2011, which aimed to provide the essence of a city history museum, but without being based on a separate collection and building(s) — the city is the collection (museotorino.it). I decided that this would not count as one of my city museums, as it raises issues about how such virtual institutions — which are different to institutions with physical bases — work. This is not to play down the interest of this initiative, whose functioning I am sure has been, or should been, well studied.

3. Francesca Lanz, "City Museums: Reflections on a Missing Definition", CAMOC Review September 2019, p. 6.

4. See Ian Jones, "The Greatest Artefact. A brief history of an international committee about cities", CAMOC website, updated December 2019.

A city (history) museum survey

The results of this survey must be hedged around with caveats, as the work involved in making such an extensive survey to a really high level of certainty in the data would have exceeded, by far, the resources available to the author. Nevertheless, the account is based on considerable research of city museum websites, plus occasional contact with museums. This survey was carried out largely during the period of pandemic lockdown in Europe in early 2020, although some updating was carried out where key museums were making changed plans somewhat later.

The approach taken to collecting information was as follows: All cities with populations over 400,000 were examined, to see if they had city (history) museums, under the defining characteristics used here. City population totals are of course themselves uncertain matters, as it depends what boundaries are taken. I used official listings, which tend normally to take municipal boundaries for their sources, but this is far from consistent, varying between the statistical practices of different countries. An alternative approach, seeking to use the "real urban area", was considered, using carefully worked sources prepared by the EU ESPON projects. But this immediately enters into complex issues about the extent of metropolitan areas. I therefore decided to stay with the simpler city population listings.

In addition, I limited myself to a particular definition of Europe, including all of what I take as the classic continent, excluding Turkey, Belarus, Russia and the Ukraine.

However, this set of cities of over 400,000 population would exclude both some cities which are members of the Barcelona Network, and some which are known to have city museums of interest. I therefore took a far-from-scientific skim over listings of cities down to 150,000 population, concentrating somewhat more on those in the 300-400,000 bracket. One part of the absence of firm criteria was that I looked somewhat less at smaller cities in some ex-Eastern bloc countries: the main example is that I only looked at Bucharest in Romania and Sofia in Bulgaria. (Romania has 12 cities with populations between 150,000 and 400,000, Bulgaria has 4).

The numbers involved are here:

- Cities over 400,000 population: 75.
- Cities 300-400,000: ca. 45.
- Cities 150-300,000: ca. 180 (even more approximate depending on city lists criteria).

It can be seen that surveying all those in the second and third categories would have added very greatly to the work involved. Certainly it would have made the survey somewhat more comprehensive, but given the "quick and dirty" methods used to find out the nature of the museums, this would not necessarily have led to more reliable findings. The survey was not intended to have any significant quantitative validity, beyond some broad findings about the presence and absence of city museums across the largest European cities.

The bare numbers in that sense are as follows. I looked at the city museums situation in 137 cities across Europe — all the 75 over 400,000 population, and 62 others. It can be seen that the 62 are a very partial subset of the set of 150,000 to 400,000 cities (around 225 of them) which I could have looked at, given time and motives. But, as was explained in chapter 1, the network has had a somewhat greater interest in the experiences of larger European cities, and the survey reflects that bias.

Of those 137 cities, I judged that 46 did not have city museums in the sense used in this book, whilst 91 did. There was a greater tendency for larger cities to have such museums. Of cities with over 1 million population, only 2 out of 20 had no city museums. Of those between 500,000 and 1 million, 9 out of 40 did not have city museums, whilst for 400,000 to 500,000, 3 out of 15 were counted as not having city museums: that is, only 14 of the 75 largest cities did not have such city museums. That is a relatively strong finding: as things stand in 2020, there is an 81% chance that such larger cities have such museums. On the other hand, only 30 of the other 62 smaller cities from my partial sample had city museums. My guess is that this catches a real tendency, that cities between 150,000 and 400,000 are less likely to have such museums, but the sample certainly cannot demonstrate that.

National peculiarities

Of course, this is looking at the continent as a whole. If one breaks down the results by states, very strong differences emerge. I am certain that some will take issue with some aspects of these differences. Certainly, other approaches would have led to quite different balances. Figure 1 (p. 56) shows that there is a heartland of city museums which can be described as based around Germany, in the broadest sense. Here, in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Netherlands, Belgium, Poland, and the Baltic Republics, larger cities have a fairly or very strong tendency to have city museums. There is then a middle category where such museums are fairly common, but where some cities which might be expected to have them do not — France and the UK are the two large states where this is so. The states with less tendency to have city museums are Italy and Spain, though the balance is much more strongly against in Italy.

These national situations could be analysed at considerable length. At the risk of getting into deep water, some general commentaries are made here, with some country cases analysed later. Any history of European cities reveals immediately that the heartland of urban development was large, stretching by the early modern period across much of the continent. It certainly included all

western Europe and all of the regions which became the Austro-Hungarian and German empires, as well as much of current Poland, and much of the Ottoman empire. Scandinavia beyond Denmark and southern Sweden was less urbanised before the 20th-century. Therefore, if one makes the very simple equation that strong urban presence provides a base for museums in and also about those cities, there would be a base for such proto-city museums across this wide swathe of the continent. Under the broadest definition of an urban museum, this is indeed generally what we find. Italy is full of civic museums — it is likely that, in some sense, all cities have some civic museum presence, often consisting of objects transferred from abolished church institutions in the later 19th-century. Milan apparently has 15 "musei civici", but nothing that can be counted as a city museum.[5] The same applies in many Spanish cities, where, if not called civic museums as in Italy, there is some municipal collection of objects from similar sources, often now placed in art or maybe ethnographic museums. Valencia, for example, has a magnificent Museu de la Ciutat / Museo de la Ciudad in the Palacio Marqués de Campo, consisting of "various collections of a historical, artistic and ethnographic character belonging to the municipal heritage" (museum leaflet), nothing like the city history museum opened in 2003.

For the areas within the Austro-Hungarian and German empires, there was, on the other hand, a systematic tendency to make collections which could then become the core of city history museums. The trajectories will be traced further below. This affected much of what is now Poland, the Baltic Republics, the Czech and Slovak republics and Croatia, Hungary and Slovenia. Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Scandinavia and the UK all saw somewhat similar developments, with the build-up of urban oriented collections, if all with strongly national specificities. These specificities meant in some cases a less automatic transition towards city museums than in the "Germanic" zone.

It could be interesting to reflect on cases where city museums are common in the country as a whole, but a particular city does not have one, however I did not come across many such cases. I found a couple of such cities in Germany — Mannheim and Heidelberg (the latter, in any case, low down in the population range), but the most that can be said there is that it is hardly surprising if a few cities have escaped the almost universal German urge to create city museums. The same could be said of Utrecht. An odder case is Manchester, where one would expect such a prominent, self-aware and self-promoting city to have a city museum.

5. Francesca Lanz, City museums: reflections on a missing definition, CAMOC Review September 2019, p. 4-5.

Pathways to city museums

Any attempt to propose a definitive history of European city museums has to be both highly tentative, in the absence of the proper research programme which would be needed (along the lines of the EU-funded national one referred to above), and accepting of the utter variability of trajectories, particularly between state museum traditions. Here I simply give a sketch, based around three categories, namely emergence, development and transformation. There is no sense that all museums go through these as "stages". Some older cases can be reasonably analysed in those terms, whilst some of the newest museums simply arrived fully fledged, as it were, missing out the stages they might have passed through. There may even be a few cases where museums emerged and then changed in only quite limited ways, but in general this is difficult to imagine. Even in a case well known to me, the Pitt Rivers in Oxford, which preserves its late-19th century collection in numerous other ways, in terms of labelling, education, participation and so on, now taking on the whole decolonising agenda within the limits of its history.

Of course, adherence to such a stages model would also risk forgetting the significant category of absences — the cities without city (history) museums. Hopefully the account here will bring out some of the ways in which such absences came to be. It will be seen that they are related in significant part with the evolution of museum landscapes, as well as with the big ideological and movement forces of European history, which will be examined further in chapter 3.

Emergence

There is an element of competition in some museum histories as to who can cite the earliest formation of collections which feed into the present museum. The same sometimes occurs in claims regarding the foundation of the museum itself. Riga has a reasonable claim to be amongst the earliest, with a definite foundation event in 1773, as has Bordeaux for its earliest general museum in 1781. It is clear that many cities built up significant collections in the 17th- and 18th-centuries, with Swiss cities being particularly ahead, because of the early advance in the sweeping away of monastic and church property, under Calvinist pressures. These were often private collections, and remained so until presentation to municipal or state bodies in the 19th-century or later. In spite of these prehistories, it was in the 19th-century that "real" city history museums started to appear, unevenly across the continent. Postula has claimed that the first "real" case was the Carnavalet of Paris, proposed by Haussman in 1868, and opened in 1880. He compares this with the museum inspired by that in Brussels, of the 1880s. A case could probably be made that there were many other 19th-century foundations across especially the Germanic zone of Europe,

where city history was very much at the core of the project. A list of foundation dates up to 1945 (Figure 2) gives some idea of that, with the inevitable caveat that the year of opening of a museum with something like city-history-museum character has an element of judgement in it.

Uncertain dates — Rotterdam, Wroclaw, both likely to be late 19th or early 20th-century, although in Wroclaw, the city history element was split off out in 2005/2009.

1773 / 1890 Riga
1819 Leeds (2008 main city part)
1826 London (in Guildhall), and 1911 (in Kensington Palace)
1833 Ghent
1849 (1671) / 1894 Basel
1861 Gothenburg
1867 McManus Dundee (2010 main city history part)
1868 Bratislava
1874 / 1904 Maerkisches Museum Berlin, Dusseldorf, The Hague (1986 as separate history museum)
1875 Sheffield
1878 Frankfurt, Nottingham, Szczecin (continuous from 1975)
1880 Paris
1883 Dortmund, Prague
1885 Birmingham
1887 Brussels, Kraków, Vienna
1888 Köln, Munich
1891 Dresden
1898 Glasgow, Zurich (but city part from 2019)
1900 Bremen
1901 Copenhagen
1902 Duisburg
1903 Belgrade, Hannover
1904 Brno, Toulouse (very small museum)
1905 / 2011 Bristol
1907 Budapest, Kaunas, Zagreb
1908 Hamburg, Katowice
1909 Leipzig, Oslo
1910 Cork
1911 Helsinki
1918 Lausanne
1920 Strasbourg
1921 Bucharest, Lyon
1926 Amsterdam
1928 / 1938 Graz
1929 / 1978 Madrid
1930 Poznan
1932 Edinburgh
1935 Ljubljana
1936 Warsaw
1937 Tallinn
1941 Sofia
1942 Lisbon, Stockholm
1943 Barcelona

Figure 2. City history museums opening between 1800 (a few earlier) and 1945

Ghent City Museum in Bijloke Abbey. Photo: STAM

It is clear from this listing that there was a foundation period from about the 1870s to 1914, when many cities set up general-purpose museums with city history elements, and a smaller number specifically created city history museums. My information is often not comprehensive enough to distinguish these categories with certainty. The city history specialisation element was present in France and Germany, but probably far less so elsewhere before 1914. Museums in the UK were largely general-purpose museums, primarily of arts, crafts, natural history, maybe with some city history element, until probably after 1945, and the same most likely applies to many of the museums in the Austro-Hungarian empire, although I have recorded early dates for some of these, such as Belgrade, Bratislava, Kraków and Zagreb. The general purpose *Land* museum continues to have strength in Austria and in Germany, drawing on deep regional historical roots, for example in Klagenfurt for the Carinthia (Kaernten) federal state or in Hannover for Lower Saxony. This does not necessarily exclude the presence of city museums, as Graz (in Styria — Steiermark — federal state) and some German *Land* capitals (Dresden, Dusseldorf, Munich, Stuttgart) demonstrate. But, particularly in a smaller federal state, there can be competition for space in the museum landscape between such urban and regional institutions.

Prague main museum, 1900. Photo: Prague Museum

In Spain, Portugal, Bulgaria and Romania, the interwar period saw the emergence of some authentic city history museums. In Italy, the Fascist period saw the foundation of the Rome History Museum, but this was very soon made into an art museum, leaving Rome without a city museum up to now. In general, the Fascist and Nazi regimes preferred other themes, especially national and grand archaeological imperial narratives, as against more local investment in city institutions. The same ideological forces affected museum development in Portugal and Spain up to the 1970s, and it can be argued that around 40 years of right-wing dictatorships are one reason why city museums are relatively thin on the ground in these two countries.

Development

Figure 3 continues the listing of openings of museums, but of course the most common feature in this period, up to 1990, is the development of already-existing institutions. So the listing is by no means a reflection of limited activity. On the contrary, this was almost certainly a period of flowering of investment in existing museums in a good number of countries; again, without a full history of such museums, it is not possible to give more than generalised comments

1953 Nuremberg
1960 Girona
1963 Bordeaux
1965 Lublin
?c1970 Portsmouth
1970 Gdansk
1975 Lodz
1976 London (merger of Guildhall and London museums)
1980 Athens
1981 Karlsruhe
1983 Marseille, Thessaloniki (but largely Archive)
1986 Geneva

Figure 3. 1945-1990 city history museum openings

on what the changes consisted of. Naturally, in many countries the rebuilding of war-damaged institutions will have taken priority for many years, often up to the 1960s. So, in London, we see the opening of a big new city history museum in one of the set-piece redevelopments in central London, the Barbican, the redevelopment running from the 1950s to the 1970s, with the Museum being one of the last elements to be completed. In Poland, investment in such museums was significant, especially from the 1970s, with this being linked to the major urban reconstruction / preservation programmes, as in the central squares of Warsaw and, to a lesser extent, Kraków. In German cities, especially in West Germany, investment was sometimes tied in with the redevelopment of massively destroyed central areas, as in Frankfurt. Chapter 9 details how Frankfurt's new modernist city museum was a controversial part of the modernising municipal reconstruction of the medieval core, alongside an equally modernist city hall, next to the surviving major church and main square. A few German cities made their investments in greener, more suburban areas, as in Bremen's Landesmuseum, with its city history content. This occurred, too, in Copenhagen, whose city museum from 1956 to 2020 was next to a city-edge green area — as is still the case with Oslo's museum, since 1909.

It was probably mainly in this period that some city museums started accumulating impressive branch structures. Sometimes, these consisted especially of historic remains such as city wall towers, or archaeological sites, as in Barcelona, Kraków and Lisbon. Sometimes, they were memorial museums related to important cultural figures, composers, writers or artists, this being most common in central Europe, as in Vienna's large package of seven

composer museums, or in the memorial houses in, for example, Belgrade, Bratislava, Bucharest, Kaunas, Ljubljana, Portsmouth and Zagreb. A related type is the preservation of period houses, as in Berlin's set formed in the Communist period, or in the houses in Katowice of both rich families and workers alike, or the preservation of modest wood-built houses in central Helsinki. This wish to preserve different kinds of houses and interiors can be linked in part to the popularity across northern Europe of the Skansen or outdoor / living museum model, which flourished through the early and mid-20th century — though this is more of a rural or regional phenomenon than an urban one.

Many cities have remained with just one central museum, but those which have the main museum plus a few specialist branches probably built these up mainly during this period. Examples of this model include Frankfurt, with its Children's (now Young People's) Museum and its Porcelain Museum, or Lyon with its Puppet Museum, or Nottingham with its strong package of central castle, 17th-century workers' terraced houses, industrial museum and aristocratic country houses. To an extent, this is just an issue of organisational accident, whether the main city museum brought these specialised museums under its umbrella or not. This made sense in many municipalities, but it did not necessarily work that way, especially in very large cities such as London, Madrid and Paris. The really big branch structures of Barcelona, Hamburg, Kraków, Vienna and Warsaw, which originate in large part in thies era, might not be what some city leaders would choose now if they could start again, but constitute a strong attraction in some ways, allowing the distribution of citizen, school and tourist interest across the city. We return to this issue of spatial organisation in chapter 3.

Transformation

I take the year 2000 as the broad starting point for defining a museum as one undergoing a recent transformation, but use the year 1990 in Figure 4, to show the emerging dynamic. What constitutes a significant transformation, even just in physical terms, is extremly subjective. Clearly museums are, in most cases, in continuous evolution. So my suggestion that around half of my 91 city museums have had, or are having, such transformation projects has to be understood as leaving considerable room for judgement. Where a museum has undergone major physical works to buildings, that counts, as does of course a completely new museum. If the transformation of permanent exhibitions appears to be very radical and wholesale, that counts too, although not all websites give this information.

With the above caveats, it is clear that a great deal of investment has gone into city museums since around 2000, even if it may be difficult to make the case that the period up to 2011 is really qualitatively different from the rather

1993 Liverpool (new opening in renovated building)
1994 Freiburg, Rijeka
1996 Luxembourg
1997 Zagreb (completing major renovations)
1998 Bonn
1999 Murcia
ca. 2000 Porto (within Archive)
2003 Valencia
2005/2009 Wroclaw (but earlier forms)
2007 Strasbourg (opening after 20-year closure)
2008 Aveiro, Leeds, Kaunas (opening after refounding in 2005)
2010 Essen (just in Archive), Dundee (major rebuilding),
Ghent (full transformation)
2011 Antwerp, Cardiff, Dublin, Waterford (and second branch 2013),
Liverpool (new building), Bristol (opening in renovated building)
2012 Bologna
2013 Marseille (major expansion completed)
2014 Volos
2015 Sofia (opening in current building)
2016 Kassel, Nantes (but earlier institutions), Helsinki (reopening
after major transformation), Rotterdam (opened in new building)
2017 Frankfurt (new building opened),Warsaw (major renovations
completed)
2018 Stuttgart
2019 Zurich (city element opened)
2020 Copenhagen
2021 Paris (complete renovation of Carnavalet)
2021 Nottingham (complete renovation of Castle Museum)

Future openings of transformation projects: Kraków renovations being completed, Vienna 2023, London 2024, Berlin 2024, Lyon under way, Munich 2030, Hamburg ??, Amsterdam ?? Other likely cases in mid 2020s: Belgrade, Birmingham, Karlsruhe, Koln, Prague.

Figure 4. Museum openings after 1990

less visible investment through the 1980s and 1990s. But there were some big openings between 2003 and 2011, including Valencia, Antwerp, Leeds, Bristol, Ghent and Liverpool, alongside some very major refurbishments and creation of new permanent exhibitions, for example in Ljubljana. The 2010 and 2011 completions were, no doubt, finalising projects created since the late 1990s, reflecting the relatively buoyant economic conditions in much of Europe in the early 2000s. But the 2008 economic crisis did not block city museum expansion, although it must undoubtedly have affected the confidence of many cities, especially in southern Europe, in proposing major new investment, for several years.

At any rate, the membership of the Barcelona Network has certainly been aware since 2011 of considerable discussion of big transformation schemes in a good number of the major city museums, discussion which has for some years now begun to result in major investments. Six of these are given full description later in the book — Frankfurt opened in 2017, Copenhagen opened in 2020, major schemes are on the way in Barcelona, Berlin, Lisbon and London. To these can be added major schemes completed in Marseille in 2013, Helsinki in 2016, Rotterdam in 2016, Warsaw in 2017, Stuttgart in 2018, Kraków in 2019, Paris in 2020, Nottingham in 2021, and schemes ongoing in Vienna and Hamburg.

There are several cases where big changes are struggling to see the light, as in Belgrade, where a major new museum is proposed and designed, but appears to be still not funded, or in Birmingham, where a major set of transformative proposals for the main museum and for the science and technology museum were drawn up in 2018, only, it would appear, to be driven out by the problematic political and economic situation of the UK. Karlsruhe city museum appears to have been in on and off participatory discussion of alternative projects since 2010, without reaching a conclusion. Rotterdam did create a new museum of sorts, but this was closed in 2020. The council is considering what alternative city museum provision it wishes to make in the longer term. Köln, after a major flooding incident in 2017 that threatened the continuation of this well-established museum in its present building, has been planning the way forward to a major new museum, via a temporary site to be set up in the next year or two, showing again the challenges which are confronting municipalities who are taking their city museums seriously, including proper engagement with their citizenry.

Such debates were particularly pronounced in Vienna, where discussion began early in the millennium about a major renovation or moving to a totally new building. One of the no-longer-used rail stations was a favourite choice early on, but the decision was taken by the city council in 2013 to extend and totally renovate the modern building of 1959. Six years of steady work followed, to the closure of the museum in 2019 and the start of rebuilding in 2020. This shows the typical long trajectory of a big project of this kind, an issue which will be revisited in chapter 3 in relation to institutional forms and resourcing.

One other interesting development has been the emergence of a few smaller museums since 2000. These had existed earlier, for example the minuscule Toulouse museum in a highly traditional form, run by a private society since 1904, by no means forming a real city history museum (let alone a city museum), but showing the survival of some older forms. The Little Museum, in Dublin, is one example of a very small private museum which, perhaps, spotted the absence of a museum dealing simply with Dublin and opened to, it seems, some success, in 2011. Againt, it does not constitute a "proper" city history or city museum, but shows the scope for private-sector niches in one of the tourist hotspots of Europe, as several Berlin museum entrepreneurs have shown with "Checkpoint Charlie" type exhibitions exposing Cold War histories. Dublin's museums are much more geared towards Irish national matters, or present famous buildings and themes, rather than engaging with the complex history of the city, or confronting current social and political issues.

Slightly different has been the emergence of a number of new museums in smaller cities since the late 1990s. My partial sample must be picking up only a few of these, but we can note Bonn, opened in 1998 after over a century of discussions (surely a record), Murcia in 1999, Cardiff in 2011, Volos in 2014 and Kassel in 2016. All are modest institutions, but Cardiff and Volos aim to be contemporary-style city museums, both taking advice from those who founded CAMOC in 2005 on how to found such a museum. It is likely that EU funding has helped in some of these cases. The more traditional approaches evident in Bonn and Kassel may be down to the continuing force of the Germanic city history museum model. Kassel is a lively and technologically up-to-date museum, taking the city's history up to around 2000, with strong emphasis on educational roles, but it does not appear to aspire to the goals at the core of CAMOC's founding, geared towards current and future challenges for the city.

Another interesting, if secondary dimension is the relationship between city museum and city archives. The two have a natural proximity, and a survey could surely find many cases where the two elements are physically or adminstratively joined or close. Over many years, scholars have noted the links between libraries, archives and museums, especially since digitisation.[6] Three cases were found where municipalities had set up new city archives, and with these provided exhibitions, of a more or less extensive kind, on the city's history — in Essen, Porto and Thessaloniki (their installation in their present buildings ranging from 1996 to 2010). These by no means constitute city museums, but they show cities without such museums feeling some urge to convey their histories in a minor key.

6. Paul Marty, "An introduction to digital convergence: libraries, archives and museums in the information age", *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 24, 4, (2009), p. 295-298.

A distinct but related tendency to use library branches for museum exhibitions has been noted in the practice of the Amsterdam Museum in the last five years or so, as part of their wish to set up a network museum with more presence around the city's neighbourhoods. Quite a number of better resourced cities have made efforts to update their library provision, both through impressive new central libraries (Amsterdam, Birmingham, The Hague, Rotterdam) and through investment in branches (Amsterdam, Barcelona). I am sure that there would be other cases of museum and library links in this way, if specific searches were made. Of course, libraries are strongly affected by the digitisation of society, and so there may be more doubts about this kind of linking than there would have been 10 or 20 years ago, when these big urban library investments were set in motion.

Country traditions and trajectories

It would be interesting to survey extensively national experiences with city (history) museums, as it is at this level that much of the explanation of current situations must lie. Here, I concentrate on the larger European states, mainly because these have more material to work on. Smaller states typically have one or two large cities, and so this would come down to an examination of what had happened in each city. Only a handful of larger European states have many cities of the scale studied here. This does exclude some interesting cases, such as the countries with major elements of cultural division, like Belgium, Switzerland and Spain, where experience in one region can be very different from another — state level generalisations will have less purchase. However there will be scope to say a bit more about this in chapter 3 when discussing state forms.

Here therefore I comment on the tendencies and trajectories in five states: France, Germany, Italy, Poland and the UK.

France

For much of the last two centuries, museums were directed centrally. This began with a decree in 1801, which arranged a "centrally organised network of municipal museums", naming 12 major cities which already had a museum structure, amongst which art treasures from the church, royalty and conquered areas) could be distributed.[7] This element of central influence has continued even through the processes of regionalisation and decentralisation since the 1980s, so the Direction des Musées de France, run by the Ministries of Culture and Education, still coordinates the museum system in certain ways. Because there is no national

7. Felicity Bodenstein, "National museums in France," in Peter Aronsson and Gabriella Elgenius (eds.), *Building National Museums in Europe 1750-2010*, EuNaMus Report No 1, Linkoping University, 2011, p. 293.

history museum, regional museums and even urban museums have roles in recounting wider history — this applies to some extent in the Musée Gadagne in Lyon and the Carnavalet in Paris, for example, where the French Revolution and other key national moments figure strongly, or in Bordeaux or Nantes where French national and global links across the Atlantic take centre stage.

A regional museum may deal fully with urban history, as in the case of the Musée Aquitaine in Bordeaux, though this is not necessarily the case — in Grenoble, the Musée Dauphinois, and in Rennes, the Musée de Bretagne, hardly seem to touch their urban locations. There are very many museums at all levels in France, with new foundations common in recent decades: apparently 41 new museums were completed across France in small- and medium-sized towns just in 1988-1991.[8] The *ecomusée* phenomenon has also been important since its promotion by the Environment Minister in 1971, as mentioned above. It is not surprising that the author of the article on Musées de Ville in 2006 was director of the Museum of St Quentin-en-Yvelines, previously the *ecomusée* of that place.[9]

Nevertheless, my survey did not suggest that France is as consistent a promoter of city history or city museums as most countries to its east. I found that 7 out of 13 of the larger cities had city history museums. One of these, Toulouse, was only an extremely small, very traditional museum in two buildings with eight rooms, set up in 1904. The museum at Strasbourg was closed from 1987 to 2007 and its account ends in 1949. The museums at Bordeaux, Lyon, Marseille and Nantes are all museums which have been or are being transformed into contemporary-style city history museums, with some emphasis on casting light on contemporary issues, but probably still with the greater stress on "purer history". The new gallery opened in 2019 in the Bordeaux-based Musée d'Aquitaine brings the history of the city up to the present and looks toward 2030. Marseille's city history museum, founded in 1983, was massively expanded for reopening in 2013, giving a very full account up to nearly the present. Nantes reopened in 2016, with 22 rooms recounting the city and region's history in seven blocks. Lyon is undergoing a major renovation to present its history in new ways. Finally, the Carnavalet in Paris is, to a degree, a "museum museum", with the four-year-long total renovation being completed in 2020 needing to keep much of its core, but transforming the museum in many other ways. The budget of 43 million euros is one indication of the scale of the transformation.

What this brief survey suggests is that the great riches of the French museum landscape only precipitate out to varying extents in city history museums, and

8. Felicity Bodenstein, "National Museums in France", p. 295.

9. Julie Guiyot-Corteville, "Musées de Ville en France" in *La lettre du comité national français*, ICOM #30, 2006, p. 9-11.

Bordeaux Musée d'Aquitaine. Photo: Musée d'Aquitaine

that these have had less tendency to promote the shift to city museums focused strongly on the present and future than in some other countries. It would be valuable to hear the views of French specialists on the likelihood of this tendency continuing, and on where the urban museum in France may be bound. There will be opportunity to say more on aspects of the French situation in chapter 3.

Germany

As was seen in the survey, Germany is the current heartland of city history museums in larger cities. Germany is, in any case, like France, a country with a deep and long museum tradition stemming back into the 18th-century. As the survey suggested, the end of the 19th and start of the 20th-centuries were particularly important times for museum foundation with, for example, 210 museums in new buildings created between 1900 and 1920.[10] In 2010, there were around 6000 museums, mostly run by states or lower-level local authorities.

10. Peter Aronsson & Emma Bentz, "National Museums in Germany: Anchoring Competing Communities", University of Linkoping, 2011, p. 334.

There is not the same thorough intertwining of national and local policy as in France, with decentralised control being dominant, though modified by elements of federal funding. For example, the new German port museum to be built in Hamburg will be paid for in large measure by the federal government, which will also make major contributions to the renewal of the whole package of Hamburg's city history museums. But most *Länder* and municipal museum investment must come from funding at those levels.

No larger city lacked a city history museum, and some of these have long been at the forefront of European practice. Purpose-built history museums opened in Hamburg in 1922, and in Berlin in 1908, whilst Munich had adapted the municipal arsenal and stables buildings and opened in 1888. This showed the determination of cities of this magnitude to present their impressive histories in style, incorporating grand reconstructions of rooms and remains of other buildings into their projects. Nowhere else in Europe was there such an investment in big city pasts so early, with only Paris and Brussels seeing, to a degree, equivalent projects. If one looked at conurbations, this impression of strong historical museum coverage would surely be confirmed. So, in the Ruhr area, there are not only city museums in Dortmund and Duisburg and no doubt several medium-sized cities, but museums covering the Ruhr area as a whole, as well as a wealth of industrial history museums, all supported by the large federal state of North Rhine Westphalia.

Western German practice after 1945 also saw leading examples of investment, building on these strong foundations, with the creation of the new Frankfurt museum pointing to new anti-elitist drives in the 1970s, to get beyond the normal, cultured, middle-class audiences of museums. Aronsson and Bentz say that this museum, opened in 1972, had the ambition:

"to display history from below, i.e. social — and everyday life history. This forms part of a turn in public history connected to the movement to the left in politics in the same decade in Western Europe, also affecting institutional representation of the past in Germany (Schörken 1981, Schulze 1994). This was accompanied by a new pedagogical concept that sought to replace the traditional, esthetical way of presenting art and history. The museum in Frankfurt was interesting, also, in the sense that it included controversial themes in German history, post-1850, in its permanent exhibition. According to Mälzer, 1850 had often constituted a time boundary for exhibitions — with the exception of art museums (Mälzer 2005:39)".[11]

East Germany, the GDR, also invested in museums, albeit with different ideological purposes, so that the tradition inherited in cities there continued,

11. Peter Aronsson & Emma Bentz, "National Museums in...", p. 337.

Stuttgart new museum, children's space. Photo: Museum für Stuttgart

being extended significantly in the case of Berlin. After 1990, this part of Germany became a major centre of renovation and new building projects, both in Berlin and in some other cities, with, for example, the city history museum of Leipzig gaining a grand new building in 2004 next to its traditional base. Dresden's history museum had been destroyed in World War II, but reopened in 1966 and has gained from large investment since the 1990s, in the same traditional building as the municipal art gallery but separated from this since 2000. Berlin's plans are described fully in Chapter 7.

In the old West Germany, the other very large projects proposed are in Hamburg and Munich, whilst one city, Stuttgart, has gained a city museum for the first time. This opened in 2018, after the spending of 38.3 million euros. It constitutes an interesting case, revealing the tensions at work for any city trying to start such an institution from scratch. The project was not "weighed down" by especially impressive collections, and took a determinedly contemporary approach: it is very definitely a city museum, not a city history museum — echoing the new Frankfurt museum and the plans in Berlin. The websites describe it as "much more than a museum", with the title "Stadtpalais — Museum for Stuttgart", and the aim is given as being to blend education and entertainment

to compete with other rivals for people's free time. It is described as a concert stage, party location, dance floor, skating spot, and a science centre of urban culture. The main permanent exhibition on the first floor covering 900m² is on "Stuttgart's City Stories", a common phrasing now used perhaps to get round any off-putting echoes of "history". The ground floor is largely the Stadtlabor or Citylab, for children, covering 450m².

So, accessibility is strongly stressed, and this combines with the aim to be a centre for thinking about the future of the city, by all citizens, emphasising themes such as migration and social exclusion, as well as pedagogy. It is perhaps claiming to be all things to all people, but constitutes, I think, a revealing example of current international practice, starting from a blank sheet of paper. Study of the first few years of this institution will cast light on such an approach to city museums. It will be particularly interesting to see the kind of social usage of such a museum and of its other museum branches, and of the other museums in the city (art and so on).

It is not yet clear if the two other megaprojects, for Hamburg and Munich, will take these museums more towards the city museum model, or whether they will lean still towards an updated version of the German city history museum. Both have very major budgets, with Munich quoted at 183.47 million euros, and Hamburg seeing 231.5 million euros, if the national port museum is included (36 million euros just for the central history museum). Along with the Berlin projects and some other emerging cases such as Koln and Karlsruhe, these schemes will illustrate the future directions for city history and city museums in Germany into the 2030s.

Italy

The absence of city museums in this book's sense has been noted in Italy. The account of Italian national museums makes clear that the development of these has always been impeded by the force of local and regional elites, who have led the founding of museums (with a few exceptions in Fascist Italy or one or two other major projects, such as the new Rome contemporary art museum).[12] So, whilst enormous numbers of local and civic museums exist, from the 19th-century and still appearing in recent decades, these have tended to be very traditional in form, not generally constituting real city history museums and so unable to evolve into either modernised city history museums, or even into city museums. One reason suggested for this is that Italy has so much "outside heritage", in

12. Simona Troilo, "National Museums in Italy: A Matter of Multifaceted Identity" in Aronsson & Elgenius (eds.), Building National Museums..., p. 461-496.

Museum of the History of Bologna. Photo: Museo della Storia di Bologna

buildings and archaeology, that an always stressed state has been unable to support other kinds of heritage investment. This has nearly always been reinforced by the great political and cultural fragmentation of the country.

I have found one city history museum of a modern type, in Bologna, even though there have been discussions about others, for example in Rome, Verona or Venice, with the virtual museum of Turin "open" since 2011.[13] The Museum of the History of Bologna opened in 2012, constituting a substantial urban history presentation in 40 rooms on 6000m^2, part chronological and part thematic. It is part of a package of six museums in ancient houses in the urban core accumulated by the Bologna savings bank (Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio in Bologna). It is not clear that it takes on much of the agenda of city museums in the contemporary sense — there is little impression of engaging with current

13. See *Citta e Storia* special issue 2008, 1-2 (in Italian), and articles in *Planning Perspectives*, 2012, 27, 3: Giulia Mezzalama, "Built city, planned city, virtual city: the city museum", p. 453-456. Donatella Calabi, "City museums: first elements for a debate", p. 457-462. Rosa Tamborrino, "Searching for state-of-the-art public space: city museums among archives and networks", p. 463-473.

issues of political or controversial significance — possibly reflecting in part its institutional location, away from the municipal political realms. However it certainly presents urban history fully, apparently up to nearly the present.

It appears that some of the dynamic in the Italian museums world is in the local ecomuseums. An example in the periphery of Rome is the Ecomuseo Casilino, whose founding stemmed from a local citizens' struggle to protect an area of open space from speculative development — a fight won with the common support (in Italy) of archaeological protection arguments (http://www.ecomuseocasilino.it/). This kind of locally based initiative seems to have more chances than any pushes from the large municipalities, who have had other, more pressing matters on their agendas in recent times. Regional-level action has been more probable in recent decades, but this is likely to have benefitted more regional-level museums, or other types of museums. Italian experts will judge if this rather downbeat estimate of city history museum prospects is broadly correct.

Poland

Poland has had an even more turbulent history than most other European countries, and this has naturally impacted on its museums, and especially its city museums, in powerful ways. One factor is the national territory, only parts of which have been in Poland in some sense of that concept, for the last two centuries and more. Some of the nine large cities surveyed had their major formative city museum period while part of Germany — Gdansk, Katowice, Poznan, Szczecin, Wroclaw. So their museum histories contain parts of the very active German tradition of forming urban museums. Other cities were in the Russian or Austro-Hungarian empires, and affected by those traditions, although these were generally less imposing of models than those for the German empire, and ended in 1919, whilst four of the above cities remained in Germany until 1945.

The second, equally evident feature impacting on museums was the 40 years of Communist rule. This naturally imposed certain ideological agendas on museums' practices. It can be said now that this overlay may have been less deep than might have been imagined, with museums able to clear away relatively rapidly in the 1990s the more obvious elements and profit again from some of the strong museum traditions of before 1945. My impression in surveying Polish practice of the Communist period is that this was eventually a strong period of investment in city history museums, with several museums opened or regenerated in this period, even if with very long absences after war damage. Post-war destruction was overcome in Kraków and Warsaw city history museums by the early 1950s, whilst openings or reopenings took place in Gdansk in 1970 and in Lodz and Szczecin in 1975. This, in turn, has meant that there have been solid foundations on which to build since 1990. All the museums surveyed have undergone major renovations, with Kraków and Warsaw both

Szczecin main museum facade. Photo: National Museum in Szczecin

systematically renovating their core museums in the 2010s. Kraków's "Cybertheque. Kraków — Time and Space" exhibition opened in 2014 showed the way in which leading-edge digital visualisation techniques could be used to explore urban histories. Wroclaw, one of several museums kept within the nationally managed museums package, opened in its current building in 2009, with new work on its permanent exhibitions in 2020, and the chronological account reaching at least the 1990s. Szczecin's Centre of Dialogue Upheavals is a new branch opened in 2016, allowing engagement with the changes the city went through from 1939 to 1989, picking up on public discussion themes central to the city museum concept — though extending the approach to the present day would form a full encounter with current and future questions.

In spite of the significant investment under all the above regimes and especially since the 1990s, my impression is that the dominant approach in these museums is a modernised city history museum form, with rather less evidence of engagement with the city museum ideas prevalent in some other countries. It will be interesting to see how this evolves, given national political tendencies in Poland during the last decade. Up to the present day, the fact that Poland has both a strong regional government structure, often under political control

different from the central government, and also some force from independent municipalities, has provided a cushion giving scope, probably, for independent approaches to museum practices, including narratives with alternatives to strong Polish nationalist ones, with distinct local or culturally variant forms. Maintaining such independence may sometimes be hard, especially if the museums are within the national package of museums, as three of the nine are.

United Kingdom

The UK remains a unitary state, in spite of some measures of devolution carried through in 1999 for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. This unitary constitutional position has meant that approaches to museums have, for most of the relevant period of two centuries or more, been implemented with common political and cultural trends affecting local museums. We can identify a dominant moment and model of urban museum foundation in the late 19th-century. In most cases, this meant that the strong provincial cities set up general-purpose museums, covering mainly art, natural history, maybe some local history. I have not found a detailed history of the evolution of these museums from their founding moments through to the present, but the following should pick up the main evolution. Only a few cities moved to set up independent city museums. There were two museums giving some overview of London history, one private, one run by the City of London Corporation. These came together to form the Museum of London, opening in 1976, the real forerunner of city history museum practice in England. Glasgow had the People's Museum from 1898, which formed a sort of history museum, though one that has been given very uneven attention by Glasgow City Council compared to its investment in its general-purpose and art museums. Edinburgh has had a city history museum since 1932, supplemented by the People's Story Museum of 1989, with a more social and oral history focus. Apart from these three cases, one has to wait until 1993 when the Museum of Liverpool Life took over the role of the Museum of Labour (set up in 1985), the Leeds Museum opened in 2008, or the Bristol history museum called M Shed, opened in 2011, or the rather minuscule Cardiff Museum opened, also in 2011. We see here, therefore, a very belated move to set up city history museums or, by the 2000s, city museums.

The reason for the late arrival of this species of museum, compared with some other countries, relates to the tendency mentioned above to set up general-purpose provincial city museums. All the larger and even medium-sized cities had such museums — most still have them, though there is already a trickle of closures under the impact of central government budget cuts. In several cases, they now shelter within themselves a reasonably developed city history element, inserted in recent decades — this is so in Birmingham and Sheffield. The major renovation project in Nottingham (budget £29.4 million) has a similar formula,

Sheffield Weston Park Museum facade. Photo: Weston Park Museum

with the new complex almost certainly enhancing the city history element. Occasionally, these provincial museums decide to "spin out" the history element — this is what occurred in Bristol and Leeds, leading to something much more like a contemporary city museum than the provincial general purpose museums can be. These spin-outs do not generally constitute very big projects, because the municipalities involved have relatively few resources. Only in two cases are far greater resources available. One is for London, where the City of London Corporation has always, up to the present, had a rich tax base and few calls on its funds, with recent support from the Mayor of London. The other is for Liverpool, where the political crisis affecting the city in the 1980s led to the nationalisation of all its museums, enabling first the Museum of Liverpool Life and then the new-build Museum of Liverpool, opened in 2011 (budget £72 million), the one and only example of a new base for a city museum, outside London.

Overall, then, we see an only moderate appetite for city or city history museums in the UK. There is not the deep, serious tradition of presenting city history found in the Germanic zone of Europe, as against a more generalised drive of local bourgeoisies to create palaces of comprehensive local pride or patriotism, which has tended to be played out through art, crafts or other cultural channels. The rise of interest in local history since the 1960s has gradually tilted this balance, but this has coincided with 40 years of municipal budgets generally under extreme pressure. Most museum projects in that half-century have had to rely on grants from lottery funds, EU funds or occasionally generous

national governments (as in Liverpool), with only some of the funds coming from councils themselves. So city history museums, and eventually a few city museums, have materialised, but with less predictability than in Germany or much of the rest of northern Europe. In one or two odd cases, like Manchester, no such city museum has ever appeared. The general-purpose, largely art, museums have not spun off such vehicles there. The nearest thing to a city history museum is the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester — in chapter 3, this issue of absent museums will be discussed further.

Dimensions of differences

Another way to present highly simplified ideas of the evolution experienced by some (certainly not all) city museums is by imagining some ideal type museums — meaning that these are not presentations of anything which will have ever existed in just these forms, but they suggest some directions of change. It should be stressed that this cannot be mapped precisely onto the also three-way model in the section above, of emergence, development and transformation, although there is some matching, as both are temporal models which land on our identified current moment of significant transformation. Here, the criteria used are drawn from the themes which form the content of Part 3 of this book. These provide a convenient sketch of some of the key ways in which museums have changed. Figure 2.5 shows the three stages of classic, modernisation and transformation. Given that these themes will have their own treatment in Part 3, I do not go into detail here regarding this Figure. The point here is just to emphasise that there are numerous dimensions to the changes which museums have gone through, over the last century and often longer. In examining city museums, we find these seven themes useful in exploring current practice, and it is clear that the classic city history formulas of the early-20th century differed very greatly from these current practices. The modernising approaches of the second half of the 20th-century were already "moving towards" such practice (seen in hindsight), in some countries more than in others, in some ways, but still preserved more traditional approaches across many of these headings.

Conclusions

This chapter has surveyed city history museums in larger European cities and explored national peculiarities and trajectories in their formation. City museums, in the current sense, have largely emerged out of such urban history museums. The next chapter explores the contexts affecting the appearance of city museums, using some examples of recent transformative projects, whilst Chapter 4 gives quick sketches of 12 of the more important projects recently completed or proposed. Then, Part 2 takes much more in-depth looks at six of the largest projects completed recently or in process.

State	With city museum	Without city museum
Austria	Graz Vienna	Klagenfurt
Belgium	Antwerp Brussels Ghent	Bruges
Bosnia and Herzegovina		Sarajevo
Bulgaria	Sofia	
Croatia	Rijeka Zagreb	Split
Czech Republic	Brno Prague	
Denmark	Copenhagen	
Estonia	Tallinn	
Finland	Helsinki	
France	Bordeaux Lyon Marseille Nantes Paris Strasbourg Toulouse	Grenoble Lille Montpellier Nice Rennes
Germany	Berlin Bonn Bremen Dresden	Dortmund Heidelberg Mannheim
Germany (continued)	Duisburg Dusseldorf Essen Frankfurt Freiburg Hamburg Hannover Karlsruhe Kassel Köln Leipzig Munich Nuremberg Stuttgart	
Greece	Athens Volos	Thessaloniki
Hungary	Budapest	
Irish Republic	Cork Dublin Waterford	
Italy	Bologna	Florence Genoa Milan Naples Padua Palermo Pisa Rome Turin (except virtual) Venice Verona

Figure 1. Cities surveyed, by state

State (continued)	With city museum	Without city museum
Latvia	Riga	
Lithuania	Kaunas	Vilnius
Luxembourg	Lëtzebuerg	
Netherlands	Amsterdam The Hague Rotterdam	Utrecht
North Macedonia		Skopje
Norway	Oslo	
Poland	Gdansk Katowice Kraków Lodz Lublin Poznan Szczecin Warsaw Wroclaw	
Portugal	Lisbon Porto	
Romania	Bucharest	
Serbia	Belgrade	
Slovakia	Bratislava	
Slovenia	Ljubljana	

State (continued)	With city museum	Without city museum
Spain	Barcelona Girona Madrid Valencia	A Coruna Bilbao Cordoba Granada Malaga Palma de Mallorca Pamplona San Sebastian Sevilla Tarragona Vitoria Zaragoza
Sweden	Gothenburg Stockholm	Malmö
Switzerland	Basel Bern Geneva Lausanne Zurich	
UK	Birmingham Bristol Cardiff Edinburgh Glasgow Leeds Liverpool London Nottingham Portsmouth Sheffield	Aberdeen Belfast Dundee Londonderry Manchester Swansea

Figure 1. (continued). Cities surveyed, by states

CLASSIC ERA

Research base	Narratives	Formats and educational	Heritage and landscape
From traditional local and national historiography, as well as folk, ethnographic and religious traditions.	Chronological, with stories according to primary sponsors. — bourgeois elites normally.	Traditional-object based display plus reconstructed rooms sometimes. Limited special attention to education.	Sometimes based in historic buildings or in specially created historicising bases.
Collections	**Participation**	**Itineraries and tours**	
Collections of classic archaeological and artistic or craft objects.	Little attempt to open to wider public views on nature of museum.	Little or no attempt to connect to surrounding town or city, though implicit link to emerging ideas of looking at historic cores of cities.	

Figure 5. Linking a three-phase model with the themes used in the thematic part of the book

MODERNISATION ERA

Research base	Narratives	Formats and educational	Heritage and landscape
New tendencies in history writing in early- and 20th-mid-century — economic and social history, workers' history. Links to school curricula. Sometimes involvement of university academics in changing approaches?	Normally chronological, but with more complex narratives, often explicitly linked to dominant powers in the city and country — socialist, communist, fascist, liberal. More tendency to create thematic zones of approaches.	Strong linking to schools and their use of the museum, as one force making more visual and interesting, hands-on elements, activities, multimedia.	New buildings often with modernist forms, and explicit links with the transformation of urban cores, and extending of museum concept to new heritage items — industry, infrastructure, archaelology in the city.
Collections	**Participation**	**Itineraries and tours**	
Widened range of objects collected and use of films and oral history, as part of search for invigorated involvement of visitors.	Some reaching out for views on the forms of museums although remaining largely in the hands of museum professionals and sometimes politicians.	Much more linking to the urban environment and experimenting with itineraries and tours.	

EMERGING OR TRANSFORMING ERA

Research base	Narratives	Formats and educational	Heritage and landscape
Consistent attempts in some cities to make enduring links both with university departments, normally of history, and with popular history of various kinds — local community and family history trends, for example.	Some mixing of chronological and thematic approaches, with some places trying first one, then another formula. Some attempts to present more open narratives, or more controversial ones, as on gender, oppression within the urban history.	Probably very varied from one museum to another, from still quite classic formulas to highly mediated ones with digital and advanced models of presentation and involvement.	Spreading out of the museums' gaze to new buildings and places, so that more of the city is touched on or included, beyond the urban core — in some cities. Others retain their primary central locations as their only or nearly base, though taking a wider view of the spatial reach of the museum.

Collections	Participation	Itineraries and tours
Continuing to extend the range of kinds of things collected and of who possessed the objects or whose voices are represented. Related to policies on participation.	Deepening efforts in some cities to engage with highly topical issues and act as a lead or near-political actor on themes such as migration. This may involve attempts at consultation on the approach of the museum as a whole, though this is likely to remain politically difficult.	More explicit engagement with making of itineraries and tours, collaborating with private initiatives and thinking explicitly about how the museum relates to these engagements with the city. In some cases digital means promote this as the main or even only mode — no physical city museum seen as needed.

Figure 5 (continued). Linking a three-phase model with the themes used in the thematic part of the book

City history museums and city museums in Europe: further reflections

Tim Marshall

Chapter 2 took the form of a survey of the past and, to an extent, of the present of city history museums in Europe. This chapter examines further the changes happening in the last 20-30 years, to see what forms the newer kinds of city museums are taking. It will soon be clear that we are dealing with a wide expanse of varieties and tendencies. There are several sorts of "contemporary" city museums, but these sit alongside and blend into other sorts of "contemporary" city history museums. Any order offered as an umbrella over these varieties will remain artificial. What follows is a series of cuts into these realities. The first section is on city museums and city history museums, descriptively and analytically, examining especially the drivers of ideology, institutions and policies. The second section is focused on the physical forms these museums take — buildings, spaces, infrastructures. The third section concentrates on one important feature of the phenomena, how museums address city futures. Some connections between this future orientation and city planning will be explored.

City museums (CMs) and city history museums (CHMs)

With apologies, I use these shorthands forms and often their abbreviations here, in the full knowledge that they are ideal types, which blend into each other in most if not all real cases. The main source for city museums has been institutions which were, or partly still are, city history museums. There are a few cases where no such CHM was present before, at least directly so — Cardiff, Stuttgart, Volos CMs. Equally, there are cases where a contemporary kind of CHM has been formed, without a direct institutional past — Bonn, Murcia, perhaps Bologna (its degree of "city museumness" being arguable). But there are far more cases where, since around the late 1990s, CHMs have taken on CM features.

Our later, theme chapters explore what are seen as identifying features of "city museumness", although in any real cases, some features are more developed than others, and each is to some degree connected to the others:

- Further steps forward in the nature of interaction and participation with the users of the museum.
- More emphasis on bringing stories up to the present day.
- Attempts to engage with city futures.
- New approaches to collecting — objects, memories, digital forms.

• Linking to the way visitors appreciate the cities in which the museums are located, through itineraries, digital exploring, spread of museum branches.

We can demonstrate how some of these features play out by means of three examples. The first shows some of the "About us" part of the Rotterdam Museum website (before the museum closure in late 2020), to give a flavour of how a leading-edge city museum presented itself. We can pick out the above features easily enough. The present city is a strong focus and there is mention of linking to city futures. The website presence is in the foreground. There is reference to local communities, even though there is only a central site, plus the special Second World War exhibition. Participation, Rotterdammers making the museum themselves, is stressed: "Our main location, the Timmerhuis, is the museum of the city. Located right in the centre, where the hypermodern glass and steel of the world-renowned architectural firm OMA meets the concrete and brick of the post-war reconstruction icon, the Timmerhuis. Here, unexpected combinations of historical objects and contemporary heritage tell the story of Rotterdam and its people — from settlement on the Rotte to modern multicultural metropolis. Our second location is dedicated to the Second World War and the impact of the May 1940 bombing on Rotterdam.

New Rotterdam heritage Museum Rotterdam is more than a city museum crammed with historical objects. The museum also celebrates life in modern-day Rotterdam. We visit local communities and, in partnership with Rotterdammers, identify the modern city's DNA. This participative project, dedicated to identifying, preserving and presenting the city's heritage, is unique in Europe.

Connecting past, present & future. Important Rotterdam themes such as the city's no-nonsense work ethic, care, migration, renewal and religion are the common thread that runs through our collection. In the museum, these themes connect past and present: members of medieval guilds aren't so different from today's freelancers, and the dockworker in a hundred-year-old painting shares many similarities with Kamen, a construction worker from eastern Europe. Comparing the lives of Rotterdammers then and now brings the past to life."

The second example, just to leave our European shell for a minute, is the Museum of the City of New York. This venerable city history museum (founded 1923) was transformed (at a cost of $97 million) and reopened in 2016.[1] Two introductory paragraphs from an article by the museum director give a sense of the direction of the changes.

1. Sarah M. Henry, "Confronting New York's present and future", *Museum International*, 70, 3-4 (2018), p. 62-71.

Museum Rotterdam. Photo: Tim Marshall

"MCNY's mission dedicates the institution and its programming not to history per se, but to exploring the nature of urban life in the United States' largest city, and to connecting the past, present, and future of the five boroughs of New York. This commitment to the present and future as well as the past is at the heart of programming at MCNY, underlining the institution's commitment to the profoundly civic enterprise of engaging people in the affairs of New York and encouraging them to use the past to inform the future. This focus on where the city is now and where it is going is represented in a bold move in the museum's new core exhibition, which dedicates the largest gallery of the Museum — more than a third of the physical space of the entire core exhibition — to the future: a centre for hands-on learning called the Future City Lab. The Lab and New York at Its Core more broadly are a realisation of the MCNY's decade-long ambition to provide an overview of New York City's history as a way to provide an introduction for all visitors and to offer a foundation for broader and deeper discussions about where the city has been and where it is headed. Under the leadership of eminent architectural historian and urbanist Hilary Ballon, the Lab was conceived as a space in which the public could engage with the work being done by futurists and planners across the city and around the world, and in which they

Future city lab at the City Museum of New York. Photo: Henry 2018

would be encouraged to think of themselves as agents of urban change, much as the historical figures elsewhere in the exhibition were for the city's past.

"This ambitious project required that the museum confront the questions of the contested present in every decision that was made. In doing so, the Future City Lab builds on MCNY's commitment to dealing with highly contentious topics and its embrace of the conflicts that have shaped the city since its inception, all while remaining committed to maintaining its institutional role as a neutral forum for debates around the city's past, present, and future" (Henry 2018, page 64).

So, the museum puts an unusually strong stress on contemporary relevance, especially in being prepared to tackle controversial subjects. A direct engagement with future urban change takes up much of the space of the newly formed museum. Participation is built into both aspects. Not all the aspects come out as strongly, such as the linking to the city via itineraries and other branches, at least in this article quote. But here we are certainly in the presence of "Museum Activism", a movement and debate within the museums world, if with a very uneven presence in different countries and cities — no CMs are present in the chapter writers among a recent compilation.[2]

2. Robert R. Janes & Richard Sandell (eds.), 2019, *Museum Activism*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2019.

Kassel museum. Photo: The Stadtmuseum Kassel

A third example is taken from a more conventional or mainstream CHM. A museum about Kassel's history was promoted by the council and a local society from 1978, and was finally opened by the municipality in 2016. An excerpt from the English language part of the website is here:

The Stadtmuseum Kassel presents the varied history of the city and offers a forum for discussing the past, present and future of Kassel. Join us on an exciting journey throughout the more than 1100-year old history of the city and discover Kassel with historical objects and documents, photographs, films and models.

The exhibition

The permanent exhibition is split into three main parts: the residential city, the advancement of civic society in the 19th-century and thirdly, peace and war in the 20th-century.

Starting with the first documented reference to "Chassalla" in 913, the time travel begins. Walk through a village made of models, where the oldest city map of 1547 is brought to life, towards the typical cityscape of the 18th-century. Meet the landgraves, the rulers of the area who shaped everyday life for more than 600 years.

The second area "The advancement of civic society" focusses on the struggle of Kassel's citizens for civil rights and political participation in the 19th-century. Experience constitutional battles, the Prussian annexation and industrialisation, encounter emperors, electors and influential persons in society.

Interiors allow glimpses into the private life of the townspeople; an oversized wall newspaper documents the political events of these days.

The 20th-century is presented in terms of war and peace. Learn about the aftermath of World War I, the Weimar Republic and Kassel's route into National Socialism. The dramatic midpoint is a model of the bombed city of May 1945.

Afterwards, you pass through the hard years of reconstruction towards the colourful 1950s and '60s. The exhibition ends with the Fall of the Wall in 1989 and German unification in 1990, transforming Kassel from a town near the border to the German Democratic Republic to a city in the middle of Germany.

In addition to the permanent exhibition, the Stadtmuseum Kassel presents particular aspects of Kassel's past and present in special exhibitions.

This text implies a straightforward city history museum approach. A visit to the museum in 2018 confirmed this impression, of a lively and contemporary presentation of selected features of the city history, up to the 1990s. Special exhibitions have also treated varied themes from relatively recent history. There is emphasis on links with schools as well as a strong programme of local itineraries. We can see some elements of the city museum package therefore, but with the primary emphasis on the long city history, not on the present or future, and with little reference, at least in how the museum presents itself, to participatory approaches or interaction as central to its operation, although the Friends group carries on the central role of the society (Verein) in pressing forward the museum project.[3]

The survey described in chapter 2 suggests that more city museums are nearer the Kassel type of museum than to New York or Rotterdam. As I have implied, it is not possible to place these on a tidy spectrum of types. But there are a good number of city museums which, in about the last 20 years, have moved to a more vigorous engagement with contemporary and future urban dimensions, and, often associated with this, to stress participatory and interactive approaches. The next section describes some factors which have been involved in this move.

Factors driving and enabling change in city museums — Ideologies

Schematically, we can look at three blocks of factors which have been affecting changes in museum practices — ideologies, institutions and policies. As always, these are very much intertwined, but separate discussion may help to reveal what is happening. Infrastructures could have come in the same sweep, but I treat these separately afterwards.

3. It may be noted that several essays in a booklet produced at the time of the opening were arguing for a rather more present- and future-looking approach, engaging with the strong migrant background of Kassel citizens as one example: Freunde des Stadtmuseums Kassel e.V. editor, 2016, Das Stadtmuseum Kassel, Kassel: Bands Siebenhaar Verlag.

Ideologies are more or less coherent systems of ideas, which have a core role in steering political change, as well as societal change even more widely. Here, ideologies are thought of in a neutral and descriptive way, as packages of concepts and values.[4] In this usage, there is nothing wrong with saying practices are steered in part by ideologies — "ideological" is not an insult word.

Michael Freeden stresses ideologies' engagement with histories: "ideologies also order social and historical time. Historical time... is a selective and patterned listing of events... that are woven together to form an ideological narrative".[5] Accordingly, I would argue that ideologies have a fast track into city museum concerns. Such museums have been centrally affected by ideological positions over their entire histories. The classic phase of museum foundation fits in with the flowering of bourgeois power in European cities, powered normally by Enlightenment ideas from the late 18th-century onwards. The shifts from this broadly liberal ideology to other emphases were very evident in the 20th-century periods of fascism, communism and social democracy. Nationalism has often combined with all of these ideological currents and is resurgent in the present period in some countries. This may be countered by internationalism, including Europeanism, and varied multicultural or anti-racist ideological elements. Other insurgent ideologies since the 1970s, especially feminism and environmentalism, have been blended with some of these core ideologies, most commonly with liberal and social democratic mixes. Urban social movements have often been the key forces carrying these ideologies through civil society and into municipal power or influence.

Generally each of these sets of ideas has been layered on top of the earlier practices and museum infrastructures, to generate relatively gradual change. A process of "Nazification" in the 1930s, or "decolonising" in the present period, will only change some functioning of a museum, maybe headlines, maybe details. It was noticeable after 1989 how easy it sometimes was to remove most signs of the Communist museum practices in Central and Eastern Europe, because these were only tacked over the narratives created already before the Second World War. This was sometimes made easier by the incorporation of nationalism into communist or socialist narratives (in Poland and Romania for example). However, this did not alter the scale of the change needed to reform narratives and gradually bring accounts into synchrony with current historical understandings — naturally based on ideological positions in each country. One core ideology not so far mentioned, conservatism, has been in the midst of many city history museum narratives, presenting changes as to some degree

4. Michael Freeden, *Ideology*, Oxford, OUP, 2003.

5. Freeden, *Ideology*, p. 42.

natural, not threatening to the normal social order. It is often when these unspoken assumptions are challenged that these museum practices get "political", challenged by one or several of the other ideological currents.

It can be argued that the emergence of city museums since the 1990s has been, in part, connected to the force of these other currents in many cities. Conventional ways of presenting history have been challenged by new idea sets which have been responding to the changes in societies since the 1970s. Each country and each city has been impacted by these idea sets very variably. At the same time, each situation has encountered a distinct heritage of museum practice, offering varied handholds for change or, alternatively, simply continuity. This was visible in the survey of different national practices in the last chapter.

Overall, it is the presence of these challenging ideas which drives the wish to be more present- and future-oriented. If "Black Lives Matter" or "Me-Too" feminism, or "climate crisis" movements are strongly in play, this can affect city museum practice, and must press for engagement with the present. The same must surely happen with other ideological positions, although I have not encountered clear impacts on museums of the management of cities by strongly right-wing political parties. This may be partly related to the somewhat chameleon, "populist" nature of some such parties, which up to the present represent the radical right rather than extreme right (the latter directly against democracy), according to the distinction made by Cas Mudde.[6]

If the role of such ideological forces in generating the emergence of city museums has been correctly identified, this naturally imposes tensions on practice. If contemporary museums are museums of ideas as much as, or more, than museums of objects, this needs to be negotiated. Arguably, the tensions have always been present, but conservative inherited practices have tended to hide them. Many museums may continue to embrace such inherited practices, possibly as a safe way of continuing management of the tensions.

Factors driving and enabling change in city museums — Institutions

Ideas need institutional carriers, which need to respond to actors' understandings of their interests. These actors and institutions formulate policies. Several institutions are involved in the museums world, although for city museums just one, the municipality, is the dominant actor.[7] This has not been so throughout

6. Cas Mudde, *The Far Right Today*, Cambridge, Polity, 2019.

7. I have not found useful recent data specific to CM ownership and management, though for the wider museum world, see Xavier Greffe & Anne Krebs, "The Relationship between Museums and Municipalities in Europe" (2010), and Kenson Kwok & Alberto Garlandini, "New Trends in Ownerships, Partnerships and Governance", ICOM, 2019.

the history of such museums, with local societies often having been leaders in forming such museums in the early periods. However, quite early on, municipalities have generally taken over these more private collections and bodies. There are a few interesting exceptions, the Bologna savings bank network of museums being one, and some very small private or society museums such as those in Dublin and Toulouse being others.

Municipal museums have not acted in a vacuum, with the role of national governments often being critical. The Napoleonic designation of a network of regional or urban museums for France was the extreme example of such steering from above. But in Communist countries, from the 1940s to 1989, many city museums were run by national governments, and in some cases this continues, for example in the package of Polish museums run by the Ministry of Cultural and National Heritage, in Poznan, Szczecin and Wroclaw. The Museum of Liverpool represents an eccentric case in England, the result of a takeover by the UK government of all Liverpool museums during a period of crisis in the 1980s — which has ensured ever since very much more funding than received by any other provincial city in Britain. Another unusual case is in Zurich, where the national museum now houses a city museum element, managed in conjunction with the city council. Much funding still often depends on being part of a recognised label of nationally significant museums, even where, as in France, the city museums are municipally run.

All of these cases reveal core aspects of the evolution of the state forms across Europe, their crises and ruptures and continuities. Constitutional forms matter (federalism, unitary states with varying degrees of devolution), but so do the practices growing up within these forms. Even within the vast majority of states which have constitutions, there is room for much development and interpretation. France and Germany differ fundamentally on the federal / unitary axis, but the French practice of politicians holding posts at several levels — the city mayor who is a minister and deputy for example — introduces a diagonal politics which may sometimes be not so different in practice from that of federal Germany. England within the UK, on the other hand, is intensely centralised, and the scope for any subnational bodies to innovate or diverge from central guidelines is typically limited.

Equally, municipal museums do not act only within national polities. One important element which would benefit from study is the international municipalism movement, which flourished from the late 19th to late 20th-century.[8] This must have allowed international learning and transfer then, just as

8. Shane Ewen & Michael Hebbert, "European cities in a networked world in the long twentieth century", *Environment and Planning C,* 25, 2007, p. 327-340. Pierr-Yves Saunier, "Taking up the bet on connections: a municipal contribution", *Contemporary European History*, 11, 2002, p. 507-528.

CAMOC and, on a smaller scale, the Barcelona Network, promote now. Such international transfer of ideas and practices has been much studied in urban planning and urban policy, revealing its importance, though variably across themes and periods.[9] This transfer will have been partially fuelled by EU funding and networking over the last half-century, for many European countries. Such learning could affect a multitude of practices, including how to present exhibits, how to organise institutionally, how to manage outsourcing, how to deal with storage or conservation or how curators deal with politicians.

There has been recent discussion of a "New Municipalism",[10] particularly when Barcelona hosted a Fearless Cities network gathering in 2017, and with English councils trying to promote foundational economy ideas (see below). Thompson suggested this was a nascent global social movement. Whilst there is (at least so far) no close link between CMs and this incipient movement, there has been some energy behind the idea that, in the midst of dramatic local and global challenges, the city and its municipal government may have some chance of providing a pole to press progressive solutions.[11]

Within municipal control, different management models have evolved in different countries in different periods. Since the 1980s, the dominance of neoliberal politics has stimulated the transfer of museums to relatively independent foundations or trusts: this has occurred widely in Austria, in Germany (in Berlin, Hamburg), and in some UK cities (Birmingham, Glasgow, Sheffield), although overall control of the municipality remains in virtually all cases — ownership of buildings and collections is municipal, and often policy on key matters such as entry charges is reserved to the city council. This may well be a move which appeals to museum directors, who are likely to gain more autonomy in management and financial decisions. But the actual results may depend just as much on the quality of political leadership and museum professionals, in making the relationships work. Presumably municipal leaders still need to see the city museums as, to some degree "their museums", if they are going to continue to be their main funders.

There are "traditional" models which still give every appearance of working well, for example the situation in Copenhagen taken from the museum website in 2020, the City Council being the body which planned and

9. Stephen V. Ward, "Re-examining the international diffusion of planning", in Robert Freestone (ed.), *Urban Planning in a Changing World*, London, Spon, 2000, p. 40-60. Kevin Ward, "Entrepreneurial urbanism, policy tourism, and the making mobile of policies". In Gary Bridge & Sophie Watson (eds.), *The New Blackwell Companion to the City*, Chichester, Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, p. 726-737.

10. Matt Thompson, 2020, "What's so new about New Municipalism?", *Progress in Human Geography*, p. 1-26.

11. Benjamin Barber, *If Mayors ruled the World*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2014. Goran Therborn, *Cities of Power*, London, Verso, 2017.

implemented the move to the new museum opening in 2020, even helpfully showing the parties of the councillors:

> "The Museum of Copenhagen is owned and run by Copenhagen's City Council. The museum's board of management consists of the City Council's Culture and Leisure Committee. The Mayor of Culture and Leisure is the chairman of the board. At present (2014-2017) the museum board consists of the following: Borgmester Carl Christian Ebbesen (O) (chairman) Simon Strange (A) Yildiz Akdogan (A) Rune Dybvad (A) Rikke Lauritsen (Ø) Allan Ahmad (Ø) Andreas Pourkamali (B) Michael Gatten (V) Jens Kristian Lütken (V) Peter Thiele (F) Lillian Parker Kaule (I). While Copenhagen City Council is the museum's main subsidy provider, it also receives state-subsidy from The Heritage Agency of Denmark on an annual basis".

One element of this strong linking to the municipality is, no doubt, the Scandinavian custom of giving the museum further responsibilities over heritage, also from the 2020 website:

> "Bearing the preservation of this distinctive cultural environment in mind, the Museum of Copenhagen is responsible for advising on matters concerning the preservation of the city's buildings. Furthermore, the museum is also responsible for photographing condemned buildings before they are demolished, with a view to documenting the city's ongoing history and development.
> The Museum of Copenhagen is responsible for archaeology in Copenhagen and Frederiksberg municipalities. The museum is present at hearings concerning local planning and municipal planning. Here the museum assesses the current development in the municipalities and assesses the possibility that ancient monuments will be affected."

These institututional factors relate to the evolution of forms of museums in each city and country. In some countries it is common for "general museums" to continue to be the norm, combining art and local history and often natural history. Cases in England include Birmingham, Leeds, Nottingham and Sheffield, whilst Basel and Bern illustrate the same phenomenon in Switzerland. England also has cases where the city history element has been separated out from the general museum, as in Bristol. Italy represents a whole country where local museums remain general museums, normally with art and various local collections combining together with a sort of treasure-trove character.

Factors driving and enabling change in city museums — Policies

When we come to policy, the relationship to other public policies is not something that has been greatly studied, as far as I am aware. There are several policy areas which link closely, potentially, to city museums. This linking is especially

of potential significance for the contemporary variety of city museum. If one imagines a "classic" city history museum, we may see the relevance of, say, educational or leisure policy, but wider issues of economy or health, or even other fields of culture, might be seen as definitely in separate — if not remote — boxes. But the city museum's wish to engage more with its physical city, its inhabitants and its future immediately shows the potentially very close implication with policy areas which have been at the core of urban debates of the last 30 or 40 years — urban policy, cultural policy, local economic development policy.

Put simply, the drive for CMs may be seen as due to the emergence of "new urban economies" and "new urban politics" since the 1980s and 1990s.[12] The issue, then, is what form these take, and which has the upper hand in relation to CMs. I am arguing here that, in effect, for CMs, politics has taken the leading role, although economic change has clearly mattered a great deal at certain times and in certain places.

Urban policy has taken many forms in different periods and countries, sometimes more socially oriented, and since the 1980s tending to be dominated by economic drives. This was first fully described by David Harvey in his theorising of "urban entrepreneurialism" in 1989,[13] and the inter-city competition which this represents has affected the majority of practices by city governments and elites since that period. That competition has co-existed with certain kinds of collaboration, often EU supported, such as the Eurocities network set up by six "second cities" (Barcelona, Birmingham, Frankfurt, Lyon, Milan and Rotterdam) in 1986, and since massively expanded, with other similar networks emerging later.[14]

Cultural policy has been closely associated with this city boosterism, with the argument that improving the "cultural offer" will provide an alternative economic sector, replacing lost industrial or other struggling sectors. However, cultural policy also emerged, to some extent, independently with a strong political and ideological colouring, with roots in Eurocommunist practice in Italy or in municipal socialist movements in Britain and elsewhere. This blended into promotion of cultural policy as a mixed economic and social instrument for municipal action, marked by consultancies like Comedia,[15] and an extensive

12. Donald McNeill & Aidan While, "The new urban economies". *Handbook of Urban Studies*, Thousand Oaks, Sage, 2000, p. 296-307.

13. David Harvey, "From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: The transformation in urban governance in late capitalism". Geografiska Annaler. Series B. *Human Geography* 71, 1989, p. 3-17. For a recent commentary: John Lauermann, "Municipal statecraft: Revisiting the geographies of the entrepreneurial city", *Progress in Human Geography*, 42, 2, 2018, p. 205-224.

14. http://www.eurocities.eu/eurocities/home.

15. Charles Landry, *The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators*, London, Earthscan, 2000.

academic literature. There have been doubts in the latter about whether the investment effort involved results in real gains, especially compared with other possible strategies,[16] but this has probably affected practice relatively little.

Beatriz Garcia surveyed the use of cultural initiatives in regeneration in 2004, being very aware of the convergence between cultural and economic discourses in European approaches to urban cultural policy (her specialism being tracking the experience of European Cultural Capitals). She notes:

> "a key realisation during the last decades of the 20th-century was that, although cities have always had cultural functions, the evolution of a global, service-oriented economy has placed culture at the very centre of urban development, and Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration has shifted traditional notions of culture as art and heritage to a view of culture as an economic asset, a commodity with market value and, as such, a valuable producer of marketable city spaces".[17]

However, Garcia's article supported Franco Bianchini's argument in favour of "cultural planning",[18] as against either the traditional aesthetically oriented idea of culture, or cultural-policy-led regeneration, with its economic instrumentalism. Culture was to be viewed widely, linked to the urban majority, society in its broadest form. This fits, I think, more with the home zone of CMs, as against the economy- and tourism-led discourses of much cultural policy thinking.

Museums in general have, of course, not been immune to the influences of these sectors of public policy. It can be argued that those most affected have been the largest museums and galleries with the highest national and international profiles — the existing big institutions such as the Louvre, Prado, or Rijksmuseum, the new projects such as Tate Modern or the Bilbao Guggenheim and their many imitators. There has been an avalanche of — generally national — government investment in these museums since the 1990s, so that these cultural mega-institutions are now seen as a core part of the European tourism industry. In one sense, economists may see this as simply one part of the ever-continuing terciarisation of urban economies for more than 50 years, carried in part by recurrent and intense crises of global capitalism, approximately every decade since then.

16. Jane Bryan, Max Munday & Richard Bevins, "Developing a framework for assessing the socioeconomic impacts of museums: The regional value of the 'flexible museum'", *Urban Studies*, 49, 1, 2010, p. 133-151.

17. Beatriz Garcia, "Cultural policy and urban regeneration in Western European cities: Lessons from experience, lessons for the future", *Local Economy*, 19, 4, 2004, p. 312-326.

18. Franco Bianchini, "Cultural planning for urban sustainability", in Louise Nyström & Colin Fudge (eds.), *Culture and Cities. Cultural Processes and Urban Sustainability*, Stockholm, Swedish Urban Development Council, 1999, p. 34-51.

It would be naïve to imagine that these big museums are being thought of as only matters of local pride or of autonomous artistic value. The work of Pierre Bourdieu long ago analysed these more autonomous aspects, in terms of class and social distinction, so there is a valuable language for expressing the cachet that having such cultural capital will give to a city, as much as to an individual.[19] But this has, certainly since the 1990s, been tied in with city self-promotion, especially for cities which do not have the inherited cultural wealth of capital cities. It is especially those places with the most unsteady economic bases, now spread across every European country, which may seek to promote cultural investment — Liverpool, Newcastle, Duisburg, Dresden, St Etienne, Lille, Lodz and Bilbao are examples.

City (history) museums may be somewhat different from these cultural flagships. They are less powerfully significant as international or national magnets for tourism or as generators of spin-off business impacts. Most city museums are relatively small (we consider partial exceptions to that statement below), and so they are more likely to simply slot into the museum and wider cultural urban ecosystem rather than be especially significant parts of that ecosystem. Their most important users are, in most cases, likely to be local schoolchildren and students, and local citizens curious about their home city. This does not exclude the importance of tourists from far away in some higher-profile museums. But, overall, I would suggest that this placing means that the relationship to urban, economic and cultural policies as they have developed since the 1990s is different from that of the big cultural players (art museums above all, but also operas, concert halls and festival institutions).

As implied, some caveats are required. There are certain cities whose location and profile gives their city museums more prominence within the cultural ecosystem. Examples would be cities with not just an impressive centrally located city museum, but a back-up of many branch museums which tourists may well be attracted to, because of the link to the big central museum. Examples may be Hamburg and Kraków, perhaps Vienna and Barcelona. There are several reasons why these may have a higher profile than the norm. One is that there may be not so many famous museums and galleries to fill the ecosystem space — meaning the city museum can occupy more of that space: I feel this may be the case in both Hamburg and Kraków, even though these do have very important art museums too. Another reason is that city museums often have a critical relationship physically to their cities. I will deal with this further in the section below, but it relates especially to the formation of centre city heritages.

19. Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, London, Routledge, 1984.

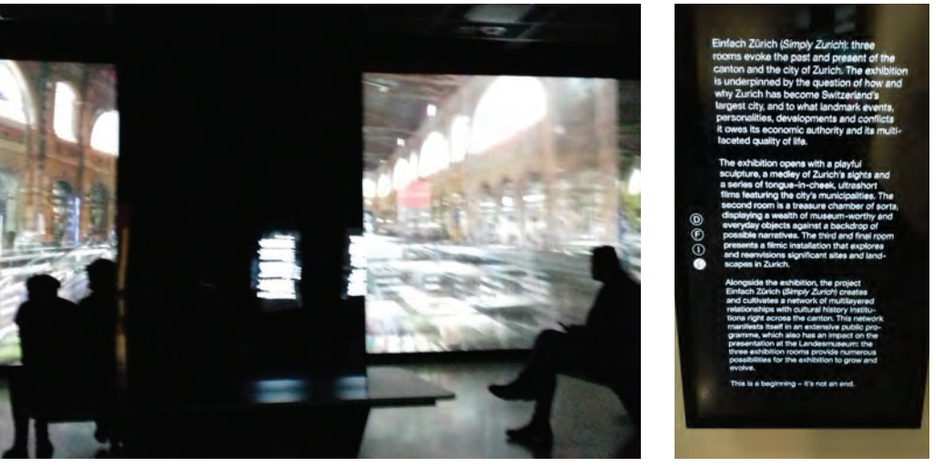
Another aspect of this is where cities have general museums, where the CM has not become a separate entity, so that the CM/CHM can, in a sense, "piggy back" on a renowned art museum. There are examples of this in England, as mentioned above, and the city museum element may also be incorporated into a national history (Zurich) or regional history museum (Bordeaux), so gaining from the critical mass of that museum in the local ecosystem. There could still be disadvantages to such incorporation, meaning that the CM part cannot really do the job that a CM would want to do, not having the elbow room in managerial or visibility terms.

I do not wish to overplay this argument of CMs' autonomy from city boosterist drives, as I still think boosterism in some sense has a significant part in explaining the big investments in CMs in many cities since around 2000. I will come back to this in the section on physical transformation. There is at least, I think, some element of contagion effect: if art museums get money, CMs should too. This has some similarities to the emulation effect that can work between cities which see themselves as rivals. A quote from the mayor of Paris is an example:

> "Le musée Carnavalet met en lumière le passé de Paris et dévoile son identité diverse. Sa restauration constitue un projet prioritaire pour la Ville de Paris, à l'heure où Londres, Amsterdam ou New York possèdent déjà des musées d'Histoire dignes de leur importance. Notre ambition est double: faire de Carnavalet, d'ici à 2020, un lieu de visite récurrente pour les Parisiens, et une étape incontournable pour les visiteurs français et étrangers se rendant à Paris", Anne Hidalgo, Maire de Paris.[20]

There are several potential implications of this different relationship to the leading policies of city governments and city elites (which are often the same thing — a long diversion on contemporary city democracy and party systems would be needed to explain this). Firstly, it may be simply that CMs are seen to matter less to the city government, and are given small budgets, both for capital programmes and revenue. At the extreme (in some countries by no means uncommon), this can translate to there being no CM, or the existing CM being closed in a funding crisis, as has been happening in the UK since 2010. An interesting case is Manchester, which one might expect to have a thriving city museum. However the nearest thing to one is the Museum of Science and Industry (MSI), which amid the funding crises hitting the council in 2011, were transferred to national government within the Science Museum grouping. This guaranteed its future, but meant that the council lost control of this major

20. https://www.carnavalet.paris.fr/fr/expositions/en-cours.



Einfach (Simply) Zurich at the Swiss National Museum, text and projection rooms. Photo: Tim Marshall

museum. The MSI may be a kind of partial substitute CM, because there is a strong tendency in Manchester to interpret the city's history in economic and technological terms, which the MSI does impressively, offering a restricted but strong narrative about the first industrial global city and its core infrastructure.[21]

An unfortunate current English case is the expansion town of Swindon, where the council has long been pressing for a major city museum investment as part of the regeneration of its central area, to replace an extremely small museum in the old village centre well away from the present core. A bid for Heritage Lottery funding failed in 2018, though a new director charged with the project had been appointed. In 2020, councillors from the leading parties were arguing whether the £5 million that had been set aside for the project should instead be spent on an extra lane for the M4 motorway (Conservatives) or to improve air quality within the city (Labour). It looks like neither the economic case (tourism promotion) nor the local citizen identification and education case had gained enough political traction, within the desperate financial situation of English local councils.[22]

However, secondly, the fact that the boosterism card can be played to less effect does not mean that other cards cannot be played to strong effect: CMs are,

21. See *Museum of Science and Industry, Souvenir Guide*, London, Carlton Books, for SCMG Enterprises (not dated), and https://www.scienceandindustrymuseum.org.uk/objects-and-stories.

22. BBC News, 18 February 2020. It can be added in July 2022 that a scheme to convert an existing civic building into a museum is now under consideration.

par excellence, citizen museums, education museums and local identity museums. Probably, on all these fronts, CMs do better than prestigious art museums. This means that museum directors and political supporters will become skilled at seeking support from those managing schools (or to a lesser extent universities), as well as with those managing the "internal branding" of the city, linked to local media. For example, those organising the Barcelona Olympics were very aware of the need to keep the citizens on their side: they had to convince the electorate of the value of the investments and disruption.[23] In a less dramatic way, this is a perennial task of city governments, looking for any way of bolstering political support. So the work of CMs will connect especially to this role, of politicians promoting the identity of the city and the meaning of shared projects. CMs can be well suited to this, although much depends much on local political circumstances.

This is essentially the central message of a recent ICOM/OECD report.[24] Its headline themes are economic development, regeneration and community development, cultural development and education, and inclusion, health and well-being. In other words, the report makes abundantly clear the multiple role played by museums, which should not be focused only on economic impact. The report makes a clear case for the importance of local government and museums working together for the mutual benefit of their citizens.

Coming back, then, to the world of urban policymaking and of cultural policy, for CMs to fit into these discourses in the last 10 years or more, we have to conceive of such policy in a broad sense, not in the sense of purer economic boosterism. The turn in academic discussion since the 2008 economic crisis, and perhaps even more with the 2020 pandemic crisis, has been to the importance of the "foundational economy".[25] This means that city governments, and also wider governments who often manage health, education and social support systems, need to consider (remember) the centrality of local support and provisioning systems — schooling, feeding, creating healthy places and fostering community solidarity. This does not mean that "base industries" (manufacturing, tourism, etc.) do not matter, but they matter alongside foundational sectors. This then makes "urban policy" a different phenomenon from how it was often seen in the period between 1980 to 2010. And such a reconceptualisation of urban policy leads straight into

23. *Pla Estrategic 1992 Avaluacio de la Ciutat*, Document 14, Pla Estrategic, November 1992, and see Tim Marshall, "Barcelona fast forward? City entrepreneurialism in the 1980s and 1990s", *European Planning Studies*, 1996, Vol. 4, No. 2.

24. OECD/ICOM, *Culture and Local Development: Maximising the Impact. Guide for local governments, communities and museums*, Paris, OECD/ICOM, 2019. file:///C:/Users/tcm2/Documents/ecmcultureandeconomicdevelopment.pdf.

25. Foundational Economy Collective, *Foundational Economy: The Infrastructure of Everyday Life*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2018.

the reconceptualisation of the roles of CMs in recent years. It does not ignore the hard economic realities of urban survival, but it can be seen as meaning that CMs matter just as much as the major hotspots of the cultural scene that attract big tourist numbers. In a sense, CMs are parts of the foundational economy. City government interests, citizenry interests and CMs can come into alignment.

Infrastructure, buildings and resources

Beyond ideologies, institutions and policies, a further dimension of the force field affecting CM evolution relates to infrastructure, in the widest sense. This is a complex area, and could benefit from a whole chapter on its own. Here the emphasis is placed on buildings and the spatial insertion of these museum bases, resourcing (especially of people), and a nod to digital infrastructure (which will be covered elsewhere in this book).

The raw material of CMs is partly constituted by the physical presence of the past in cities, including ruins, the archaeological underground, shadows of previous urban layouts, the whole shape of city regions, rivers, and sometimes the sea. The placement of museums within the urban fabric, often within old buildings, affects the nature of each CM and equally any branch museums — famous people's houses, industrial sites, religious sites and military sites. The central museum is often in the urban core and incorporates ancient remains, as in London, Frankfurt and Barcelona, amongst many. A great many CMs are housed in a historic building, from the medieval period onwards. The tie-in to heritage and links to heritage itineraries is almost guaranteed. These are powerful attraction factors, not so easily shared by entirely new buildings, but the latter are far less common in CMs, compared with art museums, for example.

Buildings have often experienced extraordinary roller-coasters rides of destruction and renovation, especially around the Second World War in central Europe. Most German and Polish museums have suffered these fates, meaning that renaissance in the decades after 1945 was the norm. Elsewhere, continuity has been more common. Collections suffered less destruction, giving some continuity in these cases.

By the 1990s, several challenges could be seen to confront CM core buildings, although variably in different parts of Europe. In ex-Communist countries, there was a need to change narratives as well as, in some cases, to undertake complete updating with major investment. Everywhere else, the impact of the wider museums boom affected CMs too, so that they began to look outdated. The arrival in the early 2000s of digitisation profoundly affected CMs' practices, again inciting them to undertake major renovation projects, not just the more normal updating of permanent exhibitions. In some cases, this meant replacing or transforming an already renewed museum from the 1960s or 1970s (Frankfurt, London, Vienna), but more commonly it meant working to enlarge and transform

an older building, typically from the late 19th or early-20th century (Berlin, Hamburg, Bordeaux), quite often with an earlier part (Paris, Amsterdam, Lyon, Munich). In contrast to contemporary art museums, only occasionally was a completely new building created, as in Marseille (1983/2013), Antwerp (2010) or, as in Valencia, a radically new start made (2003, a 19th-century water reservoir was turned into the CM). Rotterdam Museum was in part of a new building, though one not created specifically for it — somewhat of a stopgap demonstrating political uncertainties about the museum's future. Sometimes there has been more of a regeneration flavour to choices of buildings, as in the Duisburg use of an early-20th century flour mill in the heart of the river port area of the city.

The existence and nature of the existing stock was critical to these projects, often inspiring high quality architecture, if in part limiting what could be possible. The much more extensive presence of standing ruins in some cities, especially in Mediterranean countries, affected demands for investment as well as options.

I do not aim to enter the wide zone of architecture and museums, although there has been interesting analysis of the role of the modern architectural industry in promoting new approaches to museums.[26] The majority of references in this literature are to art museums. CMs are perhaps, by their natures and budgets, less likely to be swept into the global "starchitecture" circuit, and the few recent new-build CMs have been tending towards relatively modest self-presentation. Antwerp's MAS is characteristically a bit more assertive, coming from the homeland of Flanders / Netherlands architectural energy.

The fact that this CM drive took place within an era of widespread investment in urban regeneration made a big difference in most cities. A very large element of planning and urban intervention since the 1980s has materialised as physical improvement schemes to buildings, streets and open spaces, although in different forms in each country and region of Europe. The primary aim was to preserve, not demolish, something clearly coherent with a museum ethos. Museums which are in these regeneration zones, which means most CMs, will benefit from this proximity effect. It is possible to think of cases where museums are in suburban locations (Bremen, Oslo, Sheffield), but these are the exception and, in one case, Copenhagen, the museum moved back to the central city in 2020, having been in an edge-of-city location for over 40 years. The strong trend of living in fashionable inner city areas affects CMs to some degree. This has been linked to gentrification processes in many cities, but whether these are seen as positive or negative, it is possible that they have brought a new clientele

26. Susan MacLeod, *Museum Architecture*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2013. Paul Jones, *The Sociology of Architecture*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2013. Gail Lord & Ngaire Blankenberg, *Cities, Museums and Soft Power*, Washington DC, AAM Press, 2013.

Valencia City Museum tableau. Photo: Tim Marshall

of museum users close to many CMs. This physical tying of CMs to their cities is significant, unlike the dynamics that can affect art museums, which can set up franchises or branches around a country or even around the world. CMs are, by their nature, local, parts of the "most urban" morphology, so it is essential to view carefully how and where they are physically tied.

The immediate surroundings of CMs can matter. Marseille City Museum is entered via a modern shopping centre, giving a very particular experience of accessing this very large and recently extended CM. Amsterdam Museum has a street running through it. Far more normally, the typical location will be near a central square or public space, which will have been subject to major investment in recent decades: Barcelona, Frankfurt, Helsinki, Leeds, Liverpool, Vienna, and Zurich. Harbour locations can be found in a few cases, again giving a very special character: Antwerp, Bristol, Hamburg for the soon-to-be-greatly-transformed port museum. Berlin aspires to connect its main CM across the river to the core of the historic city, as a contrast to its current sense of being somewhat in a backwater. As chapter 7 shows, its director sees this specific feature of its location as problematic. Köln proposes to move its CM temporarily to part of a shopping centre, whilst a new headquarters is constructed. As the Copenhagen website said about its move to the city centre: "The new address offers a new and central location, more visibility and easier access. The new location close to other museums and cultural institutions will bring about new opportunities for co-creation and cooperation".

Implicitly, this connects to the interest shown, in regeneration and cultural planning fields, in the development of "cultural zones". The move to designate parts of existing central areas as zones seems to have begun in the 1980s. Birmingham was a well known case where following the Highbury meeting of 1987, the large area within the Middle Ring Road was given names, some being established (Jewellery Quarter, Gun Quarter), some being invented (Irish Quarter, Eastside and so on). Other British provincial cities followed suit, with a special stress in cases like Manchester and Sheffield on the creative industries in these quarters or zones. This became effectively a planning and regeneration instrument, for funding, marketing and labelling purposes. The practice has affected CMs to some degree. There may be an aspiration to cluster museums, with apparently related attractions (as in Copenhagen). Chapter 11 shows how the Museum of London new project is now seen as sitting within the Culture Mile on the western edge of the City. Manchester's Museum of Science and Industry's plans reveal the same thinking:

> "The museum is adjacent to a £1 billion redevelopment area on the former site of Granada Studios. Work on the area, which will be known as St John's Quarter, is expected to be completed by 2022. The Manchester International Festival's new Factory venue is set to open alongside the MSI at the end of 2019 as part of the redevelopment."[27]

There is even a Global Cultural District Network, run by AEA Consulting, a creative industries consultancy active since 1991, with offices in New York and London:

> "An initiative of AEA Consulting, the Global Cultural Districts Network is a membership-based network that fosters cooperation and knowledge-sharing among those responsible for planning and running districts and clusters that include a significant cultural element. Founded in 2013, GCDN provides a context for cultural leaders to discuss emerging best practice across a range of issues related to the successful creation and management of cultural districts and cultural planning around the world".

An annual Cultural Infrastructure Index is published by the GCDN, showing global cultural investments — one resource which might be used to try to track city museum investment, for projects over US$10 million.[28]

This "quartering" may play more into the visitor numbers game which, I have argued, CMs are often not so fully involved in. But I think it is important

27. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Science_and_Industry_Museum.
28. https://aeaconsulting.com/insights/aea_consulting_releases_the_2018_cultural_infrastructure_index.

Manchester Science and Industry Museum entrance. Photo: Manchester Science and Industry Museum

for demonstrating links to regeneration discourses, and the inevitable pressure of entrepreneurialist thinking. It does also relate to real spatial issues within big city central areas, where one location has different implications from another, even if the difference may be a matter of a couple of hundred metres, or five-minutes walk. It is well known, in new shopping centre design, that pedestrian routes and siting near key attractions (or the car park) are key factors affecting rents and unit take-up. Micro-location matters, if to a definitely lesser degree, for CMs.

Infrastructure can be extended to resourcing more widely. Ideally it would be good to provide data on the financial natures of CMs (evolution of budgets over time), but the surely large effort to secure even partial coverage for this has not been made. A study of one country gave some clues.[29] Greffe et al were looking at all museums in France, their numbers fluctuating around 1000 from 2001 to 2013, on the definition selected, but with a significant decline in

29. Xavier Greffe, Anne Krebs & Sylvie Pflieger, "The future of the museum in the 21st-century: recent clues from France", *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 32, 4, (2017), p. 319-334.

staffing by 2013. They found that 80% of French museums were municipal, depending on subsidies from their councils. They saw a "canonical model" of a balance of subsidies, patronage and income from activities being challenged by new formulas. Three discussed were the branding museum, only available to a very select group (Versailles as a prime case), the event-driven museum, again available to big art museums, but not many more, and the empowering local community museum. None were seen to fit many museums, implying that the alternatives to the canonical model were seen as limited. But the headline result of the challenge of declining resources was clear enough.

The resourcing issue must have a role in explaining why museum projects often have long drawn-out planning and implementation periods. This is a field where a decade would mean fast work, from starting to discuss a big project to opening the museum. Two decades would surely be nearer the norm, though I have not tried to pin down an average or median. There may be plenty of good reasons for this — allowing maximum public debate, ensuring the project really works, fitting in with regeneration or other public programmes. Other delay factors may be more mundane — a dynamic director arriving or leaving, some political party change or an economic crisis temporarily or permanently torpedoing a project.

The core of resourcing is, of course, the people managing museums. Curators stress the importance of the professionalisation of museum training and education in the last half century or more, so that specialisms like conservation and curating exhibitions now have highly skilled staff. Directors may move from one city to another (Laurent Vedrine from Marseille to Bordeaux) or even to other countries (Jette Sandahl, Gothenburg to Copenhagen, Marie-Paul Jungblut, Luxembourg to Basel, Paul Spies, Amsterdam to Berlin). This mirrors recruitment processes in the wider museum world, though it may be limited significantly by the local nature of CMs. Chapter 12 stresses the value of links with the world of research, including links with local universities, and with City Archives, which may be institutionally close to CMs. These should be museum infrastructures, as much as buildings.

Digital infrastructure has become ever more critical since around 2000, with the 2020 pandemic raising its profile even further. Some museums have allied with the tech mega-corporations to further digitisation, as for example in the link of Tallinn with Google: "Tallinn City Museum is the first museum in Estonia to launch a virtual exhibition on Google Arts & Culture, making the museum and its exhibits accessible from all around the world" (museum website). Whilst such direct links may be the exception, it remains to be seen how the economic and cultural dimensions of digitisation play out, whether this will support a wide ecosystem of local digital suppliers, or whether giant companies will be interested in footholds in this field. At least until 2020, it can be argued that digitisation has worked as a handmaiden to the physical museum (only one

purely digital CM is known: Turin), and this book is premised on the assumption that this will continue. Time will tell.

Planning, futures, scale and imaginaries

Futures

The final part of this chapter looks at just two issues which relate to how CMs deal with the future — the scales at which CMs operate, and possible links to city planning thinking and action. I noted the increasing tendency for CMs to engage with current and often controversial issues, and also to mount exhibitions about urban futures. As a planner involved in practice and academic planning education, I am especially interested in this dimension of practice evident in a good number of CMs. We saw this in the Rotterdam and New York cases, and we can mention some other examples.

- Lisbon Museum (see Chapter 10) put on a temporary exhibition in 2018 on Urban Futures, looking at varied dimensions for the future of the city (ecology, economy, education, ethics, mobility), the exhibition being co-curated by a geographer / urban planner, architect and environmental engineer.
- Chapter 9 describes the way that the Citylab in Frankfurt Museum developed during the five years when the museum was being rebuilt, connecting with city neighbourhoods, and then bringing this focus into the whole of the top floor of the new museum, with a large artist-created model of the city, and a range of opportunities for visitors to interact with ideas about the present and future.
- The Museum of London had a whole year in 2017-2018 on "City Now City Future",[30] covering themes of the sharing city, changing the city and the future city. One element was the temporary exhibition on The City is Ours, this coming from the Cité des sciences et de l'industrie in Paris, adapted and extended. This dealt with global urban change, and used a range of advanced digital approaches to present data and allow visitor interaction. One focus was on urban densities and urban forms, especially in relation to energy and urban metabolism. This was accompanied by a smaller exhibition about alternative London futures and a wide range of outreach activities about current issues such as urban food growing and provision, and getting around London. "25 ways to fix the city" focused on London initiatives to improve the city.
- Since its remodelled permanent exhibition reopened in 2017, Luxembourg Museum has a Future Outlook section: "a large 1:2,500 scale 3D model as well as a multi-touch table allow visitors to familiarise with present and future questions of urbanism" (museum website).
- The Aquitaine Museum in Bordeaux has, in its galleries opened in 2019, a final part about the "aspirations up to the horizon of 2030".

30. https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/discover/introducing-city-now-city-future-season.

Further examples could surely be found, though my impression is that the aspiration of many city museums to address future issues is not one which is easy to translate into practice. It is clear that the use of temporary exhibitions is one approach being used, this fitting, in the London case, into a long season of linked events and exhibitions. Frankfurt shows greater ambition by allocating a prime and generous space in part to future orientations, but this is not necessarily an easy path either: one question is how to make this space link to the strong and extensive "mainline" areas on the big themes of Frankfurt's history.

There is ample scope to explore varied routes for dealing with futures linking. It is possible that the two above will remain popular options — temporary campaigns, or a permanent presence, linked in to the "core" as well as possible. The third way may be that which I believe is being attempted in Barcelona, which is to manage the whole drive of permanent and temporary exhibitions, branch museum creation, and continuous citizenry involvement (Friends, events, itineraries, collecting and so on) to generate a growing and perennial sense of the connection of the museum as a whole to present and future questions. On this path, there may be little talk of futures explicitly, but the intention is that the perspective on the histories being presented is one that maintains awareness of connections. Part of this may be around the understanding of history as a whole, in that museum direction on these lines may be committed to a politically explicit approach to history, and to a feel for public history, however ambiguous and controversial that term can be.[31] This is not to embrace a shallow politicisation, linked to immediate political programmes, in part because this will leave the museums too exposed to short term political changes in municipalities. But it does need city museum directors to be very much aware of the big challenges and debates which are alive in the "city air", as well as in the wider country as a whole.

Scaling CMs

There are many avenues to addressing this question of CMs and futures. Here, just two dimensions are explored, starting with the scales at which CMs operate. Clearly, city museums are most linked to their own cities. But it is important to think about how they link with questions of scale, that is above and below the level of the city. In a very small country (Luxembourg most obviously) the CM

31. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_history. It is odd that the term has been much less popular in Europe than in North America.

may risk treading on national or all-state history. The same is more common where a city is the capital of a region and there is a regional museum. This seems to occur in France in some regions, where the region has a high profile, as in Britanny where the Musée de Bretagne in Rennes may have squeezed out any city museum. This has not happened in Aquitaine, where there appears to be a sort of coexistence of the region and the city of Bordeaux, in what is certainly a museum of the wider region. In Grenoble's Musée Dauphinois the region appears to be the only focus, with no city history. The enthusiasm for history museums appears to overcome this tendency in Germany, where typically there are museums of both the *Land* and the city, in the state capital (Dusseldorf, Hanover, Munich, now Stuttgart). In Austria, however, the states have well-established museums going back into the Austro-Hungarian empire and there seem to be stronger *Lander* museums and little sign of city museums in several cases (Klagenfurt, Linz, Salzburg), although Graz does have a vigorous city museum. In the Spain of Autonomous Communities since 1980, some regions have probably promoted their own identities (Aragon, Galicia) via museums, at the expense of city museums. But in an energetic case like Catalonia, there has been space for both the Museum of Catalonia and the Barcelona History Museum, as strong institutions, even if with room for some jostling on key issues, given the different political perspectives on Catalan history.

A further scale issue is how the 20th-century generation of extensive metropolitan regions or conurbations has been met by history museums. The answer is generally, hardly at all. The Museum of London does not begin to cover the London within the jurisdiction of the London mayor, let alone the real city with a bigger spread. The Carnavalet in Paris is the same, although this may change a little with the major reform completed in 2021. The next rung down in city size may be a bit more adapted to the real city scale, in Barcelona or Berlin, simply because both had massive municipal extensions between the 1890s and 1920s. But still there, the emphasis is firmly on the city within the jurisdiction of Barcelona municipality or the Berlin Senate, neither equating to the real metropolis. Only perhaps in the Ruhr region is the challenge picked up by a museum directly, due to the very distinct institutional history of this part of Germany, backed by strong continuing supporting factors (EU, federal, state and local funding for regeneration). The way the museum presents itself on the website gives an idea of its unusual aspirations:

> "The Ruhr Museum is located in the former Coal Washery of the Zollverein Coal Mine, Shaft XII in Essen, Germany. It has existed since 01.01.2008 as a dependent foundation within the Zollverein Foundation funded by the Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia, the Rhineland Regional Council (Landschaftsverband Rheinland; LVR) and the city of Essen. As a unique type of regional museum it showcases the entire natural and cultural history of the Ruhr area in its permanent exhibition. It is not a traditional industrial museum, but presents itself as the memory of and a window for the new Ruhr Metropolis".[32]

So, in general, city museums are just that, museums which stop at the city boundary. This limitation is shared with much of the rest of urban and regional governance, which has been unable, in many cases, to create governing mechanisms for the real spaces in which people make their lives. The Wider South East is regarded by most planning experts as the real region of London, but since 2010 (and often in earlier periods), there has been no institutional or policy recognition of this, to deal with housing, transport, climate crisis and a whole range of other issues which do not stop at the London boundary line. There has been some on-and-off planning for the 27 municipalities of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area since the 1970s, and also some for the wider Barcelona Metropolitan Region, here led by the Catalan government. But in neither case has the support for the planning come near to meeting the challenges. There are other, much more positive cases in Germany, Scandinavia and the Netherlands, but not, as far as I know, spilling over to any museum practice. Berlin and Brandenburg cooperate directly on planning, but not, as far as I am aware, on metropolitan museum questions. There is no "Randstad Museum" in the Netherlands.

A final scale issue is one which some regard as critical to city museum functioning, the link to districts and/or to neighbourhoods. This may present itself in two forms. One is where local history museums exist at this level, as in the Bezirksmuseen in Berlin, for each of the 12 Districts (since 2001 — there were 23 Districts before that reform). These often very local museums may be called *Heimatmuseen* in Germany, whilst in France and Italy the term *ecomuseum* has been popular. Such local museums have been numerous in the UK too, though they have been fading with the government cuts since 2010, with volunteer staff struggling to keep them going. In Berlin, the city museum has a commitment to work with the Bezirksmuseen, but with pressure on resources on both sides, this may not be the highest priority. I have not noticed a strong tendency for city and local museums to work very closely together: in London, for example, there are some lively Borough museums amongst the 32 Boroughs (which often have populations of 200-300,000), but the links with the Museum of London may not be strong. This would require far more research to substantiate. In priniciple, effective collaboration would need strength on both

32. https://www.ruhrmuseum.de/en/museum/.

Ruhr Museum, general outside view. Photo: Ruhr Museum

sides, and this may often not be the case, with one partner or the other lacking resources or the needed perspectives. There can be clashes of approaches, with district or even more local museums having a strongly nostalgic and even restricted perspective, compared to the drives now common in CMs.

The second form in which the whole city and local museum issue presents itself is where there is no museum locally, but there is a local community wish to work with the central body. This is probably far more the norm, and I am sure such local working by CMs occurs widely. Examples are the way working with the 10 Districts is part of the DNA of the Barcelona History Museum, how Amsterdam Museum aspires to become a network museum, with small exhibitions set up in the wonderful chain of local libraries spread around every part of the city, and the work by Frankfurt mentioned above for the Citylab. This relates in part to the promotion of new branch museums. This has occurred gradually in Barcelona in recent decades, with 15 branches now existing, with the aim to create a museum presence especially in those city districts which have had almost no museums up to the recent past: the northeastern more working class and (ex)-industrial areas. This has occurred in a few other cases, in the big branch networks in Kraków (14) and Vienna (21), and similar

Berlin local museum, in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg. Photo: Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg Museum

equivalent numbers (given smaller cities) in some other central European cases (Belgrade has 6, but no central museum at present). But in Kraków and Vienna this does not, in general, address the link to urban districts, as the majority of the branches are in the central city — an exception being the museum at Nowa Huta, opening in 2005. Other examples of this kind of reaching out are in the opening of workers' dwellings, as in Stockholm, where these are indeed out in the suburbs, in Helsinki, where they are in the city centre, or in Katowice, where industrial workers' (mainly miners) houses are part of the museum, well out of the central zone.

Given the pressure on city budgets since the "boom" of CMs from around 2000, the lack of spread of branches is perhaps not surprising, though it can represent a clear decision to prioritise the central building and institution. Rather than new branches, it seems more likely that museums will continue their efforts to work with neighbourhoods and districts, where resources allow for this, bringing their skills to the districts' and the district experiences to the centres (if no branch museums are present). One approach is shown by the project by Helsinki Museum to study, in depth, a suburban area and collect from there and create an exhibition on the area. Perhaps this could link

Amsterdam Museum exhibiting in a local library. Photo: Tim Marshall

in a more systematic and structured way to educational programmes, whether within schools or universities, whereby different districts or neighbourhoods become the focus of intense study, in collaboration with CMs.

Geographical reach

We can explore a little further in relation to the metropolitan question raised above. The reasons for the current limited reach are convincing. This gives museums, in any case, a great deal to do, and any "trespassing" on the areas of peripheral or metropolitan municipalities might generate complaints, either from the museum services of those municipalities, or from some higher regional or national (history) museum.

Nevertheless, there appears to be an aspiration, among some city museum directors, to have a role in thinking about or imagining this real wider region. But this is not easily done. Most obviously, it might be done as part of cooperative efforts with adjoining municipalities, to tackle metropolitan-wide issues, or even with regional-level or national museums. Rather more indirectly, it may be possible to do something by exploring images which are apparently of the central city, but implicitly go far wider. So exploration of clichés, or stereotypes, or understandings of current or future changes might have this nature. What is Oxford, or London, or Berlin, really? What does the place include, what is it like, what could it be like? How could work on utopias, better futures, advance? It could be argued that this is not deliberate "trespassing", just honest

exploration of realities. However, the visual forms and questionings would not be easily negotiated. A body less directly related to the city museum would have more scope to do this kind of regional exploration than the museum itself — though it is not clear which one; possibility a university body with a continuing presence and resources.

One way into the metropolitan question can be to find themes which, by definition, do not respect municipal boundaries, such as the change in ecosystem processes over decades or centuries (air, water, food and fuel provisioning and so on). This can also apply to the use of materials visible in the city, such as types of stone. This therefore brings in the big sweep of changes such as industrialisation and post-industrialisation (where the latter applies). Social and economic system changes are equally appropriate for such treatment, as the municipal boundary very often touches on important zones of urban functioning, including big modern housing estates — the ring of the *banlieue* — or the protected sanctuaries of the rich, leafy, low-density zones, often found on one side of cities (frequently the west). Such thematic issues may be controversial, but the city museum can argue its right, or duty, to cover such matters critical to its everyday existence. They may easily carry 20 or 50 miles beyond the municipal boundary.

Of course, a straightforward way to deal with this question could be to set up a metropolitan museum. This is what London has done, to a certain degree, in that the Museum of London is run by the City Corporation (the historic core) and the Greater London Authority (the city of nine million), more or less jointly, so it includes much of the real city. However, the Museum of London has never really drawn the real potential from this, continuing to focus on the historic core or cores (with the port having its own special treatment on a Docklands site, somewhat of an anomaly). It has never really felt like a metropolitan museum, and certainly does not try to reach out to the real city beyond the GLA boundaries. Berlin also has a big boundary, and it will be interesting to see if it can take on big metro ambitions. What would a real metro museum look like? Or what would one look like that was allowed to ask metropolitan level questions, even if not having a metropolitan form?

Urban planning and city museums

Whilst my perspective on planning and museums does relate to my own background, I am not alone in seeing potential connections.[33] A conclusion from a 2015 CAMOC workshop in Berlin was that:

33. Also see: Duncan Grewcock, "Museums of cities and urban futures: new approaches to urban planning and the opportunities for museums of cities", *Museum International*, 58, 3, (2006), p. 32-42.

> "In terms of their presence in the urban space, city museums can play a key role in the process of urban planning by providing historical knowledge about the city and can change urban areas by their mere existence (e.g. new museum buildings, increased tourism, retailing etc".[34]

This slightly uncertain justification for relevance can, I think, be extended, to make a closer link. It is interesting that Ian Jones, one of the founders of CAMOC, was enthused by the Pavillon de L'Arsenal in Paris when he visited it in 2002, seeing it as an object lesson for city museums.[35] This urban planning centre was well known to any planners or planning academics with student groups visiting Paris, as was a similar centre in Amsterdam until its closure around 2010, amongst a good number around Europe. These centres were especially designed for participation and communication, again revealing to a student of city museums, but the bread and butter of planning teaching and to varying extents of planning practice since the 1970s. Jones saw the links to the roles of city museums as clear enough.

This chimes with the very widespread tendency to use historic models in city museums — it would be pointless to try to list these, as it would be more a matter of finding somewhere without a model of some kind and of some date. Often, models date back to early periods, and are themselves historic objects, showing cities before war destruction. Examples are the dioramas in Brussels history museum, or the 1727 model in Strasbourg. Equally ubiquitous is the use of digital displays, with sometimes elaborate layering of maps and use of very advanced techniques, since the 1990s (Graz, Kraków, as just two cases).

This has been accompanied in a few instances by the placing of maps or aerial views of cities on the floors of the entrance halls or nearby rooms of museums (Dresden measuring 54m^2, Ghent measuring 300m^2, Leeds a whole room of similar size to Ghent). So visitors will literally walk on images of their city, find their own homes or neighbourhoods, as well perhaps as use these for "more serious" purposes — if knowing where and how your home fits into the wider city is not serious enough. A variant is to use the walls of a centre — at ARCAM, the Amsterdam Architecture Centre, there is a striking example of covering almost all available wall space, in a not-very-large but purpose-built centre in the port area.

Some CMs already exist with more active engagement with urban planning matters in their cities. One example is in Dusseldorf, where the museum

34. CAMOC Newsletter 2015, p. 29.

35. Ian Jones, "The Greatest Artefact. A brief history of an international committee on cities", revised December 2019, CAMOC website.

Paris Pavillon de l'Arsenal, internal view with map. Photo: Pavillon de l'Arsenal

director describes the Stadtmuseum as "a participative museum... your platform for the design of urban processes". There is a close partnership with the local branch of the Association of German Architects (BDA Düsseldorf) and a (virtual) visit to this large museum shows a very strong emphasis on the physical and spatial features of the city, as if architectural and planning ideas have indeed affected the permanent exhibition's design — lots of maps, models, carried through the urban history. Another example reflects the Scandinavian close linking of museums with development and conservation management. The Museum of Gothenburg has a City Development Department:

> "The cultural environment is part of our collective resources, our environment in its broadest sense, which must be managed in a socially responsible manner. At the City Development Department the conservators of built environment and archaeologists work with this in several ways. We work with assessments, archaeological field investigations and surveys, planning and building-permit issues, research and knowledge-building and advice.
> In the city we are consulted on planning and construction issues. This mission has been assigned to us by the Cultural Committee of the City of Gothenburg. Our mission includes also to impart knowledge and research results to the public. We do this in lectures, seminars, publications and reports, public archaeological excavations and in the museum's exhibitions and projects." (museum website).

However, my inquiries in relation to several of the city museums in the Barcelona Network suggests that this linking is rarely close. Generally, city planners know little of the activities of CMs, whilst CMs are not that likely to be connected to city planning exercises or current issues. The most likely fruitful connections may come from thinking how there may already be intersections between CM practice, and planning thinking about futures and urban imaginaries. We have seen that models, digital displays, and interactive opportunities to discuss current and future urban issues may all develop how citizens think about their cities: how cities have come to be how they are, how they are changing, and in what directions they may or ought to change in the future.

It is natural that city planning agencies and, to a certain degree, city architecture centres (where these exist) think about the long-term future of cities and wider regions. But this imagining risks staying within constrained forms, and not reaching wide public debate. Here, some further thought is given to how CMs might aid in this imagining and conversing. Certainly CMs, or possibly museums for parts of cities (districts, quarters, neighbourhoods), are the most likely kind of museum to take on some of this role of presenting the current city to itself, helping it to "see itself". The explicit approach to being present- and future-facing was discussed above. However, more normally, CMs will be presenting past themes, but with the present and future in mind. I mentioned that this has been part of the work of Barcelona's MUHBA in the last decade or more, though there the engagement has sometimes gone further, through the strategy of spreading museums around the city, which then impinges directly on the current urban renewal work in those quarters, primarily in the north-east zone of the city. Analysis of the interaction of museum practice and "imaginaries work" might be divided up by themes (often developed by special exhibitions — typical recent topics have been migration, and tourism), by geographies (considering and changing how the presences and activities of the museum are distributed across the city, or even reach out beyond it) and by the periodic redesign of the permanent exhibitions (although it is unlikely that any museum would go so far as to risk structuring this around contemporary themes directly). It may be necessary to make this kind of reading across to the present and future more explicit and prominent, although clearly there can be political difficulties in doing this.

On a more mundane level, there is scope to develop museum and planning collaboration — although in some countries and cities, this is practice that already happens. So, beyond imagining the big picture, there will be scope in relation to local projects. It is likely to be easier for a museum and planning office to collaborate in relation to an individual project or a relatively small quarter of a city. This could take several forms, including bringing in local inputs from residents, over a significant time span, and generating understandings

of past physical changes to the environment. This will cover both built and natural environment — although nothing is purely natural in cities. Included will be involvement in reconstruction and archaeological presentation schemes. Already, over many decades, museums have been involved to some degree in these debates. The massive extent of urban archaeological discoveries over the last 50 years has frequently raised the issues of preservation or marking of previous urban features. This naturally raises all sorts of resourcing and institutional questions, particularly given the power of major development interests and the money that may be at stake in deciding on new urban areas, especially in city centres. The intersection with place marketing and tourism may be powerful. Sometimes this may occur at the level of the "quartering" described above. Place marketing now almost requires that any reasonably large central, urban zone is cut into areas, at least one of which may be labelled a creative or even museums quarter: the Frankfurt Museumsufer (river bank) was invented in the 1980s, as part of the drive to break away from the "boring" or uncultured image of the city.

It is noticeable that, in the case of planning the central areas of London, the move of the Museum of London, from its present base in the Barbican to half a mile west in Smithfield, has begun to generate ripples of ideas and pressures around the proposed creative quarter, which may well lead to the total displacement of the historic Smithfield meat market, as an unintended consequence of the museum move. In Berlin, the reform of the Maerkisches Museum is also being crafted around the idea of a creative quarter, presumably to take its place alongside the Museum Island zone, already the target of heavy investment.

The quarters approach sits alongside the project orientations discussed above, being a way used by planners and urban strategists to think about future change, at a level above the individual project. Museums are clearly involved as core actors in this in some cities, though how far they can steer the agenda towards "respectable" purposes will depend on many factors.

Conclusions

In summary, it has been suggested that the emergence of new sets of ideas, within ideologically changing times, has been an important part of the drive behind the changes seen in city museums. This has been accompanied by a host of enabling factors, including linking to urban regeneration, some contagion from the economic boosterism affecting larger museums more, and emulation and transfer effects. Political movements related to democracy and participation have also been important, although these have not been analysed so directly here. These have provided some of the push to engage with current and future challenges in cities.

Disabling factors have been equally forceful in many places and at many times, working against the emergence of CMs, maintaining pressures for more

conservative approaches, or often preventing the creation of any museums at all in relation to cities. These disabling forces include cuts to public budgets, often associated with the management of the crises of global capitalism recurrent since the 1970s, the powerful force of varieties of conservative ideologies during the same period, as well as less obviously political factors such as institutional arrangements, within councils and in relation to other key bodies such as universities.

We can also extract some concluding headline points from the chapter:

- The future of CHMs / CMs is wide open, because it is caught in this complex force field of ideologies, institutional change and public policies.
- Practice will continue to differ widely across countries and cities, due to the very wide variation of this force field.
- As a matter of fact, every type of CM has and will have its presence, from the most "activist" and "political", to the most "conventional" presenter of "neutral" city historical narratives.
- This variation gives special opportunities for mutual learning across cities and countries: therefore public support for such learning could spread best practice. The EU should have a role.
- Physical and spatial features are especially critical to this type of museum, and this should encourage close cooperation, within and beyond municipalities, with others dealing with such physical and spatial issues, especially those working on planning, conservation and community collaboration.
- The intense politicisation of the post-2008 era, especially in relation to the fates of democracy and of social futures, will make it challenging for CMs to find pathways, yet offer opportunities to play a significant role within the playing out of this era within each city.

Some important city museum transformation projects

Tim Marshall

The last two chapters have omitted commentary on a good number of important projects which have been completed, are under way, or are proposed in the quite near future. This chapter sketches in the directions being taken by a few of these projects. As always, when commenting on "someone else's" museum, the information given on these projects may well not be the view from the city or the museum itself. It is to be hoped that what is lost in full knowledge of the projects is gained in being able to give an overview, with some implicit comparison of projects. The aim is simply to give an idea of what sorts of transformation projects are involved.

The order of presentation reflects the extent of the projects chosen. The first ones are very large schemes, involving new buildings and sometimes major renovation — Munich, Vienna, Liverpool, Antwerp, Marseille. These are in the same sort of league as the projects highlighted in Part 2 below. There follow somewhat smaller schemes, but still with major changes — Paris, Bristol, Leeds, Ghent, Nottingham. Finally, Graz and Lyon are largely changes to the permanent exhibitions rather than major building changes, at least in the last decade or so. A brief concluding section comments on the strong variability and distinctiveness that this selection reveals.

Munich

The Stadtmuseum was founded in 1888, in the former municipal arsenal and stables, following an initiative by the keeper of the city archives. The website claims this is the "largest municipal museum in Germany", both in physical size and collections. A major transformation project has been long under discussion, since at least 1999. A new permanent exhibition "Typisch Munchen", from the early 2000s, appears to have been the first fruit of the transformation drive. This consists of five rooms, and draws out selected periods and issues, encouraging visitors to agree or challenge the themes presented as most characteristic of the city.

The council agreed the terms of an architectural competition in 2013, selected winners in 2015 and finally agreed the funding for the selected scheme in 2019. However, there path has not been smooth since then. The museum team issued an impassioned press release in July 2020, saying that it would be disastrous to delay the work again. The council, at that point, set a start date of 2023. But in November 2020, the council put this back again because of the precarious position of the city finances. The aim, at the time of writing, is to

Munich. Photo: Müncher Stadtmuseum

start the project in 2025, for completion in 2030.[1] So what follows is based on the 2019 proposals, and may well change over the coming years.

This is a large and expensive scheme (183.47 million euros as the indicated budget), designed to improve the functioning and appearance of the whole complex — which is mostly made up of protected heritage buildings in the historic urban core. There is also seen to be a pressing need for renovation of the 1950s building. The scheme will insert a new building, to make the six existing buildings work together as a whole and create a new main entrance.

A new concept for the whole museum would thus be enabled, with inclusiveness and accessibility for all as key elements. One aim was said to be to span the arc between Munich's city history and the present (website 2020, comments from councillor for culture Anton Biebl). Whilst what I have taken here from the website only gives a partial flavour of the objectives, it is clear that this relatively wealthy city is now investing strongly in its city museum. There are some signs of the characteristics highlighted in the presetn-day city museum agenda, relating to dealing with current themes and the future, but no obvious reference to citizen involvement or outgoing initiatives (via itineraries, to other parts of the city — there are no other branch museums). However, this is quite likely to be the result of not having researched more fully.

1. https://www.muenchner-stadtmuseum.de/muenchner-stadtmuseum/sanierung-jetzt, https://www.muenchner-stadtmuseum.de/muenchner-stadtmuseum/muenchner-stadtmuseum-wird-zukunftsfaehig.

Vienna

The museum was founded in 1887, and was originally located in the town hall until 1959. After many years of deliberation, a new museum building was created, opening in 1959. There is a central museum, plus 13 other branches, plus 7 composer museums. The museum website has a lengthy mission statement, see below. The museum had already changed its name in 2003 to Wien Museum.

Wien Museum is a general-purpose metropolitan museum with a wide range of collections and exhibitions — from the history of the city to art, fashion and modern culture, from the earliest settlements to the present day. Because of its general approach and interdisciplinary potential, it occupies a unique position among Vienna's museums. It has sites throughout the city. Taking the city of Vienna as a model, it explores the general theme of social, cultural and urban change in comparison with other cities.

In its consideration of the history of the city and the evidence of the past, the museum also takes account of current issues and themes. It collects, studies and reinterprets the objects in the various collections and their significance for our lives. Although Wien Museum is not primarily an art institution, it also deals with art and the conditions in which it is created. Artistic phenomena are placed in their social and cultural context and considered within a broader framework ("art plus" principle).

The history of the city and the cultures within it are not regarded as homogeneous processes, and the collection of objects and their exhibition are presented and managed with account taken of the lifestyles, interests and recollections of people of different origins. Collection activities in future will be based on the principles of radical selectivity and significant selection. The collections focus on Vienna and are supplemented by artefacts from the 20th-century.

Wien Museum is a repository of knowledge and a public medium. It offers permanent residents, newcomers and passing visitors an opportunity for contemplation and reflection".[2]

The approach is therefore typical of some CM aims, in the wish to connect to currrent themes, to address people's diverse origins and to tackle collecting in fresh ways. The numerous branches give it an unusually widespread presence in the city, even though the majority are in relatively central districts and on what one might call *classic* high cultural themes — music, art, archaeology.

There was a long discussion, from at least 2009, about moving to a new site, with preference for a disused station, Hauptbahnhof-Areal, but in 2013 the decision was taken to extend on the existing site. The closure of the museum

2. Wien Museum website accessed May 2020.

Vienna. Photo: Wien Museum Karlsplatz

occurred in 2019 with reopening expected at the end of 2023. There is to be a total renovation of the 1959 building and a considerable extension with a second large building. Altogether this will raise the floor area from 6900 to 12000m², and the permanent exhibition spaces from 2000 to 3000m². The 2018 estimate of the scheme's cost was 108 million euros.

This stands out, then, as an ambitious project, backed by a powerful and probably relatively wealthy municipality, able to compete with or compliment the very rich museum landscape of Vienna, both state- and private-managed. I have not established fully the aims of the project beyond the evident proposal to enlarge and completely update the central museum, with perhaps largely new permanent exhibitions. I suspect practices may fit the CAMOC city museum drive, but there may also be an element of the more traditional Germanic stress on solid historical presentation, as well as, judging from the mission statement, a desire to cover an unusually wide range of city issues, with a stress on art and culture apparently at the core. This is as much a city cultural museum as a city history museum, and this may well mean that the transition to a contemporary-style CM will be taking a distinct path. It may be that, a bit like the Stuttgart project, the aim is to be all singing and all dancing, to hit lots of targets at the same time, though here with the major difference of being at the core of a heavily touristed city. This contrasts with what may be taken to be the (to some degree) more narrowly history-oriented CMs, such as Frankfurt or Berlin or Hamburg. As always, this shows how distinctive each CM is.

Liverpool

During the period when Liverpool city council was run by left Labour politicians in the 1980s, a Museum of Labour was created. The takeover by national government of all the city's museums in 1986 gave National Museums Liverpool (NML) the most powerful package of museums and galleries in Britain outside London. The takeover led eventually to the replacement of the Museum of Labour by the Museum of Liverpool Life, opened in 1993. This, in turn, closed in 2006, to be replaced by the Museum of Liverpool, opened in 2011. At its closure, the Museum of Liverpool Life had three galleries, City Lives on cultural diversity, The River Room on life by the Mersey, and City Soldiers on the local regiment. It was based in an old port building, which proved too small for the number of visitors it received.

The current museum occupies a totally new building on a prestige site on the Mersey waterfront. The new museum cost £72 million, put together from regional and European funds, plus national funds and Lottery money. There are 8000m² of exhibition space. Permanent exhibition themes are Great Port, Global City, People's Republic, and Wondrous Place. There is a strong social history and communities emphasis, and very extensive facilities for schools and visitors, as well as impressive views from the museum of the Mersey. It has a wide take for a CM, drawing on many NML collections — costume, botanical, archaeological, oral testimony, and so on.

> "On the ground floor, displays look at the city's urban and technological evolution, both local and national, including the Industrial Revolution and the changes in the British Empire, and how these changes have impacted the city's economic development. The upper floor looks at Liverpool's particular and strong identity through examining the social history of the city, from settlement in the area from Neolithic times to the present day, migration, and the various communities and cultures which contribute to the city's diversity."[3]

It is clear that national funding, as well as its location near to other strong museums, including the Merseyside Maritime Museum, the International Slavery Museum and Tate Liverpool, give this CM strength and resourcing unique outside London. It is certainly the largest CM outside London, and likely to stay that way, a monument to pre-2010 national and European funding. It strives to have an accessible and open character, and must make a most attractive visit for many kinds of people, including serving schools very well. However, it is not clear that

3. Quote from museum website, accessed May 2020.

Liverpool: Photo: Museum of Liverpool

its permanent exhibitions have a strong linking to present and future issues. It may be that its status as a nationally funded museum reduces its capacity to engage, at least in a critical way, with local issues. A fine 2018 temporary exhibition on John Lennon and Yoko Ono was able to present a more radical edge safely. But there is no direct engagement with current urban development controversies. Part of this role may be taken on by the architecture centre, RIBA North, which is next to the museum on the waterfront, and opened in 2017. This has a model of the Liverpool conurbation and much on future planning issues, in this wider conurbation, not just Liverpool city. But its nature is more professional than truly public.

This museum may well sum up the recent evolving character of the small grouping of CMs in Britain, striving to be many things, but above all popular and educational, rather more than challenging or risking engagement with the present problems of Liverpool or the wider Merseyside region. As part of the wider museums package, it participates in the core drive of tourism promotion, although as the most locally oriented museum, it also stresses local identity, blending these two elements, perhaps more than any other British CM. It is certainly a project which was and is about economic regeneration, Liverpool being the UK city which has had the greatest regeneration focus and funding over a 40-year period. It remains to be seen how far this situation will continue, following the exit from the EU and current challenges facing especially the Midlands and North of England.

Antwerp. Photo: Museum aan de Stroom

Antwerp

The Museum aan de Stroom (MAS) was opened in 2011, having drawn on a budget of 50 million euros, following a city council decision in 1998. It therefore constitutes an early case in the transformation wave, and is unusual in being a totally new building. It functions as a museum about Antwerp and its connexion to the world, profiting from its commanding 60-metre-tall new building on the waterfront, poised between city and harbour, to provide a maritime take on the city's history. The MAS partly brings together objects from folklore, ethnographic and maritime museums (the latter two museums having been closed). The municipality still has ten other museums, so this is part of a substantial package, with Antwerp being especially strong on art museums. The MAS has had some private-sector input, and one Founder has its own Pavilion: the Port Authority of Antwerp.

It is clear that the new museum is much more like a contemporary city museum than the ones it supercedes, with an aspiration to connect to current issues. However, it is a particular kind of city museum, showing how varied this drive for contemporary city museum presence is, being adapted to the perspectives and narratives of each city. Here, the stress is on the quality of the "iconic" new building, the position on the river, and on global connections, including use of the global ethnographic collections. So although there is no doubt a

"conventional" city history narrative in part of the museum, this is set within a different shell from that common in many CHMs, for example in many German cities. This may reflect a characteristically Flemish / Dutch perspective on a city's insertion within the wider world, and on links to the water environment, as well as a frequent predilection for high-tech modernism. The new Hamburg port museum will be an interesting model of comparison, as that equally globalised and self-aware port city refashions its presentation of its city museum package — a package on a larger multi-branch scale with a long history. There are plenty of possible contrasting cases — the powerful port cities of Amsterdam, Barcelona, Liverpool, London and Marseille perhaps put less stress on their "port aspect", though clearly all containing references to their ports, sometimes extensive ones.

Marseille

The Musee d'Histoire de Marseille opened in 1983, within the Centre de la Bourse, a very large new shopping centre development, above and next to major Roman remains discovered in the late 1960s. It was these remains, including including those of the Roman port and of boats from the Roman period, that formed the first stimulus to create the city history museum in this location. The museum took the city history up to the 18th-century during these first decades of its operation. "The museum building, which is entered from within the centre, opens onto the "jardin des vestiges", a garden containing the stabilised archaeological remains of classical ramparts, port buildings, a necropolis and so on".[4]

A major renovation and reorganisation of the permanent exhibitions led to the reopening of the museum in 2013. This part of the municipality's extensive set of museums includes two memorial museums, and a museum about the Roman docks. The museum claims to have been the first city history museum in France, and is now one of the largest city history museums in Europe, with a surface area of 15,500m².

Since 2013, the permanent exhibitions have contained 13 sequences covering 3500m², now including from prehistoric times up to 2013. The last two sequences are:

> *Sequence 12: Marseille — a singular and a plural city 1945 to 2013:* 12.1 1945-1955: The city makes a recovery; 12.2 1955-1975: Population growth and the creation of the northern districts; 12.3 1975-2013: A city of contrasts.
> *Sequence 13: Marseille, the city of now and tomorrow:* This last section shows an open, vibrant and innovative vision of the present-day city. It is also dedicated to its challenges and social actors. Here, some temporary exhibitions, imagined in collaboration with experts, inhabitants and associations, authors and cultural partners, reveal districts of the city, personalities and current events."

4. Quote from museum website, accessed May 2020.

Marseille. Photo: Musée d'Histoire de Marseille

So, Marseille now has a large modern CM, rather unusually in France, with the 2013 renovation including digital updating inside the exhibitions and in terms of links to web and other digital resources. The latest sequence shows a wish to engage with the contemporary city, but it is not clear from the website how this plays into regular practices and temporary exhibitions. The impression gained is that this is a powerful city history museum, without necessarily having adopted many of the hallmarks of the CAMOC-style CM, in terms of participation and engagement with users or outreach into city neighbourhoods, or addressing some of the most controversial themes on current agendas. This very likely reflects the tough political context in the city and overall region, split between different political forces and kinds of cities, with the contrast between the diverse class and ethnic mix of Marseille and the heavily bourgeois character of nearby Aix, as one example of these splits. However full research would undoubtedly be needed to give a more confident characterisation of the contemporary museum.

Paris

The Carnavalet has been presented as the first deliberately founded city history museum. It stemmed from the Haussmann-led redevelopment of Paris, and was founded in 1866, and finally opened in 1880. It has a traditional form, based on extensive remains from houses destroyed in the Haussman era and classic collections accumulated during the early years. The 2016-2021 transformation changes this to some degree: the museum closed in 2016, and reopened in 2021, after a development scheme budgeted at 43 million euros. Visitor numbers before the renovation were around 500,000, so this is an important part of the City of Paris museums set.

The overall aim is to retain the special historic features of Carnavalet, ordering it with a more straightforward chronology, alternating historical periods, geographical aspects and thematic ones. This will be accompanied by a thorough modernisation of the buildings and the exhibitions, particularly improving access, and, for example, making 10% of exhibits at child height.

An important aim is to bring in coverage of the 20th and 21st-centuries. This will deal with the social and urban changes since 1900 and with the globalisation of the legend and image of Paris. For the present period, treated as from 1977 when Paris first elected its own mayor, a room allocated allow numerous voices to speak of the changes to the territory of Paris and of Grand Paris — so bringing in evidently some treatment of the metropolis.

Another aim is to favour participation and appropriation of the contents by the public, with resource and documentary centres helping to promote the "collaborative making of the history, archaeology and memory of Paris".[5]

"Riches de collections-joyaux, le musée Carnavalet — Histoire de Paris veut proposer des ambiances, des rêves, des expériences, des prises de conscience et des ouvertures sur des interrogations contemporaines. Outil de réflexivité, il sera un forum ouvert, une scène d'expression de la diversité culturelle, un foyer de l'actualité métropolitaine en réseau, un espace de rêve à forte attraction touristique fidélisant tous les Parisiens et ceux qui aiment Paris, sans exception".

So several of the CM buzzwords are present in this statement of the transformation project, and it will be very interesting to see how far these aims can be squared with maintaining the integrity of the classic traditional CHM, with extraordinary riches of reconstructed rooms, all based in historic and highly protected 17th-century buildings in the core of the intensely tourist-affected Marais district. It almost seems as if another spacious and modern

5. Information and quotes are from a booklet issued during the project, apparently in 2017: *La Rénovation du musée Carnavalet — Histoire de Paris*, Paris, Mairie de Paris, Musee Carnivalet, found on the museum website May 2020.

Paris. Photo: Musée Carnavalet

museum site would be needed to achieve all that is being promised, but clearly this would have problems in connecting to the jewel in the crown that the classic museum constitutes.

Bristol

Bristol Museums, part of the city council, consists of the main art and national history museum in a classic central building in the university area, the City Archives, in a rehabilitated tobacco warehouse in the docks, three other branches, and M Shed, which is the city museum. Bristol Industrial Museum had been based in the docks in a transit building with the name M Shed. It was closed in 2006 and reformed as M Shed, which is largely a city history museum, opened in 2011, £28 million having been spent on the project, nearly half of that from the Heritage Lottery Fund (a primary source of UK museum project funding since the 1990s). The museum consists of two large floors in the warehouse, plus three tugboats moored outside on the dock.

The permanent exhibitions are divided into three blocks, Places on the ground floor (with temporary spaces, shop and café), and People, and Life, on the first floor.

Bristol. Photo: M Shed

"The Bristol Places gallery focuses on the physical and dynamic city: the ways that people have shaped and experienced it and continue to do so. It highlights how and why Bristol has been transformed over time, how people have developed various ways in which to move around it, and showcases some amazing discoveries that have been made in and around the city".[6] So this has sections on housing, transport, and on particular neighbourhoods.

"The Bristol People gallery on the First Floor: explores the activities past and present that make Bristol what it is. The main themes are creating, trading, challenging and celebrating". This includes much on the involvement in the slave trade, as well as on Bristol's commercial life as a whole, on its creative arts, technology and festivals.

"The Bristol Life gallery on the First Floor: explores people's shared experiences in the city — from the momentous to the everyday, whether out on the town, attending a sports event or chatting to a neighbour". This looks at social

6. Quotes from museum website, accessed May 2020.

life within the city, including the arrival in the city of new groups from other parts of the country and the world.

So the approach here resonates much with contemporary CM formulas, connecting to recent history and the present, stressing accessibility and making the museum child-friendly. The tone is no doubt set by the broadly progressive, Labour-led, character of city politics since the 1940s. The impetus may come from a special focus on the past in the city.

Bristol, like most English provincial cities, has developed an intense interest in its past, recent as much as remote. The remote past is especially significant, Bristol having long been something like England's second city (vying with Norwich and York at times). A further reason for this, in Bristol's case, was the especially massive destruction caused to the central and dock areas in the Second World War, this was reinforced by planning-led redevelopment in the following decades, raising a local culture of a consciousness of loss. With the support of two strong universities in the city, it is not surprising that there was a push to create a museum specially directed to deal with this history, not only create a gallery within the main museum. That ocurred in several similar cases — Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, but all of these lacked the very powerful medieval history of Bristol. The high profile of the slave trade connection has probably been an extra factor pressing forward this fuller focus, as in Liverpool and, in a different way, in London, the the Docklands Museum. In any case port histories seem to lend themselves rather strongly to museum consciousness and treatment, with or without the slave trade centrality as in the English cases (also present in France — Bordeaux, Nantes — and in Amsterdam).

Leeds

Like Bristol, Leeds made the push to create some kind of CM element in the early 2000s, though this did not go as far as Bristol, or for that matter as Liverpool or London. There is a long and deep history of museum work in the city, with the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society museum set up in 1819 being handed to the city corporation in 1921. However, this museum was hardly open at all from 1965 to 2008. Finally, the museum was moved to the also centrally located Mechanics Institute building, opening in 2008. The complete transformation of this building included a £19.5 million grant from the National Lottery (I have not found the whole budget cost). The new museum is called the City Museum, and it covers a wide range of historical, cultural and natural history dimensions, so being to some extent a general-purpose museum. But it is part of a strong package of nine city council museum centres, including art, monastic ruins, mills, an industrial museum and out-of-town country houses. On the second floor is the Leeds Story, in several galleries:

Leeds. Photo: Leeds City Museum

> "Discover the fascinating history of Leeds including our surprising inventions, sporting accolades and incredible textile heritage. From the first archaeological finds to changing displays reflecting people's lives in the city today, Leeds is a city of stories. Find out how Leeds has shaped, and been shaped by, its landscape and people".[7]

There is also a map of Leeds on the floor of the entrance hall to this section. The impression gained is of a museum which works hard to be accessible and open to participation, and the Leeds Story is clearly an important part of the museum. But as the museum covers much else, the focus cannot perhaps be on the whole CAMOC-style agenda. It would be interesting to study more carefully what difference it makes to the ability to pursue the past-present-future linkings, when only part of a museum is dedicated to historical dimensions. It may be that a city museum like Leeds could have some advantages in achieving this goal, given that it includes the natural history of the city or region as well, evidently a key part of all history, and with intense resonance in current environmental politics. The same may apply to linkings with "cultural history", however this is understood when not related to paintings — fashion, jewellery and textiles are an important part in some cities. Another dimension

7. Quotes from museum website, accessed May 2020.

with variable linkings is industrial and technological history, in most English provincial cities separated off into a different museum centre of some kind.

There are issues here of museum organisation, the risks and strengths of "city museum imperialism". That is, it might be argued that some overarching framework to present cities would work best, bringing all these elements together. This might aid the creation of a powerful museum institution able to address the links to present and future trajectories of cities, which clearly cross all these boundaries in reality. However, that is rarely the way it works in UK cases, and the same applies in many other European cities, where a separate CHM tradition is often powerful.

Ghent

The Stadsmuseum Gent, now abbreviated to STAM, was founded in 1833, became municipal in 1884, and has been in the partially preserved precinct of Bijloke Abbey since 1928. Large traditional collections had been accumulated since the early 19th-century. The Bijloke Museum closed in 2005 and a major refashioning, including a new entrance building, led to the opening of STAM in 2010. The museum functions as a "modern-day heritage forum" and is run by the Autonomous Municipal Heritage Institute.[8]

The permanent exhibition, The Story of Ghent, gives a chronological history, and was updated in 2020. "But, whereas most museums start in the past and work their way forward, STAM starts in the modern-day city. Its motto is 'from the present to the past and back again'".

The website shows the museum's idea of itself:

- "STAM presents the story of the city of Ghent. A permanent circuit leads visitors along a chronological trail of objects and multimedia which trace the development and growth of Ghent. Temporary exhibitions explore the concept of 'urbanity' from different angles. STAM's real showpiece, its raison d'être, is the city itself".
- STAM holds up a picture of the city in the past, present and future and so provides the perfect introduction to a visit to Ghent. Armed with your newly-acquired knowledge, STAM will refer you on to the city itself, to experience it all first-hand.
- Ghent is a city of many faces — it's a historical city, university city, port city and city of culture. Its appearance has not been defined by any one dominant period or rule. Ghent is a city of all times. And it's still constantly in motion.

8. All quotes from museum website, accessed May 2020.

Ghent. Photo: STAM

• STAM is an instrument for deciphering the city layer by layer and making it legible. STAM reveals the fabric of the old city by dissecting the accumulated years of history. It also holds up to view the chalk lines of future developments".

The reference to "urbanity" is no doubt strengthened by the sky picture of Ghent (300m²) on which the visitors can walk around, and by the software with which Ghent can be viewed in detail, over the course of four centuries.

Like Antwerp's MAS, STAM was an early arrival in the museum transformation wave. It may now be a classic contemporary CM, showing how a medium-sized city (population 466,000), but one with a powerful collecting and exhibiting past, can lead the way in developing new approaches to city museum imagining. The above quotes suggest a strong emphasis on linking to the city to be visited afterwards, though how precisely this works I have not established. Temporary exhibitions seem to be used to pick up the most contemporary themes and make links to current issues. There is nothing like the emphasis that the new Stuttgart museum, for example, puts on participation and luring in visitors of all kinds. But this may be more a matter of politics and style of presentation, and probably is also related to the confidence given in Ghent by a long history and impressive collection.

Nottingham. Photo: Nottingham Castle Museum and Art Gallery

Nottingham

Nottingham's Castle Museum and Art Gallery are the "jewel in the crown" of a strong package of seven museums belonging to the city council, including two stately homes. It opened in the then recently restored castle building in 1878. At the bottom of the Castle Rock is Brewhouse Yard, five 17th-century houses forming the Museum of Nottingham Life, dealing with social history over 300 years. As the name suggests, the Castle Museum has been as much an art gallery, with a strong local — and to some extent international collection —, as a city history museum. "It housed most of the City of Nottingham's fine and decorative art collections, galleries on the history and archaeology of Nottingham and the surrounding areas, and the regimental museum of the Sherwood Foresters".[9]

There had been many plans to renovate the castle over 30 years, but after the creation of a city council project team in 2012, funding was finally confirmed from the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2016, and the museum closed in 2018. It reopened in 2021. This involved full renovation of the castle, which largely dates from the 17th to 19th-centuries, as well as enabling access to many

9. Quote from museum website, accessed May 2020.

of the caves existing in the rock, and a great deal of archaeological work, all at a cost of £29.4 million.

The project gives the appearance of being tourist-, heritage- and art-led, retaining the grand gallery style of the castle museum, though no doubt with state-of-the-art technology included. The resulting museum may well have stronger city history elements, but probably of a Robin Hood and "popular" style. "A beacon of power, protest and rebellion throughout the centuries, Nottingham Castle will be revitalised to reflect the wealth of its history, the depth of its collections and the lives of the people of Nottingham". There is not much sense from the project website of a wish to engage with current and future city issues, or necessarily of a strongly participative approach.

The person appointed to lead the project had previously been General Manager for the National Trust in the region, boosting visitor numbers from 75,000 to 250,000 in her six years: "Sara Blair-Manning, who has a highly experienced background running heritage projects, will become Chief Executive Officer of Nottingham Castle Trust, the organisation appointed to run the Castle".

"Sara will lead the development, delivery and operation of Nottingham Castle to become a world-class visitor destination in the heart of city. The transformation, with the ambition of becoming one of the country's most visited historical sites outside London, will re-open with exciting and engaging interactive attractions".

Nottingham's project may therefore exemplify the few current CM projects in Britain, pressed to promote popular and tourist agendas, as part of municipal survival strategies, in the midst of the drastic cuts in all public funding since 2010. The achievement will be in actually making progress with a municipal project in this difficult period, allowing the development of varied agendas during the coming years, depending on local and national circumstances. The fact that it is, in part, a general-purpose museum, may make the achievement of CM goals more difficult, although the council does have other sites covering other dimensions — natural history in one of its stately homes, an industrial museum, and the social history side in the Museum of Nottingham Life. There might be scope to combine these in some way in the future, in order to engage more with current and future issues in the city.

Graz

The Stadtmuseum was founded in 1928, and found a permanent residence in Palais Khuenburg in 1972; this is its only branch. "The exhibits of that time were historical objects and works of art owned by the municipality".[10] The

10. All quotes from the museum website, accessed May 2020.

Graz. Photo: GrazMuseum

museum was modernised in 1995-7, and renamed as GrazMuseum in 2012. A new permanent exhibition 360GRAZ "The city in all times and all perspectives", was nominated for European Museum of the Year in 2014. The city's story is followed up to 2003. Since 2005 the museum has been run as an autonomous company with the city archive, though totally owned by the municipality.

The website explicitly refers to working within the objectives of CAMOC as a present-day city museum: "to be a space for investigating and discussing contemporary urban subjects". Its mission statement makes clear the broadly progressive goals of the museum:

- "Experiments in Civic Identity: The GrazMuseum as a permanent identity laboratory continuously looks for both scientific and artistic answers to the question how reasonable, not irrational, identity can be found at all in the more and more complex society of a "Europe of the Regions". We think that today's city museums have to dismiss the myth of the homogenous citizen and pay particular attention to not or little represented segments of the population or urban subjects".
- Open to All Interested Parties: We see our museum as a visitor-oriented but by no means populist place. In the GrazMuseum as an open place for cultural participation, local experiences can be organised as a resource for social processes".

The GrazMuseum as a historical museum is obliged to be decidedly contemporary; hence it always looks at history from a present-day perspective". Descriptions such as "The museum on cultural history and urbanism in Graz" convey its ambition, including mention of the maps of the city's development. There is reference to diversity, migration, gender issues and co-determination.

The website does not refer to any large physical transformation project recently. The emphasis in the last 15-20 years appears to have been in the realm of changing ideas and practices, rather than buildings change.

Lyon

Although there had been varied forms of collecting and exhibiting from the 1600s, the first city history museum opened in Hotel Gadagne in 1921, in the Vieux Lyon — the ancient city core. This Renaissance town house had been bought by the council to become the seat of a city history museum. The building was closed from 1998 to 2009 for complete renovation. The resulting MHL, Musee de l'histoire de Lyon, had (largely still has) 31 permanent exhibition rooms. "Through an all-encompassing approach, from the Capital of the Gauls to the 21st-century, the museum is a resource centre for understanding the city in all its facets: urban planning, economic, social, religious, political and cultural".[11] This is the main part of MHL, there being otherwise only a quite small Marionette museum nearby, which was comprehensively modernised up to 2017.

However a major project to transform the main permanent exhibition is underway. The first section opened in 2019, called *Portraits de Lyon*, the second in 2021, called *Les pieds dans l'eau*. This will be followed by two more sections, to be completed by 2023, with the titles *Lyon une ville industrielle au travail*, and *Pouvoirs, engagements et citoyenneté*. These will, it appears, be about the overall development of the city, the changing economy and the political history of Lyon.

The questions behind the first section are: Can Lyon be defined? How did Lyon become Lyon? And Lyon today? These are what may be called typical contemporary CM starting points, combining ideas of stereotypes or clichés, of the big flow of history, and of potential links to contemporary city concerns.

The first section, *Portraits de Lyon*, has an introductory character, aimed to be accessible to all and giving an idea of the city which can be viewed in an hour. It has strong use of digital formats, of sound and music, and of actors presenting facets of the city's history. The first space begins with typical clichés about the city and includes a short film of the contemporary city, as a base from which to go backwards in time. The second space takes six moments of history,

11. Quotes and information from museum website, accessed May and August 2020.

Lyon. Photo: Musée d'Histoire de Lyon

each presented by an individual, and this is followed by a part answering the question, who were the builders of the city, using mainly cartoon animations. The final space is centred on an impressive digital relief model of the city, with dense digital content, on a 4m by 4m base. Between them, these three spaces are seen as being easily open to tourists, local residents, young children and adults alike, with much use of mediators to help with comprehension, and with interactive and participatory elements.

The transformation of this eminent CHM has occurred, therefore, in two stages. Firstly, complete renovation and replanning of the inherited historic buildings was undertaken, forming a modern and attractive museum, partly chronological and with some specialist themes relevant to Lyon's distinctive past. This lasted in its full form just ten years. Now the second stage, the new presentation of the main permanent exhibitio is, it seems, animated more by the sort of principles embraced by CAMOC, seeking to connect past, present and future, and include more participatory and accessible elements. Importantly, this will be done without any closure of the museum, by carrying it out in four phases.

As with all museums based in historic buildings, very major physical change is not possible, and so the steps of renovation and then, potentially, of

the introduction of new practices, are those available. In a slightly faltering way, Lyon is passing through both those stages, as against, as tried in some other cases (perhaps the Carnavalet), making the jump in one go. It will be interesting to see how the transformation turns out when completed in the next few years.

Conclusions

Several variations have emerged around the nature of the recent evolution of these CMs or CHMs. Relatively few are what one might call classic CMs, embracing the full CAMOC package (possibly Ghent, Graz and Lyon more so), but some appear to have been moving to adopt some parts of that agenda. The present and future orientation may well be present in the Austrian, Flemish and French cases, although this remains to be confirmed when the Lyon and Vienna projects are completed in the next few years — the same applies to Munich, whose future practices remain hard to guess from the website information. The four English cases present a mixed picture, with Bristol maybe nearer to a more contemporary CM orientation, but all leaning strongly towards popular, accessible and tourist-attracting styles — needing to hit several targets at the same time, as to a lesser extent all of these projects try to do.

Put in another way, this varied engagement with the contemporary CM agenda suggests the force of some of the factors discussed in chapter 3 — of ideology, and of pressures from both economic imperatives and local identity reinforcement mechanisms, in particular. These play on these cities to quite varying extents, with the "big beasts" of Munich, Paris and Vienna potentially with more room to manoeuvre than in other cases, and more prosperous cities like Antwerp, Bristol and Ghent also with more scope for local choice. However, most of the cities chosen here are amongst the better-off cities in their respective countries, with Liverpool and Marseille exceptions, but both normally gaining significantly from national and European redistribution.

European city museums in the making

Joan Roca i Albert

By the time this text is published, Google will have consolidated its latest layer of digital mapping for getting to know cities: Hoodmaps, which contains visitors' opinions on the diverse characteristics of urban areas. Thus, at any given time, city spaces may appear classified with tags such as "No locals, just tourists and pickpockets", "Amazing city view", "Beer", "Stinks", "Beautiful architecture", "Anarchist quarter", "Rich Catalans" or "Cool cemetery".

It's not bad at all, as a first impression shared *urbi et orbi* about Barcelona, European metropolis and national capital of Catalonia. In all likelihood, few people will take much notice, so it might be that the experiment will be short-lived but, in any case, here we have it: the impulsive creativity of the tourist combined with the tantrum of the local resident and, one would suppose, very soon, the propaganda of numerous urban agents will become a tremendous sociological source of non-contrasted knowledge. The urban space converted, entirely, into one big social media network!

It's like a return to the *doxa* of the Ancient Greeks, to a world of opinions that enjoys labelling neighbourhoods and cities with the impressions of visitors who have spent only a few hours there or who, simply, want to leave an imprint of their viewpoint. If, this time, we find ourselves facing a case of disinformation that could cause laughter, the sinister side of the same procedure is the "alternative truths" — i.e., lies — that mill around on social media, favoured by the lack of a "legitimated knowledge" model that favours the spread of unsubstantiated facts and concepts, frequently presenting them as the height of expressive freedom.

Hoodmaps is not the first instrument of its kind and probably nobody will take much notice of its attached tags. It is so crude that it perhaps will not last very long: it is an extreme case of creation of urban legends. But it is a symptom of the extent to which cognitive populism has appropriated public and universally accessible knowledge online, where despite precautions, much weight is carried by fake news which, under the cover of an extreme relativism, some dare to dub "post-truth". Until perhaps, someday, the information delirium that we are experiencing brings with it the desire for better substantiated knowledge.

It is worth getting ahead, by surfing over this time of in-depth technological, socioeconomic and geopolitical changes. And in this, city museums can play a significant role. We will seek to demonstrate this.

Trajectories in the renewal of city museums

Around the turn of the 20th century, city museums accomplished some significant but little-acknowledged missions, perhaps because they achieved them in a dispersed manner, as local institutions dedicated, at that time, to exhibiting the treasures of cities that were undergoing rapid transformation, without, however, explaining the transformations in the appearance of the city and in the condition of citizens in the midst of urban modernisation.

The first city museums played an important role in the legitimation of the new middle-class city when, in the light of Romanticism, the *sventramenti* of the old centres stirred up a reaction before the loss of the essences of the past, and this led to them coming together to legitimise the operations of the time. A paradigmatic example of this is the Musée Carnavalet, with a historicism that evoked, above all, the past of the elites, with a compilation of "treasures at risk" in the city, from buildings and their interior contents in the case of demolitions to the archaeological digs sparked by the building of modern infrastructures.

The main mission of these early city museums was to evoke the splendid pasts of the urban elites in which it was possible to mirror industrial society, torn apart by new inequalities that fuelled numerous economic, social, political and cultural conflicts. The reinvention of urban identity was approached, at the city museum, from the representation of a glorious past as the basis of present times, led by the industrial middle class.

In the Anglosphere, some city museums emerged that were closer to social reformism, with the educational intention of explaining the urban world. This is the case of initiatives promoted from 1906 by Patrick Geddes, based on his prior experiences at the Outlook Tower in Edinburgh. It is also the case of the Museum of the City of New York, founded in 1923 by Henry Collins Brown. The purpose of educating the masses within the context of a middle-class society was not very different to the case of the Musée Carnavalet, but the political orientation and the intellectual orientation were, as they pointed more towards positivist explanation than to Romantic understanding.[1]

In any event, city museums, conceived as local institutions, over time found themselves somewhat on the margins both of the new tendencies in museums and of the ways of explaining cities. As museums, in the era of specialisations, many of them were little more than cabinets of curiosities. It was necessary to be able to define what collecting the city meant, and that was difficult

1. Joan Roca i Albert, "City museums and urban strategies". In Jelena Savic (ed.), *The Right to the City. CAMOC Annual Conference 2020* (2021), Book of Proceedings, ICOM/CAMOC, 2022, p. 29-30, https://camoc.mini.icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2022/06/KRAKOW-CONFERENCE-BOOK-OF-PROCEEDINGS-for-website.pdf.

to do without an academic and institutional support that had to be more than local, resolved in a different way in each city.

Many European city museums were like this, on standby, for some decades. They remained open for the mere reason that it is not so easy for a municipality to close the museum that, even if only in theory, represents it (although the very recent case of the Museum Rotterdam shows that it could happen). This somewhat lethargic situation was very common, until the promotion of urban tourism, first of all, and the diversification of the body of citizens due to immigration, afterwards, once more put on the table the unexploited potentials of city museums as a hub for shareable reference points regarding the locality in question.

However... how to act in order to renew them? Their consideration as merely local organisations meant that their situations were very diverse. Creating a definition and guidelines for shared actions required as much reflection on the word *museum* as on the word *city*.

As for the nature and definition of museums in general, in 1971 the first major debate took place at ICOM's 9th general conference in Paris and Grenoble, due to the immediate impact that the French May of '68 had on all fields of culture. The controversy arose just when all the social aspirations linked to the welfare state materialised in the possibility of taking a month's holiday and travelling to other cities and countries, for social groups previously unable to do this.[2] The conference, whose theme was the museum at the service of the people, led to a "revolt against the splendid isolation of museums." The battle was a tough one.

What was the impact in the case of city museums? The first museum to try and approach the new paradigm, as Jean-Louis Postula explains in his thesis, was the Museum of London. It reinvented itself in 1976 as a result of the merger and renewal of two previous museums and it aspired to be not only the museum "of" London, but also the museum "for London".[3]

In the last decade of the 20th century, city museums quickly regained ground, but without having tackled in depth the structural problem that was rooted in their trajectory: the lack of conceptual coherence of their collections

2. Sid Ahmed Bagli, Patrick Boylan & Yani Herreman, *History of ICOM (1946-1996)*, Paris, ICOM, 1998, https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/History_of_ICOM__1946-1996_-2.pdf, p. 24: "As the conference was taking place in France not long after the events of 1968, discussions centred on different concepts of democracy, both generally in relation to the role of the museum in the advancement of popular democracy, and specifically in relation to ICOM's structure and organisation."

3. According to André Gob, in the prologue of the book by Jean-Louis Postula, *Le musée de ville. Histoire et actualités*, Paris, La Documentation Française, 2015, p. 11: "Il s'inscrit dans un nouveau paradigme muséal qui place le discours du musée et le public auquel il est adressé au centre de la démarche et déplace au second plan la collection, toujours présente pourtant. Celle-ci est vue comme un moyen du musée et non plus comme sa finalité".

and narratives and their great local diversity. Nevertheless, there was a growing awareness of the similarity of their role in very diverse cities, and in 1993 they met in London, at a symposium named Reflecting Cities. There, the International Association of City Museums (IACM) was founded.

At that first-time meeting in London, the term *city museum* started to take shape, with a clear and express intention: "explaining the city", as commented by Max Hebditch, then the museum's director.[4] *City Museums* was the title of the issue of the *Museum International* journal that the UNESCO published in 1995. That same year, 1995,[5] the IACM met again in Barcelona, and in the year 2000 it did so in Luxembourg: interest was spreading and multiplying.

Following that, at the 2001 annual general meeting of ICOM in Barcelona — whose organising committee was presided over by a former MUHBA director, Frederic-Pau Verrié — and in 2004 in Seoul, the new international committee dedicated to museums on cities gradually matured until, in April 2005, it held its first meeting in Moscow.[6]

Ian Jones has written that one of the reasons that pushed him to work on the creation of a city museums committee within ICOM was based on the example of the Pavillon de l'Arsenal in Paris as a space for explaining the city to residents and visitors.[7] A model that perhaps may be disputable (we will come back to it later), but that points to the key question in the proposal: a city museum for the 21st-century has to explain the entire city for all citizens, those living there and those visiting.

Some months later, in October 2005, the fourth congress of the IACM network was held in Amsterdam, under the supervision of Renée Kistemaker and with the title City Museums as Centres of Civic Dialogue, and which was attended by some prominent members of the recently founded CAMOC.[8] The meeting showed the great potential of IACM, but it was not easy to escape the dilemma inherent in the existence at that time of two networks with similar

4. Max Hebditch, "Museums about Cities", *Museum International [City Museums]*, 187 (1995), p. 7-11, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000103004.

5. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000103018.

6. One reference to take into account is Ian Jones, *A brief history of CAMOC, an international committee about cities*, https://camoc.mini.icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2021/11/CAMOC-how-and-why-1.pdf. The author has worked subsequently on a new version whose text has not yet been published in 2022.

7. Jones, *A brief history...*

8. Renée Kistemaker (ed.), "City museums as centres of civic dialogue?" Proceedings of the fourth conference of the International Association of City Museums, Amsterdam, 3-5 November 2005, Amsterdam, Amsterdam Historisch Museum, 2006, https://pure.uvt.nl/ws/portalfiles/portal/900043/Citymuseums.pdf.

goals, at least in appearance. This duality was resolved in favour of CAMOC, with the prevailing idea that ICOM could provide a broader base for the movement. It was a very intense year for city museums in Europe: the following month, Carlo M. Travaglini organised in Rome the I Musei della Città congress, to which a special issue of the journal *Città e Storia*[9] was dedicated.

The interest in city museums positioned CAMOC as a new point of reference, although the cost, as mentioned, was the disappearance of IACM. In the following years, the crowd-drawing success of CAMOC conferences favoured broad reflection, but was not able to save a founding difficulty: that of delimiting and profiling the "city museum" institution, whose definition had ended up blurred at the foundational meeting due to it adopting, perhaps to give the movement greater breadth, the term *museums of cities* and not that of *city museums*. With the passing of the years, it has not been possible to resolve this vagueness in the definition of goals, with interventions at congresses on issues and museums related "with" the city but not always "about" the city, which is what had given rise to the project for the creation of CAMOC, as explained on repeated occasions by Ian Jones.

This is how things were, when Jean-Louis Postula proposed at the end of the first decade of this century to write his thesis on the subject. He confirmed that "la particularité du groupe de musées dont nous proposons ici de retracer l'évolution est de relever d'une thématique commune, plutôt que d'une même discipline académique: tous sont en effet consacrés aux villes dans lesquelles ils sont situés, qu'ils exposent le plus souvent, mais sans systématisme, selon une perspective historique".[10]

Postula defines the problem accurately, when he says that they are museums "without systematism". But he does not reach the heart of the question, because, in fact, neither do they have a "common theme", but rather a multitude of themes juxtaposed due to the simple fact that they take place in the city. Nor is there a "historical perspective" as such, but rather a carefree historicism of history that is proud to live with an amalgam of stories — fragmentary tales — that in some cases could be of major relevance and in other cases are somewhat bland. Nor is there a "geographical perspective" that enables characterisation of the urban complex and the relationship between its parts. Postula himself indicates that, simply, they do not have a reference academic discipline. The question of memory remains. The field of urban history, on the one hand, and that of living memory, of the memory of pasts that continue in the present, on

9. Donatella Calabi, Paola Marini & Carlo M. Travaglini (eds.), *I musei della città* (Città e Storia 1-2/2008), Rome, CROMA, 2008.

10. Jean-Louis Postula, *Le musée de ville..., op. cit.*, p. 13.

the other, meet again, yes, but they correspond to different codes, one does not substitute the other.

As with all formal knowledge, and more so in the human sciences, historical knowledge is always imperfect and has to be subjected to criticism, but abandoning the historical perspective would mean giving in. We cannot let history go, and even less so when the bodies of knowledge that aspire to replace it, from diverse social sciences and from artistic practices, cannot guarantee that the knowledge that they provide is more rigorous.

However, is there always a search at city museums for a rigorous knowledge that enables evaluation with a more precise focus on our surrounding reality? Sometimes one gets the impression that the dangers of irrationalism are not sufficiently valued, making emotion and empathy the basis of a museology of a neoromantic style.

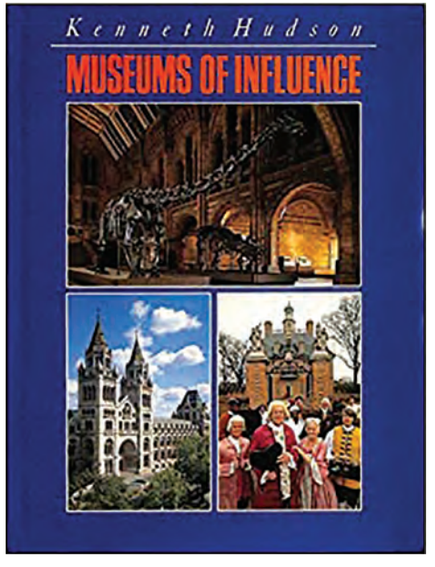
A number of museums have tried to tiptoe over their target theme, but to focus on their procedures and their users. They have often forgotten the question already underlined, back in the 1980s, by Kenneth Hudson, founder of the European Museum Forum: "the museum must never lose sight of the essential truth contained in the apparent paradox that successful popularisation can be achieved only on the basis of sound scholarship".[11]

At the MUHBA, we have tried to think about this question with the greatest care possible, convinced that without a consolidated explanatory model we could not construct a museum that is at the same time of the city, of the community and of relevance beyond the city. And also convinced that the action potential of city museums does not have to be dedicated to the most burning issues of the day, always controversial, but to constructing an urban thinking perspective that enables them to be tackled in a more substantial way.

One of a city museum's great goals should be to favour citizens being able to exercise their right to the city, by providing an overall instrument to think about change, giving a perspective which expands the perceptions of the possible and the desirable. Under the urban history model, a city museum can surely achieve this goal with greater ease than other institutions inevitably more closely linked to the field of power.

In contrast, the idea that city museums should be spaces for discussing the most raging political issues, which finds favour among many heads of museums today, seems to us to be high-risk, because either they are harmless debates, as is often the case, or alternatively, if they enter into the debate "with real fire", the effects will soon be felt by the institution's stability and credibility.

11. See the conclusions of Kenneth Hudson, *Museums of influence*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987.



Kenneth Hudson, Museums of Influence, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987

Socially, citizens form a diverse group and those who are not in agreement with what is proposed, and how, in the debate incited by the museum, will lose the trust they had deposited in it as an institution for knowledge and appropriation of the city. The risk is still greater when modalities of authoritarian thought are shared among citizens and when the museum can find itself caught up in debates that it can in no way put back on the rails. In conclusion, the proposal of putting the city museum at the heart of living disputes of current times is not a prudent one.

Overall, the city museum has to be able to give a deeper perspective and provide explanatory keys. And this role should not be limited to the city itself, but should help to establish comparative points between cities: the view of cities in a network can be one of the keys for building Europe, in the midst of the crisis of nations and states that has unfolded in recent decades and could once more lead the continent towards disaster. As Leonardo Benevolo said, "le città rappresentano e in qualche modo prolungano i processi di lunga durata che stanno all'origine della storia europea, e che si misurano in molti secoli".[12]

12. Leonardo Benevolo, *La città nella storia d'Europa*. Roma, Laterza, 1993, p. 217.

However, if we are to take urban history as the conceptual and academic core of city museums, there were, and there are, two quite generalised problems. The first is that city museums habitually only have curators and restorers, art historians and other disciplines related, in the first instance, with their objectual aspect, as centres for the acquisition, custody and conservation of heritage artefacts. And the second problem is that the historians, archaeologists, social scientists — anthropologists above all — that may be there are usually specialists in a delimited field and are not, in the great majority, scholars specialised in the city as such.

In short, in a significant number of metropolises, the construction and renovation of urban historiography is not passing, right now, through the city museums. So then, how to create an explanatory model based around them?

And no less importantly: how to give impetus to public history programmes without a solid starting point, in such a way that the social construction of knowledge, with full participation of other institutions and of citizens, is academically rigorous and cognitively productive?[13]

The solution, one might think immediately, is the university. According to this line of thinking, it would be a case of acting like art, science, technology or design museums and others, which have very clear academic reference points and can always go to these poles of university expertise when it suits. But this solution is rarely suitable for city museums. Apart from a few exceptions, there are no systematic studies of urban history on a specific city in the world of academia, nor for the major cities that have their own generalist centres of urban studies.

In the university world, centres for urban studies abound, such as the magnificent Centre for Urban History at the University of Antwerp, and papers on diverse thematic fields and historical periods are numerous, but rarely with the aim of constructing a consistent history that takes as its subject the city itself. There is no specific Chair of History of Madrid, or of Kraków, or of Lyon, and if any city has a solid and well-crafted historiography, it is only due to its municipal impetus.

In the case of Barcelona, somewhat singular in this aspect, the municipality has maintained, with variable intensity, urban history studies over the course of the 20th century, through the City's Historical Archive and also the Museum. In 1943, the Municipal History Institute was founded and in 1954 the City of

13. The concept of *public history* as a practice that is both academically rigorous and socially shared with institutions, collectives and interested citizens presents numerous variants. In the sense in which we are approaching it here, see the defining page of the first major association for collaborative history, which emerged in the United States, the National Council on Public History, https://ncph.org/about/who-we-are/. See also the website of the IFPH (International Federation for Public History) and its congresses at https://ifph.hypotheses.org/sample-page/about.

Meeting of European museum directors from the CITYHIST network, at the MUHBA, 2019.
Photo: Daniel Alcubierre, MUHBA

Barcelona Chair, at the Faculty of Letters of the University of Barcelona. However, the Chair would not last long and the Institute led an existence fraught with difficulties until it was extinguished in 1997. Today, the Archive and Museum, which are their heirs, both conduct research on Barcelona and its history.

For all this that we are explaining, perhaps it is not by chance that it is the Barcelona museum that has conceived and given impetus to the formation of the CITYHIST network, which straddles museums and universities. Its purpose: to contribute to the construction of Europe through the network of cities, with a solid academic foundation in urban history and with innovative museum expressions that involve citizens.

The CITYHIST network met for the first time in Barcelona in the year 2010. It was in no way an attempt to compete with CAMOC, but rather to invite around twenty major European cities, all in the EU at that time, to form a stable network for academic and museological work; it was made quite clear from the start that it would be neither a network of museums nor one of research centres separately, but that the proposal was to bring together universities and city museums in a single fabric.

The new network was born, as said, based on an initiative from the Barcelona History Museum (MUHBA) and it opted to have its secretariat at the Amsterdam Historisch Museum — as it was called then. To date, it has been an

Les Cases Barates del Bon Pastor. Photo: Manuel Cohen, MUHBA

informal network limited to around 20 expressly invited members, with a meeting frequency that was annual initially and subsequently every year and a half, until the pandemic, which has slowed the frequency down.[14]

If a large part of the city museums members of CITYHIST are active in CAMOC, aiming to contribute a specific perspective, CITYHIST museums and urban research centres alike have played an active role in the latest congresses of the EAUH (European Association for Urban History), favouring an important coming together of city museums and practitioners of urban history at recent events. On another level, there are various contacts with other urban history centres on the continent, which are progressing.

14. In the early years, the network was formed by urban research centres in Antwerp, Stockholm, Kraków, Turin and Rome and by city museums in Lisbon, Madrid, Barcelona, Marseille, Lyon, Liverpool, Amsterdam, Luxembourg, Hamburg, Berlin, Vienna, Ljubljana, Copenhagen, Riga and Helsinki. Over the years there have been some intermittences in the attendance at meetings and some voluntary departures — nobody has ever been told to leave the network — but the majority continue. More recent incorporations have been the museums of Frankfurt, London, Bordeaux and Rotterdam (unfortunately Rotterdam no longer exists) and as an observer, occasionally that of Budapest. Graz will be joining in the near future. In any event, there has been an attempt to maintain maximum continuity of members and to evaluate carefully new incorporations, in favour of the shared task in a work network that only involves its members.

CITYHIST has been, at least until now, important for maintaining a counterpoint position in the face of the solution given by many city museums to the "history crisis", available beyond the positivist description of objects and events that are dispersed, when not poorly substantiated. In the second decade of the century, the noun *history* started to fall from the name of a number of city museums, who saw no advantage in it, but rather a major disadvantage with regard to the citizen perception of history, a result, in part, of how this discipline is poorly treated in schools.

Being a "participatory" museum of proximity should be the other, obligatory side of the coin from being an "explanatory" city museum at large. In recent times, however, it has often not been thus: the privilege of the small space and recent time in projects has led to large spaces and historical times being disparaged.

It is as if, in order to be an active and interesting city museum, it would be necessary to cease being a "historical" museum (as if this were an antiquated view), to the detriment of the capacity to situate urban processes.[15] This is a renunciation that epistemologically belittles the role of city museums, which have as one of their defining traits the capacity to act on various scales, from neighbourhoods to the world, passing through national space and through Europe, in whatever order suits, if they are really configured as the gateway to and mirror of their cities.

One of the promoters of the first meeting of city museums, in London in 1993, Nichola Johnson, wrote two years later in *Museum International* that "when urgent social issues dominate the political agenda, the city museum is more often seen as an expensive liability than as a potential agent of social change in urban and national centres."[16] These were the years immediately subsequent to the fall of the Berlin Wall, when it seemed that geopolitics were only decisions taken at the very top, between presidencies and chancellors.

15. In the case of Barcelona, the experiment conducted with the neighbours of Bon Pastor has shown that it is possible for a long-term historical perspective of inhabiting Barcelona, considering the metropolis as a whole, can be closely part of a museological space rooted in the trajectory of a specific neighbourhood and its recent memory. It is this dual scale that affords conceptual strength and democratic potential to the project. See Elena Pérez Rubiales, & The MUHBA Team. "At Home. Worker Housing as a Participative New Branch of Barcelona City Museum". In Jelene Savic, (ed.), *The Future of Museums of Cities*. CAMOC Annual Conference Frankfurt 2018 (pp. 106-115). CAMOC, https://camoc.mini.icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/04/FRANKFURT_CONFERENCE_- _BOOK_OF_PROCEEDINGS_Final_LR__2_.pdf; Joan Roca i Albert & Carme Turégano López. "La gestió participativa i el museu de la ciutat. Patrimoni, ciutadania i nodes culturals als barris de Barcelona". *Diferents. Revista De Museus*, 5 (2020), p. 18-35, https://doi.org/10.6035/Diferents.2020.5.2.

16. Nichola Johnson, "Discovering the City", *Museum International [City Museums]*, 187 (1995), p. 5, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000103004.

Perhaps, back then, this was seen as still too audacious to propose that at city museums, the balance between narratives and objects could change. Perhaps it was still considered that the significant historical subjects were only the states and that urban history was mere local mimesis. Or perhaps the city museum was still viewed as a mere container of artefacts that modernisation was pushing towards destruction or oblivion. In any case, the fact is that the new evaluation of city museums for their city inwards role was not accompanied by a new evaluation of their role in broader spheres. Below we will try to show that it would be a good idea to take a look at all these questions differently.

It would be of interest to find a way of resolving the dilemma: in the world of city museums that gravitate towards the ICOM/CAMOC environment there is often a tendency to perceive — and often reject — history, viewed as a mere chronological arrangement or as a rigid narrative and more in relation to the state than to the city. The word *history* has been suppressed from the name of quite a number of city museums. What is being talked about here is a collaborative history in the field of urban processes, of the *longue durée* and the trajectory of urban government in the numerous variants of life in the neighbourhoods, from the metropolis in question to the urban fabric of the continent. We should enhance an exquisitely rigorous history in its epistemological premises, as transdisciplinary as is convenient, and socially and institutionally shareable in its construction and dissemination.

Building Europe from the city museums

If it is true, as we will attempt to show, that the city museums are of capital importance for the multi-scale building of citizenship, in a European perspective, the need for their metamorphosis is unquestionable, as are the difficulties in achieving it: this is shown by the leading examples of museological transformation explained in this book.[17]

It is a good idea to understand the city museum as a project always undergoing transformation, from the construction of knowledge processes with words, objects and images, and diverse urban routes and heritages, to networking with other cities and city museums. They are much more than local museums; they can be one of the bases for shaping a united Europe and for outlining new forms of global dialogue centered on cities. If it takes this path, the

17. See also Joan Roca i Albert, "At the Crossroads of Cultural and Urban Policies. Rethinking the City and the City Museum", in Jelena Savic (ed.), *The Future of Museums of Cities*, CAMOC Conference Frankfurt 2018. CAMOC, 2919, https://camoc.mini.icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/04/FRANKFURT_CONFERENCE_-_BOOK_OF_PROCEEDINGS_Final_LR__2_.pdf.

museum will automatically become an RDI (Research, Development and Innovation) centre of the first order, culturally, socially and economically active.

In this aspect, it helps a great deal to resort to strategic planning techniques,[18] from the organisation of knowledge-building to the decision on how to constitute a network of heritage spaces that favours the explanation and representation of a diverse city and the creation of a collection geared towards the museum's projects. It is also necessary to rethink the role and the format that the stable exhibitions should take, due to their renewed importance in a world overtaken by social media: they are the effective testimonies of a materially rooted narrative, as opposed to the multiplication of digital fables.

Weaving the city to weave the continent

The simple fact of exhibiting and explaining cities is of capital importance for building Europe, the question is how to do it. In Paris, for example, there is a dual version of the proposal. More empirical and technocratic at the Arsenal, and more historicist and centred on the elites at the Musée Carnavalet. By, this, we do not mean that they are comparable institutions, although the Arsenal was important at the beginning of the creation of ICOM/CAMOC, according to one of its main promoters, Ian Jones.[19]

The Musée Carnavalet has to take care of an exceptional mobile and immobile heritage; a heritage that, from the viewpoint of the comparative history of the cultural capitals of Europe, Christophe Charle considers to be excellent.[20] The new Musée Carnavalet, exquisite in its presentation, is a powerful model and a future one for a "capital city" museum. In contrast, right now it has not been able to reinvent itself as a "city" museum. Its treatment of the contemporary metropolitan trajectory is limited to the last rooms of the "permanent" exhibition, with the exception of possible "temporary" exhibitions.

In greater Paris, the social and cultural inclusion of the periphery has not yet managed to find a museological and heritage fit. Paris, in summary, does not yet really have a city museum, in the terms proposed here, pending news in this regard around the 2024 Olympic Games. The Arsenal usually only shows urban projects and contemporary architecture and the Musée Carnavalet includes the Parisian reality of the 20th-century only in its final exhibition spaces. It is no surprise,

18. Joan Roca i Albert, "City museums and urban strategies", p. 30 and following.

19. Christophe Charles, "Quel musée pour une capitale?", Revue du Musée Carnavalet, May 2021.

20. Cf. Andrea Delaplace, "Immigration, Housing and the Right to the City: Life in the HLMs of Paris and in the Industrial Estates of Barcelona and their Presentation in the Museum", CAMOC Museums of Cities Review, 2022-1, p. 18-21, https://camoc.mini.icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2022/06/CAMOCReview-No.1-2022-for-wbesite.pdf.

therefore, that museum proposals emerge from the periphery, which could be an incentive for new projects to reweave the city from the museological field.[21]

We have talked about the Musée Carnavalet because of its doyen character in the museological representation of cities, having been open since 1880, but the trajectory of city museums on the European continent has been very varied. Their consideration, until not long ago, as "museums of local representation" did not favour comparative reflections on their profile. Today, contacts are much more intense, and this more intense relationship arrives when also, in many cases, their profile is being reformulated.

As a result of their evolution and of that of municipal requirements, the mission that is expected of many city museums is today double: attracting tourists and interacting with citizens. However, this dual mission requires a solid academic conceptual base that in general has been cared for little. In recent years, from the museums, there has been a lot of thought about the public, but less thought about what is offered to the public, what is proposed and is shared. The question is that the objective should be none other than proposing, to both parties, residents and visitors, a single explanation of the city if one wants to go beyond cultural marketing. Just as in the case of urban planning, it is necessary to understand urban museology as one of the applied social sciences, directly influenced by the methodological fluctuations that characterise them.[22]

The weaknesses of the conceptual base of city museums, sometimes even with somewhat mystified explanations of the urbs to make it more attractive, are usually camouflaged behind more or less spectacular museographies. This triumph of intensive museography implies a concentration of energies in the "how", leaving the "what" for later. The repercussions are broad, because deriving from this is the fact that Collections departments, the ones that most live within the world of the museum, have added difficulties when it comes to gearing a suitable policy in the construction and use of the collection.

21. Ramon Grau, "El planeamiento urbano como ciencia social", in *Història urbana i centre històric. III Setmana d'Estudis Urbans a Lleida 1986*, Barcelona, Institut Cartogràfic de Catalunya, 1989, p. 111-133. For the case of city museums, see "Two methodological traditions" in Joan Roca i Albert, "City museums and urban strategies", op. cit., p. 24-25.

22. This focus was widespread long before the Internet era, when explaining how people lived under the Roman Empire or in medieval times was a rare event, but when all the museums started to show in in a similar way, and thus it was seen on the Internet, it started to become clear that either it would have to be reoriented towards the field of historical continuities and discontinuities of the city in question or alternatively it remained at the mercy of the requirements of a museumisation designed in terms of tourist attraction, as was the case in Spain during the expansion of heritage archaeological spaces in the first decade of this century, until the impact of the economic crisis of 2008. See Joan Roca i Albert, "Intervención arqueológica, discurso histórico y monumentalización en Barcelona", in *V Congreso internacional Musealización de yacimientos arqueológicos*, 2008, Cartagena, Ayuntamiento de Cartagena, 2010.

Carnavalet Museum, Paris. Photo: Marc Bertrand, Paris Tourist Office

The notion of *ecomuseums*, which appeared in France in the 1970s, was adopted *de facto* by some city museums, above all those that had an important archaeological base, as was the case in Barcelona. Over time, however, it became evident that the view of "ways of living" linked to a "territory" conceived to show rural worlds, mining worlds and, more in general, traditional societies and trades that have disappeared, led to similar explanations in all the cities,[23] banalising their trajectory if there was no approach to their changing reality, with internal ruptures and with the impacts of broader powers.

The Ecomuseums model, within the framework of the so-called new museology and inspired in the notions of ethnography and the French regional geography of the early 20th-century, does not easily lead to the urban history model. And nor does the art museums model: its reformulation in recent decades has achieved extraordinary results, but not always transposable directly to city museums. If, at art museums, the exhibition order and the relationship between exhibits and words can be resolved in numerous fruitful and unexpected ways, this is not the case at city museums.

23. Joan Roca i Albert, *The Hidden Potential of City Museums. A Transcontinental Workshop*, 2022, at press.

The "what" requires an approach in a historical and transdisciplinary vein, from geography and urban planning to architecture and arts. The museum loses much of its potential without a clear narrative reference framework, however much in a more questioning tone than an affirmatory one, that enables the formulation of questions and the crossing of answers on the trajectory of the city, with its continuities and its changes, sometimes abrupt and sometimes due to the impact of broader powers.

The fundamental issue in historical explanation is that it gives rise to questioning the past, which is also a way of thinking about the future. It is showing how the decisions taken at a certain moment did not have to obligatorily be those ones, they could have been others. If the past were determined, if decisions had no way of going back, there would be no interest in dwelling on it. The options of cities and the decisions adopted have been capital also for the states, and vice versa. It is a good idea to insist on this: the urban network overall forms a history of Europe that is as explanatory or more so than that of its states.

Geopolitics and city museums

Geopolitical arguments, often not very generous, can help a great deal to explain intra-European relationships, in a continent that has arrived, barely linked together, to a new era of turbulences. The chance was lost to produce a viable constitution, with a document that eventually was rejected by citizens in 2005. And subsequently, in the midst of state ambitions and democratic failures, Europe, from north to south and from west to east, has not completed its weaving when it would be most necessary.

In these circumstances, the potential of the cities network is strategic. In the consolidation of European unity, through the urban network, city museums can play a very important role, providing that they work in a network and reformulate themselves in an innovative way as hubs for research, thinking and heritage, instead of limiting themselves to putting on more or less attractive exhibitions.

Based on this convergence in the European space, city museums can establish a balance between their role from the city inwards and from the city outwards and look beyond, towards projects shared with other continents. It may be a good idea to take advantage, to start with, of the fact that Europe and Africa cover the same time zones, for example: decolonising relations is a good reason for building new relations, also through cities and through city museums.[24]

24. Lucien Febvre, *Combats pour l'histoire*, Paris, Armand Colin, 1952, back cover.

The world can be studied historically based on the urban network as the principal subject, rather than always referring to states, consecrated as the historiographic unit par excellence since the rise of the middle class.

Europe's hope is for a united and polycentric continent, in the face of the rise of Eurosceptic revisionism. That is why in the constitution of the CITY-HIST network, so much emphasis was placed on the connection with the world of research, to contribute to weaving the European citizens' space from city museums with a solid foundation.

Fight for History

"Je définis volontiers l'Histoire comme un besoin de l'humanité, le besoin qu'éprouve chaque groupe humain, à chaque moment de son évolution, de chercher et de mettre en valeur dans le passé les faits, les événements, les tendances qui préparent le temps présent, qui permettent de le comprendre et qui aident à le vivre." This cover text from a classical work by Lucien Febvre, *Combats pour l'histoire* (Fight for History), is an excellent summary of what, applied to the city, can always be done by the museum that presents it and represents it.[25] However, we have already explained in the first section the difficulties for achieving this.

In recent times, in the field of city museums at least, there has been a tendency to underestimate history — confused with an insipid and insubstantial chronological tale or with a view of the past directly "manipulated by power" — just when historical knowledge would be most necessary. We are not talking, obviously, from a point of yearning for so-called *master narratives*, if understood as such as ideologised recreations of the past, often to justify elites and states, which cannot withstand the minimum historical criticism. Opening the past is opening the future. It is a good idea to underline this because this fallacious argument has often served to disqualify history in a summary fashion. And it is necessary to add that vindicating the key role of history does not involve undervaluing the potential of other narratives, such as literary and artistic ones, which it is necessary to tackle and evaluate in line with the codes of the respective fields.

Accelerated technical change, the enduring impact of the Coronavirus pandemic, and a geopolitics that does not exclude war, combined in diverse proportions, tend to expand today the field of action of numerous ultraconservative elites, across nearly the whole world. The lack of knowledge of history has helped a great deal, as underlined in a recent book by an author on the other

25. Jason Steinhauer, *History, Disrupted. How Social Media and the World Wide Web Have Changed the Past*. Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2022.

side of the Atlantic, Jason Steinhauer, who defines himself as a practitioner of public history and researcher of how history is communicated via the web and social media networks.[26]

Victor Klemperer spoke in *LTI*, a work published in 1947, about Nazi mastery in the creation of a new style of propaganda with a new language: "words can be like tiny doses of arsenic: they are swallowed unnoticed, appear to have no effect, and then after a little time the toxic reaction sets in after all".[27] Nowadays, the ultra-conservative communication think tanks have decided to opt for confusion, adopting as their own the words that designate the concepts they basically want to attack, perverting their meaning, starting with "freedom" and "democracy". The very notion of "alternative truth" aspires to consecrate the lie as a powerful anti-system truth: an "alternative truth" for an "alternative right".

In the last decade, this far right has adopted as a norm, in Europe and America alike, and in fact throughout the world, infiltration into the language: freedom, justice, equality, transparency... have become words with an unprecedented meaning at the service of misleading if not directly fake news. It would be good to be able to recover them.

Hannah Arendt left well established how authoritarian movements prosper thanks to the destruction of reality, creating a coherent but fake world. In the taking of position against this drift towards unreality and authoritarianism, city museums can play a significant role, but for that they have to count on a rigorous programme of ongoing research, which covers the explanation of the city in a historical and transdisciplinary key and shows it through significant documents, artefacts and landscapes. If there is no lasting programmatic coherence, however much the exhibitions defend minorities or criticise colonialism, issues that right now are recurrent, their public success is not transformed into critical social energy.

That facts matter and it is necessary to document them must be the basis of the projects of city museums and the objective of their collections, beyond their artistic value. This is right now a way of containing revisionism in political history, as well in the Spanish case with the Civil War and the fight of the right to avoid compromising testimonies. From MUHBA, we can say that the Poble Sec shelter and the anti-aircraft battery of Turó de la Rovira, subsequently

26. Victor Klemperer, *LTI. Apuntes de un filológo*, Barcelona, Minúscula, 2007, p. 31. (Original in German: *LTI. Notizbuch eines Philologen*).

27. With regard to the impact of the theories of Lyotard on immeasurable and therefore unconnectable "language games", see Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition. A Report on Knowledge*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1984.

converted into a shanty town, play an important role when it comes to explaining that dramatic period from the spaces that form part of the museum.

Urban history is revealed as a privileged field in the construction of urban and continental identities shareable by a population from very diverse origins. The conclusion is obvious: faced with the fragmentation of knowledge so praised by postmodernists, we cannot do without rigorous and verifiable stories that join together the different terrains of the urban trajectory.

The deconstruction of the links between knowledge and power, favoured by French post-structuralism, initially gave impetus to critical thinking, but at the same time has also become a refuge for neoconservative proposals, favourable to the deconstruction of "meta-narratives" while keeping its own intact.[28] The postmodernist theories in favour of fragmentary social knowledge have ended up leaving more ground free for ideologies.

In any event, after the deconstruction of the rigidities and dogmatisms of modernity, the decisive question today is how to approach the building of a reconstructive social knowledge, amidst the confusion of the current time. In the field of city museums, the proposal is to try to do this from the field of urban history.

Urban history: the city and citizens as a subject

City museums have it easier than other institutions to trial a more shared and shareable history. Narratives about cities and Europe can more easily escape political and social pressures than tales about nations and states. If there is a shared history that can help to weave Europe, it is surely the one that can be written by taking as a basis its network of cities.

The trajectory of the great metropolises dilutes the historiographical dilemma between national history and local history. On the one hand, the big cities are a prominent objective for national policies; conversely, the main cities contribute decisively to modelling states and their norms; but, in addition, metropolises have an impact that goes further, a transnational impact.[29] The history of Europe in terms of a network of cities cannot only consist of the mere aggregation of local histories, it must permit an alternative view of the continent that is based on urban history.

There is already a lot of work done to address this with the continent as a whole in mind. It will soon be four decades, to mention just one classic, since

28. The debate is reiterated here and there, before the preponderance, still today! of an implicit Hegelian consideration of states as the main subjects of history. See, for Barcelona, Joan B. Culla i Clarà, "Barcelona al segle XX: història local o història nacional", Museu d'Història de la Ciutat de Barcelona, *Actes del III Congrés d'Història de Barcelona*, vol. II, p. 501-507.

29. Jan de Vries, *European urbanization 1500-1800*, Routledge, 2013.

publication of the first edition in 1984 of *European urbanization 1500-1800* by Jan de Vries.[30]

We have already said it: hedging our bets on history has little to do with the unsubstantial and insipid chronological journeys that, room after room, many museums had and that do not allow us to rethink the past nor reimagine presents and futures. However, few cities right now have a corpus of urban history studies sufficient to profile the trajectory of the city at a level similar to that of nations and states.

This is a significant difficulty, because a consistent historical narrative requires a well-defined periodisation that highlights the continuities and discontinuities in the urban trajectory. Except in cities where the initiative to study their history has had more or less stable institutional support — this has been the case with Barcelona — thematically comprehensive historiographies that cover their overall trajectory do not abound in European cities, nor in the rest of the world. If they are lacking, not only are the narratives of the city compromised, but also the programme of collections that the city museum has to be able to promote to substantiate them objectively.

University faculties rarely have departments or institutes dedicated to the systematic historical study of a specific city. There are excellent urban history institutes with ambitious research programmes, but not focused on the comprehensive study of a city, however large and relevant it may be. Cities are taken as case studies, but rarely is the aim one of shaping the trajectory of just one city with stable and ongoing research programmes. And urban institutes geared towards planning tend to stick very strictly to their specific field.

In recent years, some proposals have emerged from the university field, within the framework of creation of urban studies centres,[31] but it is not a good idea to lose sight of the interest in promoting the role of the municipality. Historically, it has often been the municipal archives that have taken the initiative, it would also be necessary to contemplate the city museums, it would also be the way of endowing them with staff qualified in the urban history field. In the case of Barcelona, one of the keys of the reformulation of its city museum, MUHBA, has been designing a Centre for Research and Debate which, although it does not have its own personnel, proposes research programmes that make it a meeting point for researchers of numerous origins and a focus of attraction for interested citizens.

Consolidating urban narratives is also essential for the construction of the city museum collection, especially with regard to the contemporary city. In some cases, the relevance of the collection inherited by the museum is so considerable that it makes it very difficult to reorient the collection and even its public use. This has been the case with the doyen of city museums, the Musée Carnavalet. In other cases, the fragmentary nature of the collections incorporated into the museum over the course of time makes it difficult to cover the gaps. However, above all, the lack of a clear idea of what the museum is narrating makes it very difficult to profile the collection and creates internal conflicts within the museum itself. Even more so when the new collections require citizen participation when it comes to creating them.

Nature, science, technology, art... Museums dedicated to these can adopt well-established paradigms from universities and research centres. This is not right now the case for city museums, the "museums without systematism" that Jean-Louis Postula talked of in his thesis. The question of collections is derived from the question of narratives and, contrary to what some curators and restorers perplexed by the changes think, it cannot be resolved without the question of which city narratives are substantiated.

City museums and municipalism

Well into the 19th-century, large European cities began to worry about the impact of urban modernisation, carried out without much thought. Then the municipal documentary systems were modernised and the study of tangible heritage was launched. The process culminated with the constitution, if they did not already exist, of the municipal services of archives, archaeology and architecture and often also of tourism, incipient at that time. Many city museums were born at that time.

The role of city museums, which for the most part stood for many decades as local museums that were very different from each other, tended to subsequently stagnate, if not decay, in the face of the popularisation of other ways of showing the city. And it remained like that until, at the end of the twentieth century, between the rise of urban tourism and a new approach to local public services aimed at neighbourhoods and communities, city museums began to experience new impetus.[32]

30. See, for example, the Urban Studies Institute at the University of Antwerp. It presents itself as a "laboratory for research and education on cities, urban development and urban challenges. [...] The project aims to confront recent urban theory with historical empiricism, and thus expand the historical-geographical and methodological horizon of both urban studies and urban history" and it devotes a large part of its energies to the trajectory of its city. See this at https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/research-groups/urban-studies-institute/.

31. In Barcelona in 1942 the Chair of History of Barcelona was founded, forming the seed for the founding, the following year, of the Municipal History Institute. Its continuity, not without its obstacles, until the present day has been assured, alternatively, by the municipal museum and archive.

32. Joan Roca i Albert, "City museums and urban strategies", op. cit., p. 24-25.

Their recent success is both a stimulus and a problem, due to the need to find a new paradigm as explanatory and representative institutions of the city: we're here for that too! Firstly, due to the convenience of a narrative, as already mentioned above: if a museum is not constituted in a point of view, always plural but with a clear framework, its existence is reduced to that of a deposit for documented objects. Secondly, because of their formats. It has not been said that museums of the 21st-century, in an increasingly digitalised world, should have as a fundamental objective the intensive dedication to create temporary exhibitions with their own and others' objects, instead of diversifying and combining formats on an equal footing between exhibitions, research and public seminars, publications and documentaries, itineraries and urban trekking routes, etc.

City museums, in short, today require a strategic vision of the narratives to be supported, of the collections to be constituted with citizen collaboration and of the new research to be promoted, with full citizen incorporation.

This role of explaining the city with a heritage base as a powerful way of building citizenship is decisive, especially in alluvial cities and metropolises, with rapid human and urban growth. The then mayor of Barcelona, Joan Clos, was the first to speak at the United Nations General Assembly, in May 2001. His message revolved around the decisive role of cities in the 21st-century, for which he demanded greater recognition of municipal power and the municipalist spirit in the face of the emergencies of the new century.[33]

The municipalist vision of world politics fits in well with a reformulation of the emancipatory project of the Enlightenment. And if a world vision based on cities and not just on nations and states makes sense on any continent, that continent is Europe. Rethinking Europe and continental unity through city museums is a derivative of explaining the cities and the urban network as a social, cultural and political base of the continent.[34]

Looking at it from the city inwards, the evolution of a number of city museums in the last two decades towards community ethnography may improve their social appreciation, but it is conceptually problematic, due to the type and scale of urban interpretation. If there is no dual scale, i.e. neighbourhood scale and city scale, if museums are limited to community empowerment, they are moving away from a strategic vision that effectively enhances the right to the city for all its residents.

33. "Clos, primer político español que habla en catalán en las Naciones Unidas", *El País*, 7 June 2001, https://elpais.com/diario/2001/06/07/catalunya/991876050_850215.html.

34. See Joan Roca i Albert, "The Hidden Potential..."

Finding one's bearings: the basis of the right to the city

"Draw a map of the city and put a red dot where your house is". This exercise, done by twelve-year-old boys and girls, is perhaps the best snapshot of the capacity for knowledge and personal freedom. The author of this article did this for two decades with his students, year after year, when he was a teacher of geography and history at the Institut Barri Besòs secondary school, on the outskirts of Barcelona. (This was before the mass rise of smartphones: it remains to be seen what results would come out of it now.).

That a simple drawing of a map done in a few minutes could express so much, highlighted many things. The first is the importance of the urban environment in the shaping of personality. The second, the great distance between genders and between social conditions, with girls from a humble background taking the worst part, while their male counterparts had greater opportunities, especially if they played football and, to play matches, they had to travel all over the city. The impact of this lack of knowledge of the urban environment in which life itself takes place cannot be underestimated.

It was a confirmation, from within the educational field, of the importance of innovation in proposals for the knowledge, explanation and appropriation of the city that pointed directly towards the cultural field. Not being able to even physically get one's bearings to move around the city as a whole, greatly limits freedom.

From Walter Benjamin's *flâneur* in Paris, to the walker who observes the marks on the walls of which Michel de Certeau spoke and in the mental maps of the city studied by Kevin Lynch, to quote three classics, the experience of the city is fundamental, grasping it is an art with varying degrees of richness according to the training one has in this regard: from the anguish of inadvertently getting lost to the thrill of "knowing how to lose oneself" voluntarily. It is an art that, if mastered, allows inhabitants to see the city with the eyes of strangers, rediscovering it daily, and allows visitors to perceive it with the eyes of inhabitants, looking at it as if it were something of their own.[35] The act of finding one's bearings cannot allude only to the mastery of the topographic map, of the physical city, but also to the knowledge of the social map.

One fact is clear: the right to the city is, in the first instance, the right to know the city. The right to find one's bearings, as a basic condition for being able to appropriate the city. The training to achieve this is directly related to both the school and the museum. It is a key issue for both institutions.

35. Joan Roca i Albert, "L'itinerari com a forma artística, la ciutat i la ciutadania" in *Itinerarios urbanos. La derrota de disensión*. Barcelona, Fundació Antoni Tàpies, 2004.

Museum mediations

City museums, like all museums, have made great progress in the educational aspect. But with specific difficulties. The first is the difficulty in incorporating a high number of visits to the museum and of urban visits, both guided and, after a certain age, self-guided by the students themselves. These days there are some heavyweight organisational and legal difficulties, due to the liabilities of teachers and educators.

The second is the difficulty of maintaining permanent and direct contact with schools, and here there is still a long way to go until the city museum is configured as a true "school museum" and "laboratory museum", with the corresponding spaces for longer stays by students and with a programme of questions sufficient for looking at the world as a whole from one's own place, one's own city. In this, some science museums have taken the lead.

The issues to be resolved are no smaller in the case of adult audiences, starting with the notion still so much in vogue of "audience segmentation". If, on the one hand, the greater accessibility of museums has democratised their use, on the other hand, the need for revenue, whether on the part of the institution itself or the municipality, has led to entry through the back door of this highly segregating principle. Under the guise of an "à la carte museum" designed to meet everyone's needs, the cultural marketing of "audience segmentation" is tending to dissolve the unity of shareable knowledge and is accentuating social differences. The museum becomes, imperceptibly, a supermarket of cultural consumables.

If, from the treatment of occasional visitors, we turn to look at the museum's options for the most involved users, problems are discovered comparable to those in what are known as "community projects" and in the notion of "participation".

The option for "proximity" community projects as a mechanism to broaden the legitimacy of the museum institution is sometimes presented as a mainstay option for the ideal city museum. Faced with a cold and distant museum, commitment to the community scale is presented as a remedy, in the sense of a neighbourhood or nearby territory, in an often ethnographic and artistic way. The option, however, is problematic and in fact contradicts the democratic objective of facilitating urban orientation and appropriation of the city. The museum moves away from the multiscale profile necessary to achieve this, a profile that implies a simultaneous commitment of its branches to the neighborhoods where they are located and to the city as a whole, and beyond.

The concept of using "participation" is also more complex than it might seem. It is not clear that, as it is formulated, it is the best way to achieve maximum citizen involvement in the museum's projects. "Participation" is often referred to as an involvement by the public that is still the quest for an implicit pact between the middle classes, of which the majority of museum professionals form part, and the lower classes. The latter are today the intended targets of a large number of projects that aspire to legitimise the social role of the museum before the authorities, who have to assign them resources, and before professional colleagues, via ICOM where applicable. This is a "participation" that leaves rich neighbourhoods aside, as if the elites could be held accountable for the city's progress without anyone questioning them.

We must therefore ask ourselves whether, as it is understood in many museums today, "participation" is really a mechanism for cultural and social clarification. Even more so when "participation" as a generic notion also starts from the somewhat naïve idea that everyone gets involved for good. But... what happens if, in the midst of the current uncertainties, which are hitting the working classes so hard, a community ends up turning towards extremist political or religious positions and wants to assert interests contrary to those of the museum? Will they be told that they cannot participate? And if they do participate, how will the proposals fit in with those of the other participants and within the museum project itself?

Perhaps it is worth looking for a more precise concept to give shape to the social construction of urban knowledge, promoted in the manner of Lev Vygotsky, as a joint venture with shared public projects. In the case of Barcelona, the city museum has been acting as an urban history research centre for some fifteen years, in tandem with the initiatives of the City of Barcelona Historical Archive.

The MUHBA Research and Debate Centre is a meeting point for specialist researchers and for citizens from diverse backgrounds, all of them interested in the museum's research programmes, which must be conducted following the rules of creating new knowledge and its expression in different formats, from seminars and conferences to urban itineraries, in the manner of a public history that is completely rigorous in academic terms, and which it is still difficult to define.[36]

It would also be appropriate to redefine the term *participation* when it refers to the shared management of heritage spaces, with custody and activities organised jointly. The heritage spaces of a polycentric museum can have shared management and programming with a local association that has a specific interest in them.

All this, however, is the visible and material part of the museum, because the basis is already, and will increasingly be, the digital and virtual museum:

- The fact that the websites of many city museums are almost mere news bulletins about their regular activity and archives of past activities, rather

36. See National Council on Public History, "How do we define public history?", https://ncph.org/what-is-public-history/about-the-field/ [accessed on 21 September 2022].

than a digital compendium of all the results of their work, shows a renunciation of their role as urban knowledge hubs that it will surely not take long to reconsider.

• The fact that the museum's activities, now filmed or streamed, have a capacity for impact far beyond the city limits is a fact of great repercussions: as before on television, and now in a general way, the broadcasting of the event is as or more important than its real-life materialisation.

• The fact that virtual construction and the so-called "augmented reality" of heritage spaces and exhibitions, whether stable or temporary, is increasingly effective, allows us to imagine a virtual museum available to everyone on a global scale that may be a privilege to visit one day for those who view it from afar and it may be easier to visit on any day for those who see it from the city itself and its surrounding area.

Finally, social media networks: here, experience is scarce and the importance is very great. The risk of being carried away by controversies fervently recommends that one flee ephemeral debates. But one has to find a way to be present. It is no easy task, because it directly affects the museum's public visibility in all its aspects, from the most political and cultural to the most social and economic ones.

City museums and urban economics

Any museum offers a boost of the highest order for local development, because it attracts visitors. These are public services that generate private benefits in their surrounding environment, almost never compensated through tourist taxes, among other possibilities.

The above consideration seems obvious, but the museum is required to cover its needs with its own income, when the wealth it generates is mainly for its surrounding environment. Nothing is said about this, no measures of their impact exist. It is a mistake, at least in the case of city museums, to consider that the fundamental figure is the number of visitors; today it is often said that this is no longer true, but in fact it is the only one that most urban policymakers rely on.

Nor is it taken into account that museums are, above all, at the peak of a broad pyramid of technology, industry, services and knowledge, with numerous companies and professions that generate broad-spectrum know-how and a considerable urban economy. The advances made by the digital economy will make increasingly evident the potential of city museums, which can reinvent themselves, in this sense, as true RDI centres for digital knowledge and innovation and virtual restoration.

If, in addition, city museums act as practical think tanks on urban knowledge, they can help to reclassify many activities in the tourism sector, with alternative visiting formulas for visitors in little-known urban areas.[37] Thus, the visit would also be democratised for tourists, who would see their right to the city respected, by ceasing to be considered as mere consumers by the tourist business.

Beyond the city, if the museum functions as an innovation hub in the fields of knowledge, industry and services, it can become part of the city's export economy and an ambassador to other cities, through formulas for international peer-to-peer cooperation.

However, the balance sheet must also take the costs into account. There is currently a fundamental social limit in many cities in the museum economy: the hiring and working conditions of the staff who serve the public and deal with security, cleaning and maintenance, among other tasks. We should not forget this when talking about museums and the urban economy related to them. Situations vary greatly but, in general, there is, at least in Europe, a high level of outsourcing and low wages. That is why it is also necessary to be careful on the issue of volunteering, so as not to contribute to job insecurity.

These are not minor issues, if a museum aspires to run as a "citizens' museum": citizens are understood as citizenry: all people of any time, origin and condition related to the city by living there or by using it.

Ten rules for a citizens' museum

Based on the reflections outlined so far, we want to conclude this presentation with a systematisation of the principles explained, as we worked on them at MUHBA during the period of seclusion due to the pandemic. A period that, through daily videoconference calls, turned out to be very useful for specifying the step from "museum of the city" to "museum of the citizenry": from a "city museum" to a "citizens' museum".

City museums, as we have discussed extensively, can be an effective meeting point between the multiple landings of a history that circulates on various scales: global geopolitics, state and national environments, cities and their numerous radii of influence. Likewise, city museums can be an effective meeting point for numerous activities with an economic, social and cultural impact that goes beyond the city.

We had the opportunity to discuss these issues at various international virtual meetings in the early days of the pandemic. The first was organised by the OECD and ICOM on 10 April 2020. It was followed by those at the Laboratorio Aperto di Ravenna on 18 May, at the Intermuseum in Moscow on 29 May and at the Colectivo Pro Ecosistema Cultural in Mexico City on 6 June.

37. Joan Roca i Albert, "The itinerary as..."

CONNECTING CITIES, CONNECTING CITIZENS
FOR A NEW GENERATION CITY MUSEUM, "MUHBA COMPASS"

Knowledge and education
The city museum as a *knowledge centre*, with a programme of research into history, heritage and a new museum formats and a determinated commitment to education, as a *museum-school*.

Participation and co-management
The museum as a *laboratory*; a meeting place for citizens with a programme in various formats, with formulas for *co-managing* heritage spaces with districts, study centres and residents' associations.

Transdisciplinary approach
Looking at the city's heritage based on urban history: from the museum collections and archaeological spaces to architecture, town planning, food and literary and artistic careers.

Multi-centrism
A *network museum*, with its galleries all over the city. This fabric of heritage spaces and territories should make it possible to provide a choral historical story built around Casa Padellàs, conceived as the Home of the History of Barcelona (Casa de la Història de Barcelona).

The MUHBA Compass presented to the public in 2019, within the exhibition Barcelona Flashback

And finally the intervention made during the colloquium "City museums in times of the pandemic", organised by CAMOC / ICOM on 27 October 2020, and to which the museums of New York City, Frankfurt, Lisbon and Kraków were invited.[38]

The pandemic accelerated the digital revolution, with new combinations between face-to-face and virtual activities, with artificial intelligence on the horizon. We find ourselves before a Copernican inversion: the digital museum becomes the base. Not good news though, if the change is only technological.

Digitalisation must bring about a paradigm shift, with a new urban museology that contributes to making the museum a public centre for clear and rigorous knowledge of the city, in the best enlightened tradition. Their role as *knowledge and heritage hubs* can be as much or more relevant than in the past when today, social media networks, in a volatile world, can lead to creating an illusory world full of lies, short and simple.

Here we transcribe below, without making any changes, the ten ideas in which the previous presuppositions were specified in the list published in the Museum's newsletter that was publicly echoed.[39]

It was at the time of emergence from the pandemic, it was necessary to accelerate the metamorphosis from "city museum" to "citizens' museum" in order to complete it to the fullest with a view to the museum's 80th anniversary, in 2023, and we proposed to them a debate organized in webinar format by the OECD and ICOM on 10 April 2020, as a set of ten rules that we dared to present as a whole series of "revolutions", as a stimulus in those days when we were all locked away at home:

1. A conceptual revolution: a new institutional definition
ICOM requires a change in the general definition of museums, to make it more social and more global: it would have been very helpful if it had been approved at the 2019 meeting in Kyoto. At the same time, city museums, which have, since their beginnings, been somewhere between urban policies and cultural policies, must be able to rethink their specific definition. We talk about MUHBA as a "heritage centre for urban knowledge and citizen-building" and we propose to situate its public activity at the crossroads between four basic rights: the right to the city, the right to knowledge, the right to beauty, and the right to identity.

38. See https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/museuhistoria/ca/seccio/xarxes-internacionals.

39. Joan Roca i Albert, "Innovar en temps de pandèmia: decàleg per a un museu de la ciutadania", *MUHBA Butlletí*, 36 (2020), https://www.barcelona.cat/museuhistoria/ca/formats-i-activitats/butlletins/butlleti-muhba-numero-36.

2. Narrative revolution: the museum as a knowledge hub
Without research to fuel new urban narratives, going far beyond documenting exhibits, a city museum is unlikely to produce knowledge of significance for its citizens and orient its collections. More research needs to be done on the trajectory of the city from the urban history perspective, and it must be possible to formulate this knowledge in an accessible way in order to favour the enlightened maxim about daring to know, *sapere aude*! In this regard, it is necessary to rethink cultural marketing based on audience segmentation, because of the implicit risk of going from considering diversity to renouncing equality.
3. Heritage revolution: strategic city collection
Objects must be both an end point and a starting point. City museums must be able to mark out their narrative publicly with the pertinent documents, objects and buildings, which are not always available. The definition of a strategic collection is as important as the technological innovation to make it accessible. Museums must be R&D centres of innovation in technologies for representation. With 3-D scanning, objects and buildings are entering a new age of technical reproducibility, following what was represented by the development of photography and printing, as theorised about by Walter Benjamin in 1936, and as approached some years later by André Malraux more specifically in relation to museums.
4. Revolution of formats: the equivalence between genres
Exhibits are an essential format for museum work, but they can no longer be considered the crowning genre in museums that aspire to show the city, inside and outside of their premises. Between virtual recreations of moveable and immoveable assets, georeferenced cartography, guides and books, audiovisual materials and urban itineraries, city museums can multiply their potential by using the most appropriate format in each case. To favour this equivalence between exhibitory, written, audiovisual, and urban genres, a new website format is required that brings together the museum's different kinds of knowledge under one big portal, an echo of Borges' mythical library.
5. Educational revolution: museum school and school museum
With the COVID-19 crisis, schools come less often to the museum, but that has also accelerated the journey towards the new model that MUHBA was already working on. The design of next-generation audiovisual and digital materials, added to teleconferencing and distance learning, has allowed the museum to have a greater presence at schools, and subsequently school visits to the museum can then be geared towards the direct and participatory appropriation of heritage elements.

This school-museum tandem can help to blur the barriers between culture and education: the city museum becomes a school museum and a key institution in the social construction of knowledge.
6. Citizens' revolution: the multi-scale museum
Proposals limited to community dynamisation of the neighbourhood, as has occasionally been proposed in debates on the future of city museums, by not allowing it to be situated in broader contexts and compared, have little potential for emancipation. With digital expansion, the work of the museum in numerous formats can expand cultural democracy, with the involvement of the urban collective, if favourable, both in substantive narratives and in social practices, multi-scale ways of seeing and doing between the "neighbourhood", "city" and broader "territories", from the neighbourhood community to the global world.
7. Tourist revolution: the remote museum
Increasingly comprehensive virtual representations and the digital museum, conceived as a hub of urban historical and heritage knowledge, allow for a qualitative leap in home-based knowledge, with the democratisation of what, in the 18th century, was only for the European aristocracy who, before undertaking the Grand Tour, equipped themselves with good guides for the trip. City museums must be able to design "urban knowledge packs" that help to promote sustainable tourism, between the right to the city of the residents and the right of visitors (who are, in fact, displaced citizens) to learn, compare, and share.
8. Organisational revolution: the cross-disciplinary museum
The need to reinvent procedures and results in an unexpected working-from-home regime has made it possible to increase, in many aspects, institutional productivity in times of pandemic. The urgency of the moment, in a brand new context, favoured a less hierarchic and more cross-disciplinary organisation, with more cross-relations between subjects, projects, staff, and collaborators. This was helped by the fact that the museum was already using a networked model that aimed to connect personal skills and general objectives. The challenge now is to consolidate it. If we are to believe Max Weber, this may be one of the most important questions of the current time.
9. Sustainable revolution: an economic RDI agent
The reduction of museums to the role of tourist bait is too schematic. Museums are the tip of an economic iceberg, on which many businesses with little visibility depend. City museums, this at least is what MUHBA is aiming for, can stimulate the export economy as R&D hubs in the treatment of movable and immovable heritage, urban history and knowledge, and civic museology. If the museums fall into decline, a broad

industrial and services sector will also decline. In post-pandemic times, Keynesian cultural policies may be highly productive socially if they stimulate productive innovation.

10. Solidarity revolution: the resilient museum

The city museums of the 21st-century, conceived as heritage nodes that connect knowledge, spaces and citizens, can become poles of scientific, technical, and economic innovation and, at the same time, educational and cultural facilities linked to their surroundings. It would be unthinkable for them not to be sensitive to the social and political unrest of very difficult times, when death has struck so close to home, and they can lose much civic legitimacy if they fail to take care of their direct and indirect workers. Most city museums receive public funding and a better definition of their role (returning to the first point) would facilitate their insertion into future cultural and urban policies, in favour of the institution and its service to the citizens.

Part 2:
Major transformation projects in six city museums

MUHBA: from city museum to citizens' museum

Joan Roca i Albert and MUHBA Team (Daniel Alcubierre, Teresa Macià, Elena Pérez, Ramon Pujades and Edgar Straehle)

Introduction

City museums are significantly different from other museums in terms of concept and in terms of trajectory, as they are often more closely linked to the concept of "city" than to the concept of "museum". In Barcelona, the museum was formally founded in 1943 and has gone through different stages in terms of its objectives and in its compilation of tangible heritage, and today, the proposal is to more clearly assume its role as a museum of the citizens or citizen's museum. It should be noted that its founder, Agustí Duran i Sanpere, was already talking about a "citizen museum" in the 1920s. The aim of this article is, above all, to highlight the numerous internal mechanisms connected with the reinvention of the museum from this citizens' perspective. I have therefore adopted a sequential structure, like the brushstrokes of an Impressionist painting.

Subsequently, the City History Museums and Research Network of Europe initiative was launched at MUHBA in 2009, to work jointly from studies in urban history and associated disciplines and from the city museums. The purpose was, and is, to provide impulse to a network of European museums that could act as a mirror of and gateway to the fabric of cities that make up the backbone of the continent. And we do this with the conviction that showing and explaining cities is key to building a democratic Europe, in light of the difficulties of our times.

The trajectory of the Museum of Barcelona

In the origins of the Museum

The museum had a prior formalisation at the Barcelona International Exhibition of 1929, in the Pavilion of the city. It had links with the Historical Archive of the City, created some years before and directed by Agustí Duran i Sanpere. In the pavilion dedicated to Barcelona in the 1929 Exhibition, there was a floor that explained the port, another the municipal services, and a third the history and future of Barcelona, with a display designed by Agustí Duran i Sanpere and Josep de Calassanç Serra Ràfols, the embryo of the future city museum. The historical discourse resulted in the model by the Rubió i Tudurí brothers on the future Barcelona.[1]

1. Joan Roca i Albert, "Estratègies d'inserció i interconnexió de Barcelona com a metròpoli moderna", in Ramon Grau (coord.), "Presència i lligams territorials de Barcelona. Vint segles de vida urbana", (*Barcelona quaderns d'història* 18, 2012), p. 277-322, https://raco.cat/index.php/BCNQuadernsHistoria/article/view/261842.

After the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) Agustí Duran i Sanpere proposed the transfer of the museum to Casa Padellàs, on the Roman remains of the Plaça del Rei, which had just been excavated next to the Palau Major. The Museum opened in 1943 in that environment and was a breath of fresh air for the city, in the midst of the sordidness of the early times of the Franco regime.

The fact that the Barcelona museum had at that time a prefiguration that reached contemporary times, with industrialisation, the Cerdà Plan and the ideas of the future city, ensured a bridge to the two aspects of the city: national capital of Catalonia and working-class and industrial metropolis. The fact that this could happen during the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera already pointed to something important: city museums have more freedom than other types of cultural institutions with regard to their critical approach to the urban world.

The conception of the Barcelona museum by Duran i Sanpere, with his commitment to relocating it, in the historic (and historicist, with the creation of the Gothic Quarter) centre, made it possible to show, within the limits imposed by the Franco regime, the century's second dictatorship, that led by General Franco, the historical formation of a capital (on top of the Roman city there was the medieval royal palace and archives) and the formation of the contemporary metropolis, with the calicoes fabrics and the Cerdà Plan. The peripheries of the 20th-century remained pending, until they were incorporated in recent decades.

The 2008 Strategic Plan

The need to reinvent the city museum became clear toward the end of the first decade of this century, amidst a great technological change that turned society's relatship with information on its head, as manifested with the spread of smartphone technology, and a generalised economic and geopolitical crisis. Moreover, Barcelona was in turmoil due to the little debated transition from industrial metropolis to tourist centre and due to the disdain shown for the linguistic and political personality of the Catalan nation by the elites based in Madrid, who controlled the deep structures of the Spanish state.[2]

The MUHBA Strategic Plan was presented on 3 June 2008, with the slogan "Museum of the city, mirror of Barcelona". The plan set out three fundamental goals: "A) The communal house of knowledge of Barcelona, offering research, heritage, and exhibitions for people of widely varying interests in the knowledge of the trajectory of the city and in the appreciation of its heritage; B) A museum rooted in the city and open to the world, the driver and backbone of a future City History Museums Network of Europe (the network

2. Josep M. Muñoz, "L'entrevista: Joan Roca i Albert, el museu com a mirall", *L'Avenç*, 357 (May 2010). Joan Roca i Albert has been the director of MUHBA since 2007.

did not yet exist), within the framework of an agreement with other European and Mediterranean cities; and C) A laboratory of citizenry for natives, immigrants, and tourists, with many meeting forums, begining with the Friends of the Museum".[3]

The public mission

The museum as "mirror" of and "gateway" to the city

The differentiated consideration of "tourists" and "local visitors", and the idea of segmentation of audiences, to diferenciate visitors following strategies originating from commercial marketing strategies leads to an excessively classifying and socially regressive cultural system. For almost fifteen years, we have seen at MUHBA that study seminars, publications and highly qualified visits and methodologically well-structured urban itineraries attract the interest of the majority of users, if they are presented and proposed in an appropriate manner. Rigorous historical research on the city, shared with the citizens, is the core of the museum's social and cultural innovation.[4]

Neighbourhoods, city, world, a multi-scale facility

The Museum of Barcelona, like those of so many other European capitals, is today a multicentre museum, the whole city and with its own spaces in 8 of the 10 districts of the municipality of Barcelona. Working on a dual scale, of city and neighbourhood allows it to be both an "exceptional" facility due to its unique nature in the city, and a "community" facility in the neighbourhoods where it is present. On the understanding that, due to its dual mission of explaining and representing, the museum is always linked to a heritage space, unlike other facilities.

The role of the museum has also been projected in interurban relations, especially in Europe, but also with cities in Latin America or Africa, through the Directorate of Global Justice and International Cooperation of Barcelona City Council. Strategic cooperation has recently been put forward between cities of Africa and Europe, for which we have sought the support of the network UCGL (United Cities and Local Governments). The idea is always the same: to establish links between cities through their city museums, whether existing or newly created, in favour of the exchanging and the progress of urban knowledge. This is one of the big topics for the future.

3. MUHBA, History Museum of Barcelona. Summary of the Museum's New Strategic Plan, Barcelona, 3 June 2008, https://www.bcn.cat/museuhistoriaciutat/docs/PlaEstAng.pdf.

4. Joan Roca i Albert, "El Museu d'Història de Barcelona, portal de la ciudad", *Her&Mus*, 2 (2009), p. 98-105, https://raco.cat/index.php/Hermus/article/view/314618/404778.

MUHBA Oliva Artés. Exhibition space and laboratory focusing on the contemporary city. Photo: MUHBA

Driving the production economy

There are no good indicators to measure the economic impact of museums, and this is even more true of city museums, due to their urban and often multi-centre nature. We tend to think a lot about tourism and little about the impact on commerce and industry. MUHBA has nearly a million visitors per year to all of its 18 spaces, but this data point does not indicate the value of the economic, social and cultural capital generated by the projects shared with research centres, study organisations, neighbourhood associations, and educational centres. Not to mention its growing presence on the Internet or social media.

In terms of industry and services, there is a lack of studies on the museum's real impact on the companies involved in the production of exhibitions, audiovisual material, books, visits, and itineraries. And we can say the same of companies dedicated to building and restoring museums: architecture, engineering, lighting, museography, image, audiovisuals, etc. At the same time, we should note the task of MUHBA as an R&D space in restoration, laser scanning, and virtual museology, especially with regard to the work on the chapel of Saint Michael in the Pedralbes Monastery, in Palau Major, and in the domus

romana on Carrer Avinyó. The economic volume of the activity is notable, as is the exportable know-how generated. It would be a good idea to be able to measure it, as the museum is not only (not remotely) a tourist attraction.

A knowledge hub

The constitution of the Research and Debate Centre

The municipal initiative has been a leader since the 1920s in historical studies of Barcelona, through archaeological and documentary research. The MUHBA Centre for Research and Debate (CRED), which began in 2008 and which will become the Centre for Research, Documentation and Debate (CREDD) from 2023, is therefore becoming part of a long tradition. More than a centre, it is a programme of the museum, as it has no personnel, besides the minimum team necessary to organise its activity as an intellectual meeting point. However, over the years, it has consolidated a programme of research areas that feed the objectives of the museum. Thanks to a rigorous and participatory process of constructing knowledge it has been decisive in transforming the museum.

The paradigm of urban history

In recent years, many museums have removed the word history from their names, whereas at MUHBA, we have chosen to maintain the H for history at the heart of its logo — and with a red dot. The idea is not to provide an impulse to any "official" or "institutionalised" version of the past but to understand it by researching and showing the numerous options the men and women of the city have had to face in different eras. Hence the need to provide an impulse to urban historiography, as well as having other social sciences and studies in art and culture. The renovation of the 12 spaces of the museum, which will be completed in 2023, would not have been possible without the impulse of the studies on urban history.

An open research system

The blurring of the line between innovation and dissemination, between research and outreach, has been decisive. Maximum rigour is compatible with maximum openness, as the conception of a project of public history. The opening up of conferences and congresses has managed to improve both the public expression and social utility of the research, with a very direct impact even on university practices: there are now over 50 specialists from different Catalan universities working with MUHBA, which has become a showcase of their work and, as a group, they help in knowledge transfer.

The Centre for Research and Debate has thus had a decisive effect on the programming of the museum and has made it possible to discover new talents, in a climate of shared knowledge. The fields of research are urban history,

Strategic planning for the museum. Drawing by Andrea Manenti. Photo: MUHBA

archaeology, architectural heritage, culinary heritage, and literary and musical heritage (the only fields where the museum has influence) and museological studies, in the sense of cultural democratisation.

History with question marks

In the framework of a system of crossed-departmental work at the museum, the formula, Interrogate Barcelona, which was disseminated by the educational programme, oversaw a reconstructive pathway critical of social thinking, after the postmodern deconstruction. The purpose was to consolidate a rigorous and clear, but always interrogative and open vision of the options that have configured the trajectory of the city. On this basis, Barcelona Flashback, the synthesis exhibition installed in the Casa de la Història (House of History), which acts as the heart of MUHBA, makes explicit this desire to follow it as a method of knowledge that helps to rethink and give renewed impetus to the Enlightenment after the profound crisis of modernity.

The institutional links of CREDD

If urban history is taken as the foundations of the city museum, the problem is that almost no university or centre for urban studies in Europe currently has a project for writing comprehensible urban histories of cities with

the rigor, controversy and interest that has marked national histories since the 19th-century. Barcelona, perhaps because it is a capital without a state and a manufacturing metropolis outside the continent's industrial heartland, has a long tradition of studies of urban history, which should now be translated from Catalan to Spanish and other languages.

This approach has made it an attractive node for the universities of Europe and other continents, which want to establish relations with it because of its projects, which the museum always selects based on coherence with its goals. In 2023, MUHBA, along with the European Museum Forum and the Council of Europe are organising the EMYA awards, and in 2026, MUHBA will be the showcase for European urban history, with hundreds of specialists called together by the European Association for Urban History, for which the museum is a member of the scientific committee.

Building the contemporary collection

The weight of the archaeological tradition

Since the museum of the city of Barcelona was founded in 1943, most of the collections of the city from before that time are spread among other museums. The museum's own collection is largely based on the archaeological research conducted in its heritage spaces. Moreover, since the museum is, by law, the trustee of the materials from digs in the municipality, all the material from them has been deposited there. For this reason, the museum's presents an imbalance, with numerous ancient, medieval and modern pieces, but fewer from more recent centuries and, in fact, very few from the 20th-century. This has made the project for building the contemporary collection, with the collaboration of citizens, indispensable.

Creation of the map of heritage spaces

The museum combines movable property and real estate, which has a decisive weight. The potential of the Roman wall and of the medieval and post-medieval Palau Major, with the archaeological digs of the city of antiquity and late antiquity under Casa Padellàs and Plaça del Rei has stimulated interest in also having heritage spaces that are representative of the contemporary city of the industrial era, as well as Vil·la Joana, dedicated to the poet Verdaguer and part of the museum since the 1960s.

The incorporation of contemporary heritage spaces began in the first decade of the 21st-century with the Guard House at Park Güell, Refuge 307 from the Spanish Civil War, and the upper floor of Can Saladrigas, which the museum then changed for the Oliva Artés building, located in the Poblenou Central Park. The process has continued with the inclusion of heritage spaces that the museum has conceptualised as the Besòs Axis, as it has been established along

this river, which crosses the eastern periphery of Barcelona: the Fabra i Coats textile factory, the Casa de l'Aigua water-pumping station, and the public housing development Cases Barates in Bon Pastor.

A useful collection for the museum's objectives

The first major step toward the collection in our times was the donation of collections of industrial pieces, that of Fabra i Coats, created by the association Friends of Fabra i Coats, made up of workers at the factory when it closed in 2005. The second step was the reflection on the need to think of both history and collection, with a number of seminars that took on a European scope thanks, precisely, to the CITYHIST network, in Barcelona and the Copenhagen Museum, of which Jette Sandahl was the director at the time. It was a long-term commitment, without results from one day to the next. Thus, the exhibition MUHBA Laboratory. Collecting the City, from 2011 to 2014, organized to showcase some of the museum's collections and incentivize loans and donations from citizens has had an important but also very slow impact; it is now being noticed above all a decade later. In fact, it is confirmed that those collaboration projects between the museum and citizens that aspire to leave a relevant mark have, in general, a similar pace: at least a decade is necessary.

Metamorphosis of the Collections Centre

The rapid construction of the contemporary collection has had to be done without having an appropriate storage facility, due to the saturation of the MUHBA Collections Centre in Zona Franca.[5] This is a situation that still remains to be resolved after 2023, but it was considered to be very important not to stop the building of the collection, which has experienced increasingly extensive participation by the citizenry. Meanwhile, the facility to allow all the museum's reserve spaces to be visitable is under way, with the inauguration of the Welcome Space at the Zona Franca Collections Centre in 2022.

Network museum: the whole system

Research, heritage and citizenry, all at once

The commitment to a museum spread throughout the city, with a supporting core conceived as a House of History and with the heritage spaces distributed throughout the districts, is what has given substance to the recent reorganization of the museum. This is not just any diversification of spaces, but one where

5. Daniel Alcubierre, "Zona Franca, el pol R+D+I del centre de col·leccions del MUHBA", *MUHBA Butlletí*, 34, (2018), p. 19.

each heritage space selected must both substantiate a specific historical point of view on the urban site and characterise and represent its close surroundings.

With regard to management, the multicentre nature should not, in the digital era, involve a substantial increase in costs: the increase in spending is minimal if timetables are properly managed, using just-in-time formulas during the week, especially with the collaboration of organisations resident at the facilities, as will be the case of Fabra i Coats (Amics de la Fabra i Coats), at Bon Pastor (Centre d'Estudis i Arxiu Vilabesòs), and at other museum centres, to specify that they will also be jointly managed.

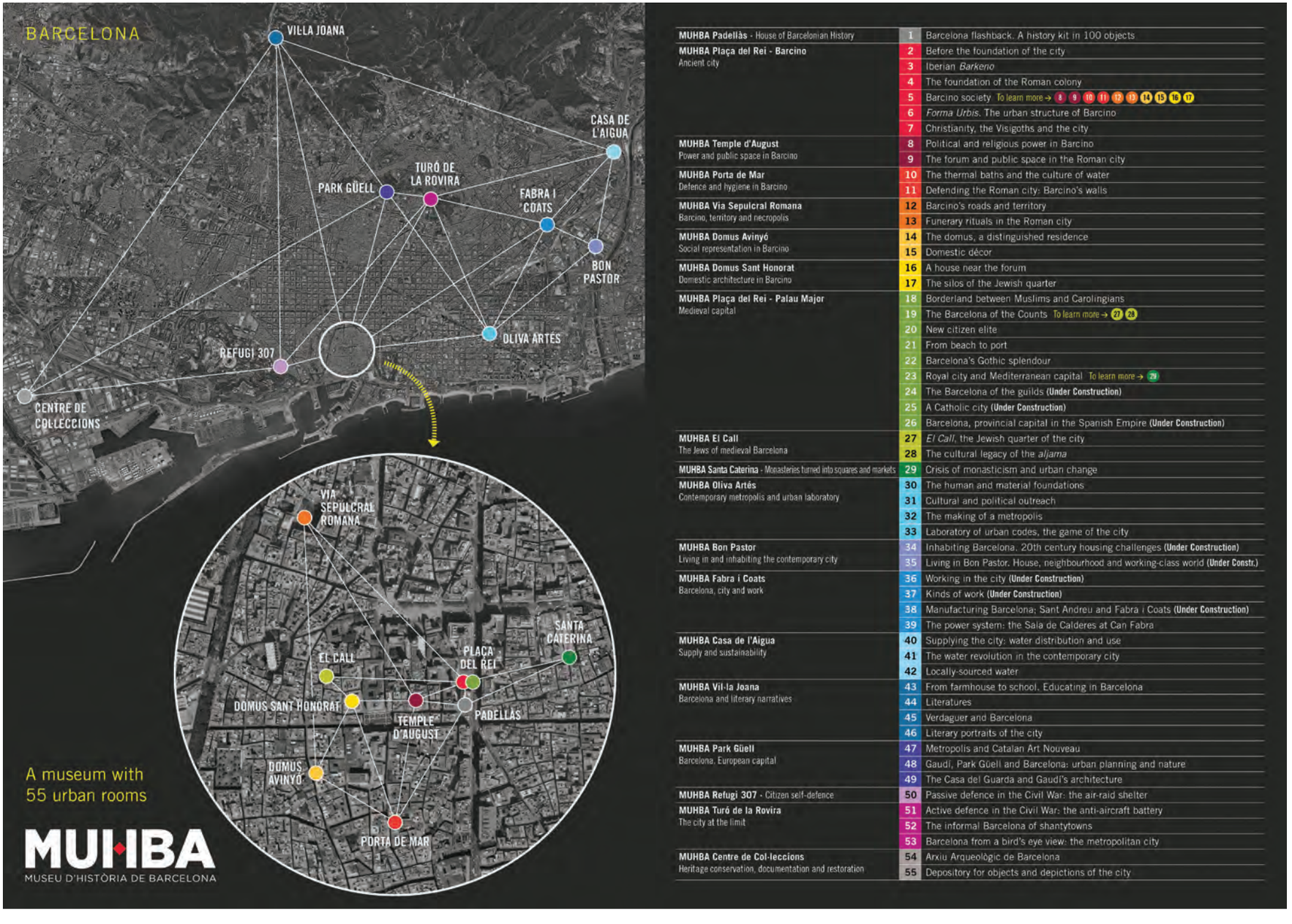
The conquest of the urban space. Cultural and urban policy

Agustí Duran i Sanpere, in a speech he gave at the Spanish Royal Academy of Letters, on the occasion of his retirement in 1957, explained that, beyond strategy, the museum had been built based on opportunities. And we are still at it three-quarters of a century later. The multicentre tradition has been there since the beginning of the museum, with the incorporation into the then Museum of the History of the City of Barcelona of archaeological spaces in the historic old town, as part of the operation "Gothic Quarter".

In more recent decades, the incorporation of heritage from the peripheries, arising from industrialisation and migratory growth, has led to a change in scale. The choice of the spaces, between strategy and opportunity, has not been easy, but has, in the end, worked quite well. These are heritage sites that are related to each other and that make it possible to create a powerful heritage trail and to be able to contribute to the definition of a verb-based museum. From the verbs "supply" (Casa de l'Aigua) and "work" (Fabra i Coats) to the verbs "inhabit" (Bon Pastor) and "urbanize" (Oliva Artés), among others.

The presence of the museum in the urban policies of the neighbourhoods to the east and north of Barcelona has made it possible to design the Besòs heritage and museum trail, with a view of the city as a whole from the periphery to the centre. Like Frankfurt's Museumsufer, but the other way round.[6] Implementation of the museum in the Eixample district, the new Cerdà Plan, is still pending. For the past decade, MUHBA has been in talks with Casa Ametller, work of the architect Puig i Cadafalch, as a space for explaining this part of the city.

6. Joan Roca i Albert, "City Museums and Urban Strategies" (2022), in Jelena SAVIC (ed.). The Right to the City, CAMOC Kraków 2020 (2021). Book of Proceedings. ICOM-CAMOC. [online] retrieved from https://camoc.mini.icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2022/06/KRAKOW-CONFERENCE-BOOK-OF-PROCEEDINGS-for-website.pdf; Joan Roca i Albert. "At the Crossroad of Cultural and Urban Policies. Rethinking the City and the City Museum", in Jelena Savic (ed.), The Future of Museums of Cities. CAMOC Frankfurt 2018. ICOM – CAMOC. 25. [online] Retrieved from: https://camoc.mini.icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/04/FRANKFURT_CONFERENCE_-_BOOK_OF_PROCEEDINGS_Final_LR__2_.pdf.



The 55 rooms of MUHBA distributed in a network throughout the city. Drawing by Andrea Manenti.
Photo: MUHBA

The 55 urban rooms of the Museum

"No, it's not possible". This was the first impression of the entire MUHBA team when, in 2018, we proposed reorganising the spaces and narratives of the museum into a conceptually coherent ensemble in historical and heritage terms. The museum has been very selective when accepting and seeking new spaces, currently there are 19, in anticipation of their articulation as a simultaneously consistent and flexible narrative of the city. In fact, these spaces had already woven years ago an overall view of the city, but it was necessary to articulate them in a much narrower way in a list of conceptually linked items and spaces, finally formed by 55 "urban rooms" that question the city's trajectory from numerous points in the centre and the periphery of the city.[7]

The overall MUHBA system of historical knowledge and urban heritage for building citizenry has, in fact, three supporting nodes. The first, the epicentre of the entire museum, is the House of History of Barcelona at MUHBA Padellàs, which we have mentioned above and which we will discuss in the next point. The second is the MUHBA Zona Franca Collections Centre, with which the reserve centres of the contemporary collections will have to be linked in the future. The third is the MUHBA Oliva Artés citizen laboratory, which will amalgamate the proposals from other entities and institutions within the museum project.

The house of history

BCN Meeting point — a meeting point with an historical perspective

When, in 1943, under the inspiration of Agustí Duran i Sanpere, the Municipal Institute of History was created to frame both the Historical Archive and the museum as well as management of urban archaeology, the idea was already to add the management of heritage spaces, communicate the history of Barcelona, stimulate research, and visit the notable heritage elements of the city. Thus, it should be borne in mind that they are fundamental elements in the museum's character and therefore we are thus inventing nothing new with the transformation of the city museum into the citizens' museum. It is necessary to remember that Duran already spoke about the museum space dedicated to Barcelona at the 1929 International Exhibition as a "citizen museum".[8]

7. Elena Pérez Rubiales, "The 55 urban rooms of MUHBA: a single frame for a network city museum" (2023 at press), in Jelena Savic (ed.), *Connecting cities, connecting citizens: Towards a shared sustainability*, CAMOC Barcelona 2021. Book of Proceedings. ICOM-CAMOC.

8. See AMCB [Contemporary Municipal Archive of Barcelona], Box 47184, Barcelona retrospective. Group 32A, "Preceso a la Exposición. Pliegos de descarga". Documentary research carried out by Lluís Sales & Cristina Bobillo.

The Flemish Clock, a metaphor for the time in the Agora Museum, designed as a free public space. Photo: MUHBA

The purpose of the entire process of transformation currently under way is to consolidate the historical explanation of urban society and its insertion in broader regional spaces and areas of power. The structuring of MUHBA Padellàs as the House of the History of Barcelona will reflect this change, and will be distributed from top to bottom based on the level of intensity of its use. On the ground floor will be the school museum and the agora museum, designed as an open public space of information on the city to propitiate new ways of understanding it. The first and second floors will host an interrogative synthesis exhibition on the city. And on the top floor, there will be the Centre for Research, Documentation and Debate. The museum offices will also be inside the site.

Agora-museum and Museum-school

The new transparent covering of the courtyard has made it possible to install the large municipal clock of 1576 there, known as the Flemish Clock, and a number of clocks from different eras and spaces in the city, a metaphor for the time of Barcelona that merges with that of the citizens' museum. The set of proposals for the agora museum environment designed as a free public space, provide an idea of Barcelona through films, interactive elements, books and maps, laid out like a cabinet for urban exploration, a meeting point to incentivise alternative and personal ways of visiting the city through the spaces of the museum. There will also be the assistance of qualified personnel to guide or explain to visitors these new proposals. Its name for the public will be Ágora BCN.

On the other side of the courtyard, the Museum-school will have two classrooms that can be booked and used with considerable freedom by schools for longer or shorter stays (some schools come from very far away), with their own programmes and the freedom to use the heritage sites.[9] The MUHBA provides tools and resources to be able to read the city. A basic vocabulary to be able to understand the grammar of the city that can be worked on firstly from the classroom, before going out into the street to observe and compare in order, upon return to school, extract conclusions and share them (which has good examples in both the United States and Cuba), in all of its centres, the museum will have a school space, as a bridge for an osmotic relationship between the education system and the cultural system. The project is based on the potential of urban history in educational syllabuses, as a substantial scale for explaining the world, with the perspective of designing textbooks in the future with this approach.

9. Elena Pérez Rubiales (2020), "Right to the City, Right to the Citizens: For a New Generation of City Museums" in J. Savic & C. Chiu (eds.), City Museums as Knowledge Hubs. Past, Present and Future. Book of Proceedings, Camoc Kyoto 2019. ICOM-CAMOC. [online] Retrieved from: https://camoc.mini.icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/09/KYOTO-CONFERENCE-BOOK-OF-PROCEEDINGS-fs0915-web.pdf.

Barcelona Flashback and linked exhibition projects

The synthesis exhibition Barcelona Flashback had a hundred objects in its experimental version, from 2019 to 2021, and will have 150 in the new version. This stable exhibit aims to encourage methodological training to learn about the city. Its initial space is configured as a series of mirrors that surround the visitor with images of the city throughout the 20th-century and invite them to "pass through the looking glass", like Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There*. From here, the exhibition establishes a journey in five sessions, presided by question marks, in the search for a well-articulated historiographic expression of the trajectory of the city, with a tone that is more interrogative than declarative.

After having passed through the initial Alice's mirror, the exhibition is approached as both an introspective and an urban journey:

1. Geographies, which approaches the current city from its urban form, the architecture, the social and political space, and its representations: one example among others these are the threads that weave together the first impression when we want to get to know the city.

2. Witnesses, which, taking this initial knowledge, approaches the way to question written texts, oral sources, images and objects, which are the materials that will allow us to move toward a more articulated vision.

3. Past times, with a whole series of interrogatives on the options of Barcelona that marked successive periods in its trajectory, from the Roman Barcino to the 18th-century, in dialogue with geopolitics.

4. Recent times, with a historiographically contrasted vision of the "present pasts"; i.e., the time of the "industrial metropolis" from the 18th century to the 21st-century, with that when, in 2008, the economic crisis and the technological revolution of the smartphone exploded on the scene. And finally:

5. Futures, which only shows interrogatives and documents, where the museum refrains from making any kind of judgement. This is just the awakening of the Alice story, which has a blurred profile between dream and reality. It is up to the visitor to decide...

Three other exhibition spaces revolve around Barcelona Flashback. In the gallery on the top floor there will be the Gothic Quarter vantage point, with a reflection on the nature of heritage as a contemporary construct, in line with the reflections of Françoise Choay and studies on historicist monumentalisation in Barcelona. Running round the first floor will be another small stable exhibit, MUHBA, the history of the history museum, as an essential narrative for reasons of intellectual honesty, in line with Pierre Bourdieu: the perspective from which we are talking must be made explicit. Finally, the temporary exhibitions space, also on the first floor, recovers the old name of *Urban Monographs* for designating the role of temporary exhibitions and installations.

The gallery of public history

As well as the Gothic Quarter vantage point, the top floor will contain the spaces dedicated to study and its public manifestations in different formats. The new distribution will make it possible to merge the archive library with the activity of academic and citizen impulse for research in a public-history setting. There will be spaces to host local study centres in the city and to include the department of publications and to expand the range of studies offered by the museum.

The new MUHBA Centre for Research, Documentation and Debate, the CREDD, will be opened, which will finally have a physical headquarters and will incorporate the second "D" for "Documentation". As well as promoting the areas of research already under way, the CREDD will, in the near future, include publications and its initial objectives will include promoting the translation of works referring to Barcelona. Dialogues, seminars and conferences aside, one of its flagships will continue to be the course Urban Narratives, Theory and Practice of the Historic Itinerary, whose teachers include more than 20 academics linked to the museum, such as curators and authors of exhibitions, itineraries, guide, and other publications, and also different members of the museum team.

Virtual MUHBA everywhere

The creation of the virtual museum, with technologies based on laser scanner, photogrammetry and 360º photography, is taking place in a context of scarce resources, thanks to the support of the Virtual Modelling Laboratory of the Technical University of Catalonia. Technological diversification enables the optimisation of resources, choosing the most suitable tool for each project. The virtualisation of temporary exhibitions enables them to be permanently integrated, like yet another room, to the city narrative that is offered to citizens from the website. The digitalisation of heritage spaces seeks not only to allow circulation through the rooms, as has already been achieved by most museums, but to obtain high-precision and enduring documentation, that facilitates the architectural and conservation work, the heritage and museum exhibitions, and the design of new uses for the space. In other words, representations that are a "unifying force" for all the processes of the museum. It is a slow process.

Reinventing the programme

Urban history and cultural democracy

City museums, like most museums, have turned so-called participation into a milestone. The problem is that if the term participation is not accompanied by an authentically democratic vocation, the position of museums runs the risk of submitting to political powers that do not always respect human rights. The challenge is to stimulate shared knowledge as appropriation and

The Seven Gateways of MUHBA. Photo: MUHBA

social communication of scientific expertise and not as a populist alternative to knowledge produced in a participative way but with maximum rigour. Added to these risks is that of programming policies based on "audience segmentation", geared towards maximizing the number of visitors by means of marketing techniques. Behind its supposed approximation to the needs of the visitors, they share a highly compartmentalising policy, differentiating and elitist, as people who visit the museum are pigeonholed right at the entrance.

So, MUHBA is trying to drive processes of "social construction of knowledge", à la Vygotski, breaking limits. A key to advancing in the design of the city museum as a centre of urban knowledge (including aesthetic appreciation) was to look at all formats as equal: exhibitions, conferences, guides, books, audiovisual documentaries, itineraries, etc.

A website with seven gateways

We have tried to reflect the organisation of the knowledge and heritage of the museum on the website, organized into seven gateways. This has been one of the fruits of the lockdown due to the pandemic, which has made it possible to dedicate many hours of virtual meetings to thinking about how to turn the

House of History, which will be physical and in-person, into the House of Knowledge, which will be both digital and virtual.

As can be seen at https://www.barcelona.cat/museuhistoria/es, The 7 gateways of MUHBA are both conceptual and practical, with the division between 1. Heritage, 2. Activities by format, 3. The knowledge of MUHBA, 4. Research and education, 5. The ages of Barcelona, 6. Geographies and cartographies, and 7. Museum-school. These 7 gateways do not lead in any case to isolated or leakproof containers, but all their knowledges and heritages are interconnected and feed off each other. It is important to highlight, as a project with its own digital profile, there is the Carta Històrica de Barcelona, georeferences, the result of recent and innovative research, and currently growing apace. The Carta Històrica is, by a long way, the most visited element on the website.

The political limits of the Museum's action

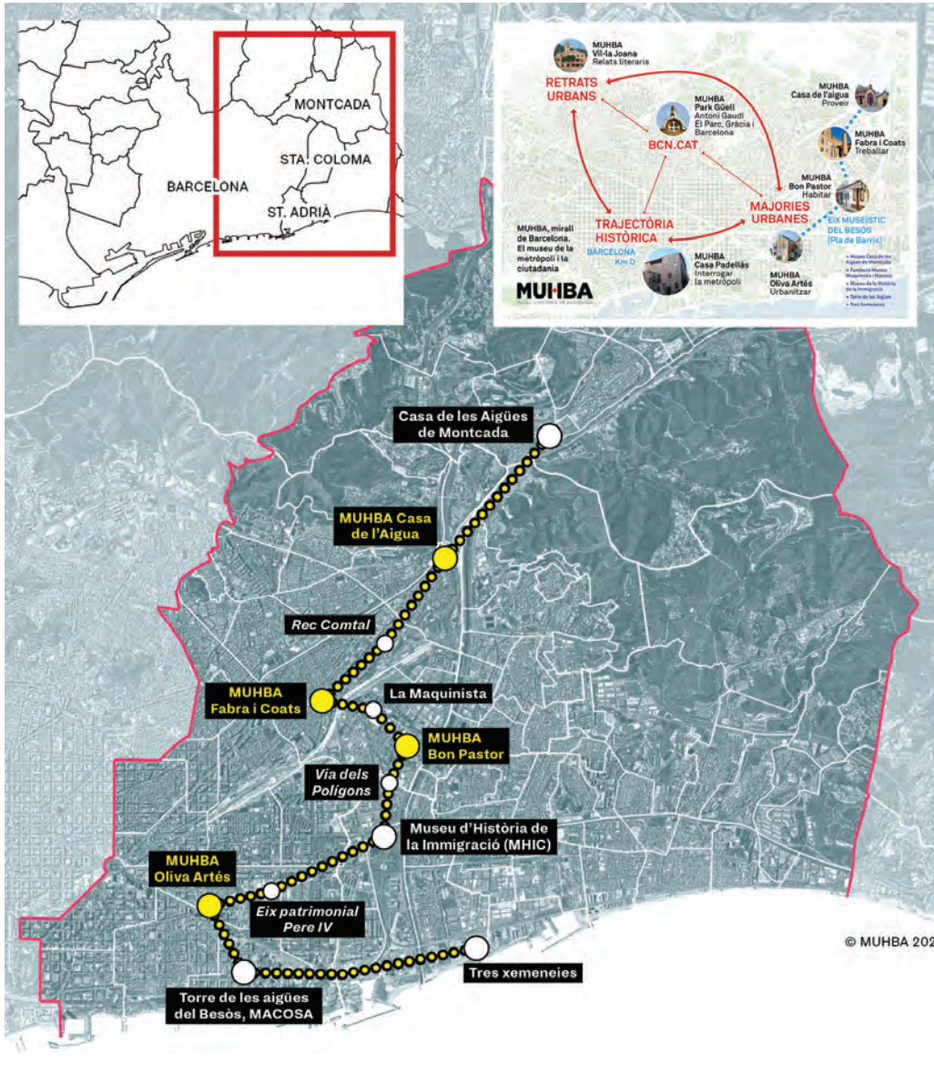
We often talk about "involving museums in the struggles for the future". In the case of city museums, and referring to the struggles in the city specifically, there are more risks than advantages, because if one is talking about really important matters, this involves entering headlong into the sphere of politics, with the danger of losing the legitimacy of historical reasoning that each one of us can use to rethink our points of view.

The option at MUHBA has been to strictly separate the construction of historical perspectives to feed thought about the present and future of direct involvement in social urban action, for which the museum is not the ideal institutions. This matter is especially important, and not always easy to resolve, at MUHBA Oliva Artés, with regard to the space of the museum laboratory on the contemporary metropolis, where the museum's proposals are amalgamated with those of other entities.

Citizen involvement

Urban movements

"Barcelona", said its former mayor, Pasqual Maragall, "is a citizen city": synthesis of what you would want of a capital without a state and of a citizenry that has fought long and hard for its quality of urban life. The origin of this citizen interest comes from the final decades of the Franco dictatorship. The scarcity of rental accommodation led immigrant families to buy their housing, and so the fight for facilities in the neighbourhood was a decisive and obligatory fight to make the most of the family effort to purchase an apartment. The fight for improvements to the neighbourhoods was, moreover, the only legal social struggle under the Franco dictatorship, because political parties and trade unions were banned, which also made it necessary to enter into dialogue with other neighbourhoods: the movement was finally given form by the FAVB (Federation of



Besòs Trail project. Drawing by Andrea Manenti. Photo: MUHBA

Associations of Residents of Barcelona). The neighbourhood movement was the star of the debates around the design of the General Metropolitan Plan, approved in 1976. Thus, the mark of urban culture in the neighbourhoods of the periphery is highly significant even today, and the interest in the heritage and the history of the neighbourhood within the context of the city is kept alive: this is a situation very specific to Barcelona in all of Europe.

Collaboration and joint management: the Besòs Axis

The project of the Besòs heritage and museum axis is now one of the strengths of the museum and it has strong roots in the citizen movements mentioned above. La Casa de l'Aigua, the Fabra i Coats industrial site, the museum block of the Cases Barates in Bon Pastor, and the Oliva Artés factory and the Can Ricart factory (where the museum is due to take action in the Boiler room), have all been heritage spaces that have been conserved thanks to the initiative of, and pressure from, the citizenry. The most active entities, with origins in neighbourhood organisations and trade unions, have joined the museum projects and the programming of the museum in these spaces, together with local study centres and different university departments.[10]

Formulas are being sought out for when the new centres open, that will allow for collaborative management between the entities and the museum. In the case of Bon Pastor, we hope to have the Vilabesòs Archive-Study Centre, which arose from the Neighbourhood Association, as a resident within the museum ensemble and body responsible for part of the shared programme with the museum. In Fabra i Coats, it will be the association of former employees of the factory, Friends of Fabra i Coats. Formulas are also being studied for la Casa de l'Aigua, which is divided into two districts: the Association for the Historic Memory of Trinitat Vella on the Sant Andreu side, and the Historical Archive of Roquetes on the Nou Barris side. On the Sant Andreu side, there is also the Trinijove Foundation, which provides classes for people who have recently immigrated and whose intention is to stay.

Other entities that manage other spaces associated with the Besòs Axis project include the Maquinista i Macosa Foundation, where there is much talk of mobility technologies, and a locomotive is due to arrive soon at the headquarters of the foundation, which is managed by former employees. We are also awaiting the incorporation into the Besòs Heritage and Museum Axis of the museums of other metropolitan municipalities along the river: Montcada, Santa Coloma de Gramanet, Sant Adrià and, perhaps, Badalona.

10. Joan Roca i Albert & Carme Turégano López (2020), La gestió participativa i el museu de la ciutat. Patrimoni, ciutadania i nodes culturals als barris de Barcelona [Participatory management and the City Museum. Heritage, citizenship and cultural nodes in the neighbourhoods of Barcelona]. Diferents. Revista de museus, 5, 18-35. [online] Retrieved from: https://doi.org/10.6035/Diferents.2020.5.2.

Global Challenges: the minimal city museum, or the essentials of a city museum

One of the keys to understanding the ineluctable core of a city museum is to think of the "minimal city museum", in the sense of what is really essential and core in a city museum, which has been one of the contributions of MUHBA to the ICOM/CAMOC World Congress of City Museums, which was held in Barcelona in December of 2021. An idea that, with the collaboration of the architect Patricia Tamayo, aspired to imagine what a new city museum might be like in a big, rapidly growing city, with a view to fueling the project The 4 Meridians, among European cities and the effervescent African metropolises, while creating a shared language, with a strictly peer-to-peer relationship. If the network of cities is to be a counterweight to that of states (and empires) in a state of change, the connection between Africa and Europe is essential.[11]

The design of the "minimal city museum", however, goes further than that, because it forces us to think about what is essential and what is not in a city museum, because at present, "city museum" is still a poorly defined category: in many places, it continues to be, purely and simply, a "local institution".

To consolidate a functional model

A flexible internal organisation

At MUHBA, the stable team is one of municipal civil servants, plus a good number of personnel from service companies and contracted freelance personnel. It would be better if they were all members of the same team, but this seems to be an impossible goal. From the museum, we cannot change this situation and nor, to a large extent, can the city council: there are state and European regulations.

However, palliative solutions can be found based on five principles: 1) extensive circulation of all the information among all personnel; 2) independent working groups working by objectives and projects; 3) combination of specialist and general tasks by each member of the team; 4) assignation of decision-making capability to all members of the team, regardless of their position on the organisation chart; and 5) strict maintenance of the structure of responsibilities and formal authority as a guarantee of the involvement and supervision of the museum managers in all the projects.

11. Joan Roca i Albert (2023, in press). "The hidden potential of city museums. A transcontinental workshop" in J. Savic (ed.), *Connecting cities, connecting citizens: Towards a shared sustainability*, CAMOC Barcelona 2021. Book of Proceedings. ICOM-CAMOC.

This way of operating that we have just presented has shown its efficacy in driving multiple projects at once, despite the limitations in terms of human and financial resources. The question is how to encourage institutional stabilization within the municipal administrative mechanisms, when all this time of intensive work has passed, given that the museum does not have a fiscal identity number or its own legal entity. People change over time... and institutionalization becomes more important.

Stabilization of the model

To finish, we should ask, how to create a lasting balance between a highly cross-disciplinary and flexible functional organisation model and a highly hierarchical model of institutional responsibility, as well as a direct and joint-work link with the citizen entities and the academic institutions, with the museum as an institution without its own legal entity, a situation similar to that of many other European city museums.

The balance of forces within which it has been possible to remain relatively stable and which has contributed to keeping MUHBA stable, at least from the perspective of its 2008 strategic plan has been the following: a) a precise idea of the museum in the framework of the Centre for Research and Debate, which made it possible to guarantee a historical and heritage project in dialogue with the other agents involved. b) The support of the citizenry, with full involvement of the entities of multiple neighbourhoods in the proposals regarding investment and activities. c) International links with presence in numerous European and global networks that echo what is happening in Barcelona.[12] And d) A relationship within the municipality that is not limited to the Barcelona Cultural Institute, of which the museum is part, but when proposing sites, investments and programme, includes the districts, the ecology and urbanism sector, and the Neighbourhoods Plan that is managed by Foment de Ciutat.

The strategic plans

Strategic planning techniques, planning that is not regulatory but that makes it possible to balance objectives, resources and people, have been incorporated for some time in cultural institutions. Thus, the fact that the actions of MUHBA are based on its 2008 Plan is nothing special. Action in strategic terms, seeking out viable agreements through initially informal channels, has been key to the

12. The culmination of the international commitments has been the presence in debates on culture and local promotion in the OECD, the hosting of the ICOM/CAMOC world conference at MUHBA in December 2022, and soon, the presentation in May 2023 of the EMYA awards, given out jointly by the European Museum Forum and the Council of Europe. Later, in 2026, MUHBA will host the biennial conference of the European Association for Urban History.

establishment of the Besòs Heritage and Museum Axis, with museum spaces that also include urban itineraries. The proposal, once mapped out, has circulated from the museum to the administration of the districts, to the Neighbourhoods Plan and to the Besòs Consortium, whence it finally jumped to the neighbouring municipalities.[13] Now, it is a project shared by all sides.

The know-how for drawing up the proposal and establishing the necessary consensus was attained some years earlier with the redefinition of Carrer de Pere IV, one of the arteries from Poblenou to Sant Adrià, as the Pere IV Axis of industrial heritage, landscapes, and activities. The city museum has thus become an agent halfway, we insist, between urban policies and cultural policies.

The output of a new urban museology

A city museum is not just a cultural institution; rather it is the cusp of an industrial pyramid that is often broader than in the case of other types of museum, due to their networked and often multicentre action in the urban space. MUHBA mobilises resources from numerous public sectors and provides citizen benefits that go beyond the number of visitors. But this is not easy to measure and, in fact, is not measured.

MUHBA OUTPUT

- **Urban capital:** City museum as citizens' museum is a means for explaining the city for well-established inhabitants, tourists, migrants or refugees.
- **Cultural capital:** New scientific and technical knowledge in many formats, from seminars, books or exhibitions to virtual museums and urban trekkings.
- **Educational capital:** Museum school as a standarised possibility for all schools, of all social settings and origins. A crucial issue in a diverse metropolitan city.
- **Social capital:** Active polycentric cultural and community nodes, especially in the peripheries.
- **Economic capital:** a) Renovation of tourism, dissemination in the urban space, and b) knowledge for export on history, heritage, museology and virtual representations.
- **Political capital:** Social inclusion and international presence through the city museum... Here we are, in Trento!
- **But:** We have the difficulty of measurement of direct and indirect impacts. This requires someone to take care of it!

13. Roca i Albert, "City Museums and..."

The number of visitors can in no way reflect the potential for technical, cultural, social and educational innovation, fruit of the sum of "regular" regional facilities and "exceptional" city facilities. For this reason, I would like to end with the MUHBA Output schema shown above (p 175). This was presented at the conference of the OECD cultural academy in September 2022 by MUHBA, showing the results of a city museum that aims to provide impulse to a new urban museography as the basis of a citizens' museum.

The vision for the Stadtmuseum Berlin

Paul Spies

The international debate on the definition of the museum in the 21st century accompanied the development of the "Masterplan 2025" for the Stadtmuseum Berlin and its locations. The definition proposed and intensively discussed in Kyoto in 2019, but not adopted, still shows gaps, for example in the area of education and outreach, but it provides important impetus.

As Stadtmuseum Berlin, we want to be a place where urban society reflects on and helps to shape urban developments. In doing so, we address the people who live, work, learn and visit Berlin. We want to act as a catalyst for them: to reflect Berlin's urbanity and diversity, to depict the different perspectives, to participate in public debates and encourage exchange, to take up and give impulses. The city museum of the future is about topics with contemporary relevance, such as housing and life in the city, architecture and urban development, the environment and the cultures of the city. And it is about personal relevance — about fun and representation, about inspiration and participation, about orientation and research into urban history.

An increasingly diverse society needs a place that presents different, even competing narratives. City museums are predestined to create spaces for different narratives in their programmes and collections, to enable connections and thus to generate polyphony.

Stadtmuseum Berlin pursues an inclusive approach: each of the six locations should be an open house with a diverse range of offerings where visitors feel welcome. For us, diversity means enrichment and this should be reflected in the design of our programmes, our audience and staff. With our diversity-oriented organisational development, this inclusive attitude is also implemented structurally. Education and participation are at the centre of our work. An inclusive museum includes the goal of making our analogue and digital locations barrier-free. The Stadtmuseum also focuses on people who have not visited museums before. In the spirit of outreach, it actively approaches new groups, moving into the city and into the digital space.

The Stadtmuseum Berlin directs its offerings to Berlin's diverse urban society, i.e. a changing, post-migrant society whose identities are fluid. The Stadtmuseum responds to their needs and desires with participatory and collaborative approaches. Through an outreach attitude, opportunities for encounters, exchange and collaboration at eye level are promoted.

The Berlin Global exhibition at the Humboldt Forum has already been developed in cooperation with urban society. In the cooperation project

"Decoloniale" the Stadtmuseum is learning from activist partners from civil society. From this self-image also follow new possibilities to relate the rich collection of the Stadtmuseum to contemporary urban issues and to collect diverse historical narratives.

A modern museum needs an open organisation

The Stadtmuseum Berlin wants to continue to develop into an open museum organisation that reflects the diversity of Berlin society. It wishes to be a modern, professional organisation in which employees feel comfortable, in which people work together respectfully and equally, and which reacts flexibly to new things and is open to all people.

Since 2016, a long-term process of change has been taking place at the Stadtmuseum in which the organisation, with its processes and working methods, is being successively restructured. The once classically hierarchical cultural institution is being transformed into a flexible matrix organisation. We see ourselves as a learning organisation with a process-oriented organisational development. In order to be able to work in an agile — i.e. flexible, process-oriented and self-organised — way, a stable organisational structure with clear responsibilities, tasks and internal information flows is needed. Organisational development is a long-term process and can only be implemented step by step. Like any organisation, the Stadtmuseum has its own history and character — with comparable and specific dynamics and challenges. In this process of change, we want to be open-minded; trial and experimentation will be as much a part of everyday life as a healthy culture of error.

To accompany the change processes, we have chosen the approach of diversity-oriented organisational development. Our goal is to anchor diversity in the museum work of the entire Stadtmuseum in an appreciative way as an important resource, as an attitude. We want to become better acquainted with the diversity that exists in the organisation, break down structural barriers that can lead to exclusion and discrimination, and create access. In addition to the professional aptitude of colleagues, there is a focus on diversity competence. This is the basis for programme and audience development and goes hand in hand with transparent internal communication. In addition to a coaching style of leadership, this plays a central role in the change.

The supervisory and service staff of the Stadtmuseum Berlin have the potential to become liaisons between the programme and the visitors as well as between the visitors themselves. Starting at the Berlin Global exhibition and then gradually in the other locations they will, in future, help to shape the visitor experience in all locations of the Stadtmuseum Berlin as so-called "connectors". They are the face of the museum, reflect the diversity of Berlin and have communicative and transcultural skills.

A modern museum needs a socially oriented programme vision

The visitor-friendly approach is at the heart of the Stadtmuseum Berlin's programme development. The Stadtmuseum Berlin actively strives to adapt its programmes, outreach and education, visitor services and marketing to the needs of a changing urban society. Therefore, the programme should be diverse, enjoyable and critical. Our goal is innovative, sustainable and inclusive thematic and programme development with a clear profile that has relevance on a local, national and international level.

We define a programme as all formats with which we transport our themes to the public. This includes exhibitions as well as educational offers, publications and events that take place in the museum, in the urban space or online. We see ourselves in a reciprocal exchange with the public: for programme development, the Stadtmuseum actively approaches the residents, visitors and cooperation partners of the city. In this way, the social issues that concern people today are identified.

The following criteria determine our programme:

- We take diversity into account in all museum activities in terms of topics, formats and (visual) language.
- We anchor outreach as an attitude, consistently approaching and including the diverse urban society.
- We develop sustainable and strategic networking with different groups, people and communities in the city.
- We develop target group strategies for the locations that also include groups of visitors who are not familiar with the museum and have been excluded up to now.

The programme is oriented towards overarching themes. We look specifically for local stories that refer to universal questions of our time. For example, we devote presentations and activities to the theme "Heritage, or: what remains?" We question issues such as: what is our cultural heritage and: how are we leaving the world for the next generations with our actions or inactions? In this way, the City Museum makes a valuable contribution to the discussion of current issues, interprets them and establishes connections between the past and the present. In doing so, we work together with the city society in many ways: in traditional cooperation with volunteers and actors, we use co-creation methods or even hand over the programming to communities and initiatives completely.

Especially in a city that is becoming more and more diverse, city museums can be places for a first connection to one's own city and its history(ies). For many children, a visit to the Stadtmuseum Berlin is such a first point of contact. Here, the museum has an identity-building effect for the future inhabitants of Berlin. In our education and outreach programmes, they learn to position themselves critically and to exert influence.

Alexander von Humboldt's Mineral and Stone Collections, 250 years of Alexander von Humboldt. June 2019.
Photo: Stadtmuseum Berlin

In the coming years, the focus will remain on participation projects for children, young people, adults and communities and will be continued in a wide variety of collaborations with all areas of education, with artists and multipliers.

A modern museum needs a vision for the future of the collection

The collection of a city history museum is the memory of the city and should tell its story from different perspectives. On behalf of the city's society, we collect, preserve and research stories and objects about Berlin's history, which are linked to the individual memories of Berliners.

The Stadtmuseum's collection comprises an estimated 4.5 million objects — from prehistory and early history to the present day. It was created in 1995 by merging various museum collections from East and West Berlin, based on the collections of the Märkisches Provinzialmuseum (the collection of the provincial museum of Brandenburg/Prussia, founded 1874), later the Märkisches Museum in the eastern part of the city, and its counterpart, the Berlin Museum in West Berlin (founded 1962). The merged collections were developed with different concepts. One continuity may lie in the claim to record the respective social and economic upheavals.

Within the framework of the Master Plan 2025, we are developing a collection strategy that responds to the social demands on museums and especially on collections in the 21st-century.

We are reorienting contemporary collecting. To this end, we are identifying socially relevant, cross-collection themes such as mobility and migration, urban development and urban ecology. In order to strengthen the identification of Berliners with the Stadtmuseum and the collection, we are working even more intensively with the diverse urban society and recording their stories. To this end, we have developed new formats and are expanding successful offerings such as the participatory online archive "Berlin jetzt!" (Berlin now!) and the digital archive of contemporary witnesses.

In order to increase public access to the city's cultural heritage, we are continuously working on indexing and digitising the huge collection.

A thematic expansion is the investigation and research of the collections of the Stadtmuseum for colonial traces. Connected to this is a preoccupation with decolonial museum practice. The newly established Competence Centre for Decolonisation at the Stadtmuseum Berlin continues to strategically accompany this topic and is both a contact point for the Berlin state museums and a platform for networking with activist civil organisations.

A modern museum needs a digital vision

Analogue and digital everyday life complement each other and merge more and more. The digital Stadtmuseum Berlin is therefore becoming a natural and logical part of the overall museum experience.

For a long time, the Stadtmuseum has focused on classic digital fields of activity: Operating and maintaining a homepage, digitising the collection, using media in exhibitions. In recent years, we have already taken greater steps into the "digital" realm. New technologies have been used, the use of virtual reality has been tested, apps have been developed and events and guided tours have been offered via livestreaming.

Digital storytelling has made collection data available on various collaborative platforms and thus increased the visibility of our topics.

Currently a vision on digital transformation is being developed in which the Stadtmuseum Berlin takes a holistic, proactive stance on digital topics and work opportunities. Only in a digitally transformed museum can modern and user-oriented digital offerings be created. We see the digital as an opportunity to expand our programmatic goals with new formats and access — without spatial restrictions.

Cultural participation is one of the most important cornerstones of our activities. Through digital offerings, we enable additional access. Guided by the idea of open access, we will rely even more on networks in all digital fields of action of the Stadtmuseum in the future. Knowledge and information about the

city's history will flow together through digital collecting, and the city's digital memory will be expanded together with the public and partners. We also see ourselves as co-designers of digital Berlin and want to strengthen cooperation with the science, start-up and creative scene as well as the private sector. Last but not least, we want to stimulate and strengthen the active action and networking of the digital urban society — keyword *digital citizenship*: digital citizens use information technology to get involved in society, politics and culture.

Digital storytelling should be above all else: our data will become stories that invite users to engage creatively and critically with the past, present and future of our city. In order to realise the idea of a digital museum and to promote the idea of the participation of urban society, the programme portfolio will be expanded in the future. Digital and hybrid event and outreach formats will also increase. Digital development is linked to the aspiration to present ourselves as an inclusive, diverse and multilingual museum.

New locations

In 2015, Berlin's governing mayor decided to set up an exhibition on the history of the city of Berlin at the Humboldt Forum. Curated by the Stadtmuseum Berlin and in close cooperation with Kulturprojekte Berlin, the exhibition "Berlin Global" was created between 2016 and 2021. Covering more than 4,000 square metres, Berlin Global is an interdisciplinary, multi-voiced and critical examination of the city's present and history. Starting from well-known events, unexpected contents and perspectives and their exchange relationships with the world are told in thematic rooms. The exhibition was developed with the participation of various associations, artists and institutions and takes a stand on contemporary political and social debates, for example on colonialism and racism. The contents are prepared for a broad public and offer an truly interactive visitor experience. The message of Berlin Global: all people are citizens of the world and together they shape the city and the world of tomorrow.

Three manageable special exhibition areas within the exhibition circuit, the so-called open spaces, are regularly handed over to Berlin groups, associations and initiatives for use. In their examination of the overarching theme of "Berlin and the World", they have sovereignty over content and design. Two new presentations in the open spaces are planned per year, the selection is made by a "people's jury". Alternately, one of the spaces will remain unused — an inviting signal to interested groups.

In 1908, the Märkisches Museum was opened at a key location in the city. The quarter's liveliness ebbed away as a result of the Second World War and post-war development. But life is slowly returning to the neighbourhood: Köllnischer Park has been undergoing redevelopment since autumn 2020, new residential buildings are being built and an artistic interim use of the so-called

The Märkisches Museum in Köllnischer Park in Berlin-Mitte. The building complex was constructed from 1901 to 1907 to a design by Ludwig Hoffmann. It has been designated as a historic landmark. Photo: Jörg Zägel

"Bärenzwinger" (a former outer ward for bears, the city's heraldic symbol) in the park is expanding the neighbourhood's cultural offerings. Under the working title "Museum and Creative Quarter", we are combining the urgently needed renovation and modernisation of the Märkisches Museum and the expansion of the neighbouring Marinehaus into an activity centre. The city quarter at Köllnischer Park is to be revitalised in the long term. By incorporating the green spaces of Köllnischer Park and the banks of the Spree, closing the street between the Märkisches Museum and the Marinehaus to car traffic and rebuilding the former "Waisenbrücke" (the bridge that used to be oriented on the museum building), the neighbourhood will gain in radiance. Together with the neighbourhood, we want to help shape the Köllnischer Park district in the long term.

The tradition-rich Märkisches Museum is to be expanded to include new, high-profile formats in the so-called Marinehaus. Following the guiding principle of participation, we are "building" this place together with others in order to be able to exploit it together in the future. The Märkisches Museum and the Marinehaus will provide impulses for urban and museum developments. In interaction with the Märkisches Museum, the new Marinehaus will be an open, discursive, present- and future-oriented house for transdisciplinary and experimental formats. In workshops, workrooms and studios, rehearsal and event spaces as well as

in open presentation areas, Berliners, people from diverse groups, associations, the neighbourhood, art, science or administration will negotiate and shape topics and questions relating to Berlin's city (society). We are creating a Berlin Laboratory. Themes can include threatened open spaces, Berlin as the city of the Wall, protest culture, ways of life and the distinct identification with the neighbourhood.

Düppel Museum Village

Towards the end of the 1960s, a medieval settlement in Berlin-Zehlendorf was uncovered with the active participation of the Berlin population, and the idea arose to reconstruct the village and the surrounding cultural landscape. The "Fördererkreis Museumsdorf Düppel e.V." was founded for this purpose. In the following decades, a rich treasure of intangible cultural heritage and a model cultural landscape unique in Berlin, with a variety of historical flora and fauna, grew out of the broad voluntary commitment to history and experimental archaeology. Today, it is a place of learning and an open-air museum for all Berliners.

Living history meets the future here. With the inclusion of the Düppel Museum Village in the Stadtmuseum Berlin, the heritage of Berlin's history remains alive and interwoven with current issues in urban society. Today, the Stadtmuseum and the open-air museum's circle of supporters can work together to develop the full potential of the site and place the legacy in a contemporary and forward-looking context.

In the museum village, medieval everyday life is made tangible thanks to the committed circle of supporters. This also opens up interesting perspectives for today's coexistence of a diverse urban society. The successful model of participatory work there is an inspiration for the other locations of the City Museum. Together with the sponsors' circle, we want to further expand the voluntary work and address new target groups. By not only looking at the Düppel Museum Village in isolation in terms of time and space, cross-cultural perspectives can emerge, lessons can be learned from the past for the future — for example, for important topics such as sustainable building and biodiversity.

Visitors are actively involved in research and the creation of knowledge. In the Düppel Museum Village, they experience the relevance of historical topics to the present, learning through guided tours, formats in sign language and tactile tours, workshops and holiday programmes, what is also of value in the now. We want to convey sustainable and ecological content and also manage the museum in this way ourselves — the path to a sustainable future.

At the moment, the highly-visited Düppel Museum Village is only open during the holiday and summer season. In order to make this forward-looking and inviting place for diverse groups to experience all year round, we are planning a new entrance building as well as a more inclusive infrastructure. In keeping with the location, this will be an ecological timber-frame building in a

Aerial view of the Museum Village Düppel. Photo: Fördererkreis Museumsdorf Düppel

circular construction as a showcase and research project. In an innovative and, for Berlin, unique process, we want to design planning and implementation in a participatory way. The first steps have already been planned in cooperation with the Natural Building Lab of the Technical University of Berlin.

The new Museum of Copenhagen

Vivi Lena Andersen and Jakob Ingemann Parby

The inauguration

In February 2020 the new Museum of Copenhagen opened in a central location of the city. The opening took place after a shutdown period of four and a half years during which the municipality and the museum collaborated with architects, engineers and other specialists in the restoration and transformation of an existing office building dating from 1894, to a venue that suited the needs and facilities of a modern city museum.

Simultaneously, the museum staff developed and curated the new exhibitions, redefined the vision and mission of the museum and even carried out a major move of its collections to a newly built storage facility in the suburbs of Copenhagen, finished in 2017.

More than 3,000 people attended the opening event including Her Majesty the Queen of Denmark and the Lord Mayor, but also huge crowds of Copenhageners of all kinds and ages who wanted to be part of the inauguration and be among the first to see the results of the long creation process. The response to the new museum and the public interest in attending the reopening in the new location was a testimony to the significant role of city museums in the 21st-century and clearly demonstrated the longing and sensation of an almost existential void that the closedown had created among the community.

For the museum staff and the vast number of external contributors, the opening marked both a climax and an opportunity to experience exhilaration and relief following a process that has taken almost 10 years from the first ideas about the need for new premises for the galleries and storage spaces of the museum. To experience the joy, dialogue and conviviality among the visitors. To observe the queue of visitors and guests lining up 800 metres down the road. To hear the sound of the music played from the balcony over the entrance, reverberating through the building, the exhortations of admiration, the buzz of the conversations and laughter, and the thoughtful words of invited speakers. To feel the bodies of visitors thronging together in the central staircase, the galleries, the museum café and the historical garden in the courtyard, with the words of the first positive reviews in national and local media still spinning in our minds.

It was an amazing moment for both the curators and the rest of staff at the museum, just as it seemed to be for our visitors, but we were well aware that the celebrations only initiated the next phase in the history of the museum. A kind of rite of passage into the long haul of operating the museum in its new

neighborhood and adjusting our organisation to cater for an altered and more numerous public. Little did we know that, a month later, COVID-19 would arrive in Denmark and change our personal as well as institutional life. Before COVID-19 the museum was well on its way to a new level of visitor numbers with a projection of up to 100,000 visitors a year. As elsewhere the pandemic has seriously crippled this projection, but even after the lock down the museum has had higher numbers than before the move.

An open-ended democratic space

This article explores the context and history of the creation of the new Museum of Copenhagen as an example of the broader trends among European city museums. In recent decades city museums have taken long strides to transform themselves from their origins as a kind of local version of the traditional national museums of cultural history, into what Duncan Grewcock has described as "an open-ended [...] democratic space, that can be physically experienced as a quarter of the city, but also used as a site for debate, discussion and experimentation on urban issues within the context of a city's past, present and future". He also envisions the city museum as "a networked, distributed conversation rather than an inward-looking institution".[1] This means, among other things, that the exhibitions, collections and research projects of the museum should include both intangible and tangible heritage, involve and engage different group of citizens and advance a concept of urban history that emphasises the ongoing production and rewriting of history, a polyphonic concept of urban and neighborhood identity, a methodological generosity and the nurturing of cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Since 2008 the Museum of Copenhagen has attempted to rethink itself along such lines of thinking. Changing its profile from a more traditional, static museum with permanent chronological galleries to a more contemporary institution, it has developed its visitor profile through a comprehensive programme of outreach projects, exhibitions on contemporary topics, and experiments with online and urban space dissemination. Simultaneously, the huge archaeological excavations carried out preceding the completion of the Metro City Ring in 2019 along with many other important excavations in recent decades, have increased our knowledge of both the earliest and the later phases of Copenhagen's urban development and everyday life. And this has led to an increase in research on various topics related to migration and cultural diversity, urbanity, consumption, health and identity among other topics. All of the above prepared the ground for the move.

1. Duncan Grewcock, "Museums of Cities and Urban Futures" in *Museum International* 58, 3, p. 32-42, 2006); see also Joan Roca: "At the Crossroads of Cultural and Urban Policies. Rethinking the City and the City Museum" in Jelena Savic (ed.): *The Future of Museums of Cities*, CAMOC, 2018, p. 14-25.

The layout and exhibitions of the new museum merged the concept of networked conversation with new tendencies in the museum sector centering on sustainable exhibition practices, accessibility and new forms of cultural tourism. Among other things this meant creating anew a permanent exhibition presenting the history of Copenhagen for locals, visitors and newcomers to the city, while incorporating knowledge and experiences from user-involving curatorial processes of recent years. It has also meant focusing on creating a diverse event programme and special exhibition programme to accommodate the ambition to maintain and extend the museum as a site for all the users and citizens of the Danish capital. After the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic some of these target points have, of course, changed dramatically and the focus on tourism has been partly supplanted by the notion of more balanced urban economies that rely less heavily on mass tourism.[2] But this was not the case when we started the project in 2015. Before we move on, we feel it necessary to offer a brief presentation of the history of the museum.

A brief historical overview

The museum's history began in 1901 at the newly built City Hall, which was officially inaugurated in 1905, but from 1901 had a functioning clock tower and from 1903 housed the meetings of Copenhagen's City Council and municipal administration. The City Hall intendant, Ernst Nyrop-Larsen, a cousin of the City Hall's architect, Martin Nyrop, began collecting paintings, photographs and remnants of torn-down buildings for an exhibition in the loft of the City Hall. From 1916, the collections were opened to the public. Since then, the management and further development of the collections were professionalised with the employment of a curator from the National Museum and the museum was gradually expanded. In 1956, the loft of the city hall had become both impractical and inconvenient for the purposes of a museum and the museum found a new venue in the Royal Shooting Society's 18th-century *palais* at Vesterbrogade, which had been vacated some years earlier.

The museum remained in this location until the autumn of 2015 and the 60 years saw the museum transformed from a cultural history museum with a more traditional exhibition practice including tableaus, interiors and lots of objects on display to more thematic exhibitions related to contemporary issues. In 1996, when Copenhagen was the cultural capital of Europe, new permanent galleries were developed and a rise in visitor numbers ensued, only to drop again in the new millennium, until a number of special exhibitions, new research

2. For more perspectives on the future of city museums, see: Jelena Savic, The Future of...; Focus on sustainable tourism, see: Jan Van Der Borg and Antonio Paulo Russo, "Towards Sustainable Tourism in Venice" in Sustainable Venice: Suggestions for the Future, 2001, pp. 159-193.

The original museum galleries in the loft of the City Hall. The museum at the time was hardly a museum, but more an open collection organized topographically. Photo: Museum of Copenhagen

projects and an extensive event programme between 2010 and 2014 formed the latest peak in the museum's popularity and public impact.

However, between 1995 and 2015, visitor numbers never exceeded 60,000 a year and and eventually nurtured a push to relocate. Both the museum's management and the municipality gradually came to the conclusion that the new Cultural District, which integrated well-known cultural institutions and tourist hubs such as Tivoli, City Hall, the National Museum, Glyptoteket and the Royal Library with new ones such as the new BLOX/Danish Architectural Centre built between 2014 and 2018, had the potential to increase the museum's visitor numbers and create a synergy similar to the effects that could be observed in areas such as Museumsinsel in Berlin, Quartier des Spectacles in Montreal and the MuseumsQuartier in Vienna. Since 2016, the neighborhood has been branded as the Copenhagen Cultural District.[3]

The decision was made to move the museum to this area. And the building selected to house the museum was Stormgade 18; an architectural

3. See https://kulturkvarteret.dk/en/.

The new museum building. Photo: Adam Mørk

gem now again made accessible to the public. The new museum building — originally built to house the Public Trustee in 1893-94 — is a historicist complex modelled after the Italian villa and containing a rich and varied architectural expression and ornamentation related to the Public Trustee's role as caretaker of the funds and properties of minors and other legally incapacitated persons.

As part of the transition from municipal offices to public museum, a concerted effort was made to restore and highlight the architectural qualities and the cultural history of the site as an integral and important part of the museum experience, while simultaneously creating an exhibition design that clearly signified the vision of the city museum in the 21st-century.

The mission of the new Museum of Copenhagen is to be the collective memory of Copenhagen and to reflect the history of the city and its people. It should be easily accessible and the obvious choice for everyone curious to know more about the city and its histories, connectivities and contrasts. The museum should be a place of identification and pride and a place that Copenhageners of all ages, origins, beliefs and occupations recurrently visit and use as a starting point for dialogues about the city's past, present and future.

Curating and designing the museum experience

The permanent galleries

The new permanent galleries are an integral and central part of the new museum. Their conceptualisation emerged from the notion that, rather than specific objects in the collection, the city is in fact the museum's main object. The overall conceptual idea behind the design and curation of the new galleries was to "bring the city into the museum" as well as "taking the museum to the streets" as we had earlier done very successfully with The WALL — an award-winning digital and user-involving dissemination project consisting of a 10-metre-long touch-screen containing small exhibitions and an interactive cityscape. This installation toured the city from 2010-2016 alongside the archaeological digs carried out by the museum's archaeological department prior to the establishment of the Metro City Ring — the third phase of Copenhagen's underground railroad-system.[4] It was taken out of use because of new copyright regulation in Denmark that made it complicated to keep the uploaded material of users accessible online. In 2017, we created a new mobile museum The Past Exposed, that built on our experiences with The WALL and functioned as a kind of pop-up museum while the new museum was in the making.[5] New forms of dissemination in the city space continue to be a part of the museum's strategy for the future, although we also still use more traditional forms of dissemination, such as city walks, open archaeological excavations and pop-up photo exhibitions on site.[6]

The city in the museum

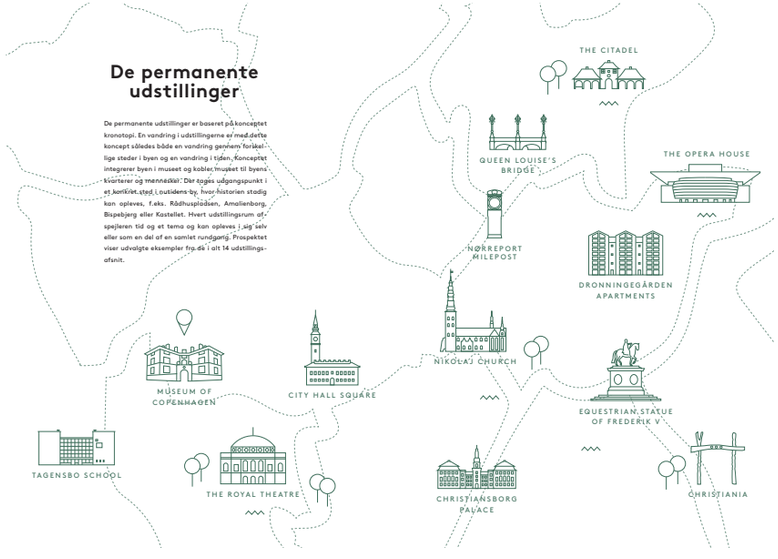
To bring the city into the museum, we structured our design and curation of the galleries around a reinterpretation of Mikhael Bakhtin's concept of the *chronotope*. In literary theory, the chronotope is a notion describing how configurations of time and space are represented in language and discourse. And Bakhtin himself particularly used the concept to explore how different literary genres operated with different configurations of time and space, which gave each genre its particular narrative character.[7] In the curation of the galleries we

4. Jette Sandahl, Jakob Parby et al.: "Taking the Museum to the Streets", in Jennifer Trant & David Bearman (eds). Museums and the Web 2011: Proceedings. Toronto: *Archives & Museum Informatics*. Published 31 March, 2011. The link no longer works. An adjusted version can be found at: https://pure.kb.dk/da/publications/taking-the-museum-to-the-streets-selected-papers-from-an-internat.

5. See www.fortidenfremkaldt.dk.

6. See f.i: https://kulturhavn365.dk/havnen-foer-og-nu/.

7. Mikhail M. Bakhtin, "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel: Notes toward a Historical Poetics", in Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Ed. Michael Holquist. Trans. Caryl Emerson & Michael Holquist. 1981. Austin, University of Texas Press, 1990d. p. 84-258. We thank Mikkel Thelle, senior researcher at the National Museum of Denmark, for suggesting the perspective of the chronotope in the initial stages of the curatorial process.



Graphic presentation of the concept for the permanent galleries. From the prospectus in 2017.
Photo: Nanna Arnfred/Elias Levinsky

applied the concept to create a very direct connection between a specific time period in the history of Copenhagen and a specific site in the contemporary city. From this starting point, we developed different themes of particular relevance for the period in question. For instance, the theme of city planning is presented in the gallery relating to 17th-century Copenhagen, the building of the Bourse and the first attempts at large-scale city planning inspired by Dutch influences during the reign of Christian IV. Whereas the interpretation of modern Copenhagen around 1900 uses the new square in front of the City Hall to represent the impact of new technologies in the transformation of the city and its inhabitants. Other galleries relate to poverty and crime, literature and communication, social hierarchies and neighborhood identities. Every gallery is named after a locality in the city and thus, for the visitors, a walk through the history of the city also becomes a walk through its geography. The museum experience, to some extent, emulates that of the city map — in a way that is similar to the psycho-geographical maps of the Situationists and Guy Debord — focusing on the personal and playful exploration of the urban.[8]

8. See f.i.: Tom McDonough, ed. *Guy Debord and the Situationist International: Texts and Documents*, Boston, October Press, 2004; Guy Debord: "Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography" in *Les Lèvres Nues*, 6, 1955. http://library.nothingness.org/articles/SI/en/display/2.

Example of cast: foot from the sculpture of Johan Ludvig Holberg in front of the Royal Theatre at Kongens Nytorv. Photo: JAC studios/Museum of Copenhagen, 2020

The galleries were developed in a close collaboration between designers from JAC studios and curators at the museum. In the design and composition of the galleries, we highlighted the presence of the past in the contemporary city by naming the galleries after specific city neighborhoods or locations and supplementing those with casts of elements from the area at full scale.

This way visitors can, for example, get close to and touch parts of sculptures and buildings related to the location, time period, and topics in each gallery. The curatorial approach is intended to offer visitors a physical connection with the city outside the museum's walls and a very clear sense of the interconnectivities between the past and the present.

The designers from JAC studios added to this experience by creating cases in each room related to the architecture and urban development of the historical age they described, and the themes explored in each gallery. Thus, the cases in the gallery relating to the metropolitanisation and electrification of Copenhagen around 1900 were done with white glass emulating the glass of the first electric street lamps in the city from 1892, whereas the gallery dealing with the social hierarchies and ethnic diversity of 17th and 18th-century Copenhagen were inspired by Baroque pavilions and the intensive use of mirrors in the banquet halls of the era.

Elsewhere, in the gallery Brokvartererne/The Bridge Districts, we use an open-grid design to give a sense of the activity and construction in the period of modern urbanisation and industrialisation. The design emulates the scaffolding used by construction workers to raise the multilevel apartment buildings in the second half of the 19th-century, built to house the huge influx of rural migrants seeking job opportunities in the new factories and shops of the growing metropolis and fleeing from the increasing poverty of the countryside. The scaffolding was fitted with screens showing images of present-day inhabitants in the Bridge Districts, as a comment on the gallery's focus on the historical processes that have shaped the identity and layout of each neighborhood and their populations.

The cases in all the galleries are made in white colours in order to make a clear contrast to the colourful original decorations in the historical architecture of the new building. This was done to create a clear distinction between the restored architecture and the history of the building itself vis-a-vis the insertions and interpretations of the modern museum.

The interplay between darkness and light was another way to distinguish the original architecture from the interpretative layers in the exhibition. A case in point was the gallery Slotsholmen/The Creation, dealing with the foundation of the city in the 11th and 12th-century. The central case was designed as an oval structure around a marble beam that was part of the original architecture of the room. The case was designed with a dark bottom and with finds hovering above the darkness in an epic lighting, emulating the archaeological dig and symbolising the knowledge about the early history of Copenhagen hovering over the abyss of lost or still undiscovered information on early life in the city.

Curatorial principles

The space of this article will not allow us to go into detail about the narratives and objects selected for all the galleries. Instead, we will highlight three curatorial principles and offer some examples of how we have developed them in our selection of items to be displayed.

The gallery Slotsholmen/The Creation. Photo: Adam Mørk

The Gallery Amalienborg with the mirrored cabinet-case. Photo: Adam Mørk

Look inside/through the mirrored cabinet. An interactive installation shows the visitor at Amalienborg Slotsplads witnessing an encounter of persons of rank as an introduction to the social hierarchies and cultures of greeting in 18th-century Copenhagen. Photo: Adam Mørk

The gallery The Bridge Districts with the white scaffolding. Photo: Adam Mørk

Urban Planning

One of our primary ambitions was to give visitors an understanding of the processes of urban generation and regeneration as well as some of the structuring principles and events in the making of Copenhagen. This was done throughout the exhibition with an extensive use of maps and figures demonstrating the transformation of the city through time, from the earliest signs of human settlements in the area to the expanding city of the 21st-century. Many galleries also used specific objects to explore the shifting definitions of the urban reality and the urban plan. In most cases, the perspective was on the city and its inhabitants rather than national and political history.

In the section dealing with the medieval city, a large display of wooden posts from the 13th-century, that were used to keep the soil of the medieval ramparts in place were placed, alongside items related to the specialisation of production and trade in the medieval city. In this way, visitors gained insight into archaeological definitions of urbanity ranging from the establishment of defence systems and churches to the development of craft and commerce. The room exploring the development of the Renaissance city in the 16th and 17th-century was designed following the model of the ideal city envisioned by Renaissance architects and urban planners using a pillar from Sankt Annæ Rotunda as the focal point of attention. Sankt Annæ Rotunda was part of the New Copenhagen neighborhood laid out by King Christian IV and was planned as a magnificent dome church with inspiration from St Peter's in Rome. The king, however, had to give up the project because of his wartime expenditure and the dome was left as a 16-metre-high unfinished structure later to be destroyed, while the building materials were used in other building projects of the 17th-century. The pillars were recovered from restoration projects in the 20th-century and preserved in the museum collections.

In another gallery, Nørreport or The Northern Gate, visitors can explore the structure of the city gates as an important boundary between urban and rural identities as well as a toll gate. An archway of the new museum building is used to create a sense of the scale and a soundscape of passing through the city gates and stimulate the imagination of visitors. The gallery revealed the importance of the gate as both a part of the defence of the city, but more importantly as a physical, juridical and mental border between urban and rural, foreign and native, privileged and unprivileged.

A final example to highlight is the gallery on the development of the city after World War II, where modern city planners, politicians and grassroot groups negotiated and fought over the right to the city. In this room, a movie gives voice to citizens who took part in different waves of peaceful and more violent squatting of condemned buildings and tried to form alternative ways of life in the city against a backdrop of protest and resistance from authorities as well

Gallery on the Renaissance city with the column from Sankt Annæ Rotunde.
Photo: Adam Mørk

as other local citizens. Some were successful, as was the case of the Freetown Christiania, whilst others ultimately failed, but in some cases still imprinted a lasting memory on the city for better or worse. The movie, as well as the exhibited items, have proved effective in starting dialogues among visitor groups about current protest and grass root movements, as well as the broader issue of the right to the city as formulated by Henri Lefevbre and David Harvey.[9]

The potential in disasters

Exploring the interplay between disasters such as fires and epidemics and the ensuing transformation of the urban space, as well as measures to improve hygiene, hospitals and supply systems are another topic in the permanent exhibition. Like most cities, Copenhagen has experienced its fair share of disasters

9. The movie was produced for the museum by Christine Hybschmann and Adam Rieper, but for copyright reasons is only available in the museum. Regarding the concept Right to the City, see: Henri Lefevbre: *Le Droit à la Ville*, 1968 and David Harvey: "The Right to the City" in *NLR*, II, 53, 2008, p. 23-40. https://newleftreview.org/issues/II53/articles/david-harvey-the-right-to-the-city.

like fires, epidemics and war. In other city museums, such disasters are often presented as dramatic or even fateful moments in time and the interpretation focuses on the human lives and cultural heritage lost. This narrative was also integrated in our galleries focusing on the plague in 1711, the cholera of 1853, the fires in 1728 and 1795 as well as the British bombardment of the city in 1807. But alongside the focus on living through disastrous events, we also highlighted the potential for change that is inherent in such events and explored how each disaster had given rise to new practices within urban planning, burial customs and health care while in some cases also introducing new architectural styles and new regimes of hygiene, poverty relief, water supply and sewage. The themes explored in the room have only increased in relevance during the COVID-19 crisis and the destruction of cities now witnessed in Ukraine.

The intimacy of everyday life

In the central case of the initial room, one encounters the remains of early Copenhageners alongside documents and items documenting our latest knowledge of the city's foundation which can now be dated to the middle of the 11th-century or more than a 100 years before the hitherto official dating. This introduces our use of the presence of the past and the intimacy of everyday life as a curatorial principle. Throughout the galleries we have integrated items and narratives that illuminate the personal lives of past Copenhageners and make use of their life stories to introduce broader themes and interconnectivities. Thus, the story of the philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, of whom the museum has a unique collection of personal items, is integrated in a broader narrative about the importance of Copenhagen for the development of the Danish book market and the birth of the modern writer. But items such as his silver dip pen, a lock of hair taken from his deathbed and the finger ring that he first gave to his fiancée, Regine Olsen, and later got back, refitted, and wore the rest of his life after breaking off the engagement, brings us very close to the everyday life of perhaps the most world-famous Copenhagener. Similarly, a medieval children's boot, an ear cleaner in 24 carat gold, an 18th-century sedan chair and the camera from the last of the 20th-century street photographers on City Hall Square, along with a movie of his work, offers visitors an intimate connection with past lives and routines. So does a jacket belonging to one of the first squatters in Copenhagen in the 1960s and a uniform from one of the poorhouses for boys from the 18th-century, dotted with ink stains from the pen of a scribe, when the boys were involved with drawing the winning numbers for one of the first state lotteries. The income from the lottery funded the poorhouse, but the lottery itself also led people to gambling problems and new poverty.

Another intimacy is created through an extensive use of voice recordings, giving visitors access to life stories and eye-witness accounts. We use listening stations and in some cases actors reading original sources to bring the past and present experiences of Copenhageners to life — for instance eyewitnesses to the plague in 1711 and the cholera outbreak in 1853.

Copenhagen Panorama — a place in time

The visit culminates with an interactive model and skyline displaying the layout of the contemporary city and using tangible 3D-imprints, soundscapes, light, a data wall and a movie to add multiple layers of interpretation of the model and to visualise the boundaries of the city in the past.

Remains of a plague victim 1711. The woman died from the plague at approximately 25 years of age. Photo: Museum of Copenhagen

A lock of hair from Søren Kierkegaard. Photo: Museum of Copenhagen

Camera from the street photographer Jens Nielsen, who worked at the City Hall Square from 1929-1973. Photo: Museum of Copenhagen

Sedan chair from the 18th-century used in Copenhagen. Photo: Museum of Copenhagen

Uniform worn by a boy from the royal orphanage. The uniform has ink stains on the right shoulder. They stem from the boys' function during the drawing of the winning numbers for the state lottery. The income from the lottery ticket sale funded the orphanage. Photo: Museum of Copenhagen

Woollen coat used by one of the early members of the squatter movement in Copenhagen during the peaceful occupation of the condemned property Sofiegaarden 1965-1969. Photo: Museum of Copenhagen

Copenhagen has been shaped by thousands of years of history. The model of the city and the panorama with the Copenhagen skyline show how the city has come into being. The model is a 1:750 cast of Copenhagen today, from the lakes around the centre of Copenhagen to Amager, and from the northern port to the south harbour. Here you can see the places and buildings you can discover as 1:1 fragments in the other rooms of the exhibition. Each fragment has its place in the story, and each place has its own history, and together they form a city and become our gateways to its past and future. Here time and place meet, and fragments coalesce to create a city.

Here you can experience 24 hours in 24 minutes, but you can also explore the very different borders of the city in the past. This is a place to immerse yourself in a sensory experience of Copenhagen, where the visitor can look, sense, feel and listen to the dynamic and ever-changing city. But it is also a place to explore facts on the data wall. How big is Copenhagen? How many people live here — now and in the past? How old are Copenhagen's buildings? How much do Copenhageners cycle? And what do they die from?

From there, you can then go from facts to feelings in the small cinema and watch the film *Copenhagen* — a poetic impression of the past with people of the present and the city as their stage, telling the stories of how Copenhagen changed and always will change.

The aim is to inspire visitors to head out into the city and experience Copenhagen anew. With fresh eyes that see the big picture in even the smallest detail, and the traces of history all around.

Facilities, activities and future plans

Special exhibitions and events:

Alongside the permanent galleries, the museum works with an extensive program of special exhibitions and events including talks, workshops, podwalks and casts, city walks, pop-up exhibitions, debates on contemporary issues and hands-on experiences of the work carried out behind the scenes. The first special exhibition at the new museum took a new look at the painter, Paul Fischer and his extensive production of paintings, postcards and illustrations of Copenhagen around 1900. The plan for the years to come includes an exhibition on urban planning called The City on the Drawing Board; an exhibition on Local Characters (in Danish, *originaler*) and Eccentricity, and last but not least, an exhibition on soundscapes, languages and oral cultures in the city past and present, related to the research project The Sound of the Capital, and various photo exhibitions focusing on the contemporary city.

City model and detail of model with horizon and laser light indicating the layout of the ramparts and the fortification between 1680 and 1870. Photo: Adam Mørk

Behind the scenes and outreach strategy
A particular focus in this regard is the archaeological work of the museum. To this end we have, in recent years, developed both a mobile museum, an archeological workshop and historical garden, that all share the principle of giving citizens a chance to take part in and gain insight into the processes involved in gaining new knowledge about the city's origin and material culture of the past.

Café, museum shop and other public facilities
We aim at making our guests feel welcome and to make the museum space a safe environment in which to share ideas and be together with friends and family. The museum café, the shop, the historical garden and the rooms reserved for school groups, all play an important role in fulfilling this. As does the access for people with disabilities. An important task within the restoration of the new museum building has been achieving public facilities that sustains this experience, while still respecting the historical architecture. In order to increase the number and diversity of visitors we have extended our opening hours. Every day of the week the museum is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Thursdays.

Method of financing
The museum is fundamentally a public, non-profit organization. All income from ticket sales and the museum shop covers staff and other projects in the museum's portfolio. The financing of the restoration of the building and the production of exhibitions and other inventories connected to the establishment of the new museum has been funded partly by the Municipality of Copenhagen and partly by donations from private foundations.

Future plans
In the years to come, the museum's primary focus is to establish the brand of the museum in the new location and to build on the massive public interest in the new museum and its exhibitions following the opening.

Other strategic goals for the upcoming years include research and outreach projects revolving around the collaboration between archaeology and the natural sciences, as well as research and exhibitions on the cultural history of sound, language and listening in the city along with the development of a varied programme of special exhibitions and events aimed at different target groups and involving citizens in the creative process of gathering knowledge and making the exhibitions.

Behind the scenes, the museum is completing the move of its collections to the new storage facility, improving the preservation and registration of the collection as well as its future usability for research and dissemination purposes alike. Parts of the collection have been available online through the platform

https://kbhbilleder.dk/ and more images are on their way, including selections from the vast collection of paintings and drawings in the museum collection as well as an online selection of objects for the benefit of students and researchers and the general public.

The accessibility project I Feel Copenhagen

We will continue to strive to become even more inclusive. Being a museum for all is not only about the content, the stories that are communicated, but also about being accessible for all. The accessibility project — I Feel Copenhagen — is a project dealing with making the museum both more physically accessible and ensuring that the content in the exhibitions is being presented in accessible ways. We wish to become a museum that is both welcoming and relevant to the young and old, the tall and short, for those who move on wobbly legs or on wheels. For those who can´t speak and those who can´t hear, or see, or for those who are visually impaired. All of us are different from how we are born, and as time shapes us, also creating different and changing basic needs through life, yet we want to put everyone in the same position, so to speak, and through many different types of communication.

We will create this through: colour differences to mark obstacles, tactile maps, audio guides based on visual interpretation, tactile reconstructions of exhibited objects, meetings between generations and people with different (dis) abilities and much more.

We do not pretend to know it all, so users and experts from different societies are an integral part of this project from the very start. Developing and revising the solutions together as we go along through meetings, workshops and extensive user tests. Through outreach, participation and ownership we believe that we can create welcoming, inclusive and functional spaces — making not only the museum space more accessible, but also communicating the history of Copenhagen to more and becoming a shared space, that truly will belong to everyone.

A city museum for the 21st-century: the Historical Museum Frankfurt[1]

Jan Gerchow

The Historical Museum Frankfurt (HMF) is situated on the central square "Römerberg" in Frankfurt on the Main, Germany. It is housed in the Saalhof, an ensemble of five historical buildings erected over an 800-year-period from the 12th to the 19th-century, making it one of the city's most prominent monuments. Its renovation, and two major new buildings added in the years 2011-2017, allowed the HMF to be remodelled as a modern city museum for Frankfurt.

A museum with a history

The HMF has been in existence for almost 150 years. From the very start (foundation phase from 1861 to 1877, opening in 1878), items connected with Frankfurt and its history have been collected and displayed here. The oldest parts of its collections even go back to the Renaissance period, when citizens of Frankfurt began not only to collect "interesting" objects but also donated these private collections to the City Library, which gave them in 1877/78 to its first museum. Today, the museum collections count over 630,000 objects. During a long process of specialisation, the once "universal" city museum developed into a special interest museum for history, with a strong focus on Frankfurt's city history. Historical events such as the Prussian occupation of Frankfurt in 1866, the debate on the reconstruction of Frankfurt's Old Town in the 1920s, and Nazi municipal policy (1933-1945) always also impacted on the orientation of the museum.

In the aftermath of the students' revolution, in the early 1970s, the museum underwent its most fundamental change hitherto: already back then the museum sought to convey "culture for everyone", education was regarded as a central task of the museum, and the first participative exhibition projects were realised. The completely renewed museum of 1972 set out to be a modern place of learning rather than a cult site at which the educated middle classes might worship. The aim was to ensure that visitors to the museum understood the content provided, irrespective of their own educational background; the

1. The entire article is based on my introduction to the museum guide of 2017: Jan Gerchow, "A City Museum for the 21st-Century", in Jan Gerchow & Wolfgang P. Cillessen (eds.), *Frankfurt Museum — Guide to the Historical Museum Frankfurt*, Frankfurt, Henrich, 2017 (2nd edition 2019), pp 11-17, and further articles in this book.

content itself, moreover, had to be not just canonical but also bear critical scrutiny and comment. The evidential value of the objects on show was doubted, while all new exhibitions were structured by illustrated information panels. Frankfurt's new departure in 1972 was viewed with interest and curiosity and widely discussed in professional circles even outside Europe. What impressed most was the critical attitude towards objects and contents, as well as the new approach to the museum's role as educator, including one of Europe's first children's museums, which was founded in 1972 and still exists today ("Young Museum"). New collections were installed devoted to the history of everyday life, industrial labour, and the history of technology, and it was also during this period that the tradition of participatory museum — in those days called *group work*[2] — that has continued to this day, first began. This early phase of remodelling the museum in the 1970s became a reference point in the most recent attempt to "re-invent" the HMF.[3]

From a museum of history to a city museum for the 21st-century

Between 2007 and 2017, the HMF again underwent a process of radical remodelling. The first step was the technical and architectural renovation of the historical buildings, which was planned by Diezinger architects of Eichstätt and completed in 2012. The new buildings, designed by the winners of the 2007/2008 competition, LRO architects of Stuttgart, were commenced in 2011 and finished in 2017. This full-scale renovation of the museum premises offered a unique opportunity to rethink the entire museum concept. The museum team sought the advice of Steiner Sarnen of Switzerland, with whose support it developed a new Master Plan in 2009. One of the key premises was that "A museum

2. Cornelia Rühlig, "Tote Resultate lebendig machen", in *Die Zukunft beginnt in der Vergangenheit: Museumsgeschichte und Geschichtsmuseum*, ed. Historisches Museum, Frankfurt/Main and Gießen, Anabas, 1982, p. 348-356, p. 354.

3. For the entire section see Detlef Hoffmann, Almut Junker & Peter Schirmbeck (eds.), *Geschichte als öffentliches Ärgernis, oder: Ein Museum für die demokratische Gesellschaft*, Fernwald, Anabas, 1974; Jürgen Steen, *Trophäe oder Leichenstein? Kulturgeschichtliche Aspekte des Geschichtsbewußtseins in Frankfurt im 19.* Jahrhundert, Frankfurt/Main, Historisches Museum, 1978, p. 23-48, Historisches Museum Frankfurt (ed.), *Die Zukunft beginnt in der Vergangenheit*, Frankfurt/Main and Gießen, Anabas, 1982; Walter Hochreiter, *Vom Musentempel zum Lernort. Zur Sozialgeschichte deutscher Museen 1800-1914*, Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1994, p. 87-114; Gudrun-Christine Schimpf, *Geld Macht Kultur. Kulturpolitik in Frankfurt am Main zwischen Kommerzialisierung und öffentlicher Finanzierung 1866-1933*, Frankfurt/Main, Kramer, 2007; Historisches Museum Frankfurt (ed.), *Frankfurter Sammler und Stifter*, Frankfurt/Main 2012; Sebastian Farnung, *Kulturpolitik im Dritten Reich am Beispiel Frankfurter Museen*, Frankfurt/Main, Henrich, 2016; Vincent Dold & Lotte Thaa, Historisches Museum Frankfurt am Main', in Anke Te Heesen, Mario Schulze & Vincent Dold (eds.), *Museumskrise und Ausstellungserfolg. Die Entwicklung der Geschichtsausstellung in den Siebzigern*, Berlin 2016, p. 34-49.

ThHMF in the 1970s: new permanent exhibition on post-war city history, ca. 1975. Photo: Kochmann/HMF

in the 21st-century, especially a city museum of the 21st-century, can become a laboratory and a forum for a new civic society".[4] This assertion grew out of the realization that museums, like most cultural institutions, are insufficiently prepared for the challenges posed by both present and future. The accelerated pace of change resulting from globalization, digitization, mobility, and migration is impacting all major cities. Frankfurt is no exception. Not only does it have a relatively high rate of turnover within its resident population (between 10 and 15 per cent per annum), but well over 50 per cent of its inhabitants have an immigrant background. At the same time, Frankfurt is a European financial centre and, as a globally leading data hub, a capital of digitization.

The first question the museum team had to ask back in 2009 was: What must a museum accomplish in order to remain relevant in a city like Frankfurt? And how can it attract, not just dwindling numbers of middle-class "culture vultures", but all sections of civic society as well as guests from elsewhere? To answer these questions, two basic assumptions were formulated: (1) The only

4. Published in Jan Gerchow, *Cura 2009: Historisches Museum Frankfurt — Stadtmuseum für das 21. Jahrhundert*, Frankfurt, Historisches Museum, 2009, p. 9 (see download section on the museum website: https://www.historisches-museum-frankfurt.de/de/museumdigital/downloads?language=en).

The new buildings of the HMF, by LRO architects, opened in October 2017. Photo: Bernoully/HMF

theme that can possibly provide social cohesion in a population as culturally diverse as Frankfurt's is the city itself. After all, the one thing that all Frankfurt's residents have in common is the city they inhabit. No other factor — be it cultural heritage, nationality, language, or religion — is shared by a majority of the population. (2) Thanks to the Web 2.0 digital revolution, knowledge in the 21st-century is no longer generated exclusively by academically accredited institutions or individuals, such as museums and their curators. These days, anyone can generate and publish what they know simply by posting it online. Inevitably, this is having an impact on established institutions like museums.

The mission of the new HMF was then developed on the basis of these basic assumptions. The old museum of history with its focus on the history of Frankfurt and the surrounding region was to be reinvented as a modern city museum. The themes addressed there, moreover, should no longer be confined to the past, but should include present-day concerns as well as the city's future prospects. The museum's old claim — based on its academic and custodial credentials

City-lab installation in October 2017 with 80 portraits of Frankfurters in the windows of the top floor, new exhibition house, in front the city lab bycicle and tools. Photo: Welzel/HMF

— to exclusive "sovereignty" over the city's cultural heritage was to be dropped in favour of a concept that made the museum and its resources open to the entire public. Its visitors would henceforth be treated as users who would feel respected and taken seriously by the museum. This policy of inclusiveness was to be supported by the installation of new interfaces: Users were to be given opportunities for participation of varying intensity and quality. The inspiration for this came from the New Museology that has become standard practice in English-speaking countries, where concepts such as the *open museum*, *outreach*, *participation*, and *co-creation* have all become firmly established.[5] The new HMF, in other words,

5. Cf. Peter Vergo, *The New Museology*, London, Reaktion Books, 1989; Ivan Karp, Christine Mullen & Steven Lavine, *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*, Washington DC, Smithsonian, 1992.

was to become a place where a highly diverse resident population, along with large numbers of outside visitors, are able to engage with the city's past, present, and future. Instead of a museum about the city, it was to become a museum for the city.

Museum Quarter instead of permanent collection

The complex structure of the museum buildings (five historical buildings in the "Saalhof" plus two new buildings, added from 2012-2017) stimulated the concept of a museum quarter rather than one museum with the classical division between permanent collection and changing exhibitions. Furthermore, the museum quarter idea was interpreted as city quarter: the Historisches Museum has a complex structure of buildings, old and new. It occupies an 800-year-old monument made up of five buildings: the Saalhof at the Mainkai (the Saalhof being the name for the entire historical complex and at the same time of its oldest part: the castle of the Staufer emperors). The new build adds an entrance building, a large exhibition house and a museum forecourt to this. Together, the buildings comprise a new Museum Quarter in the historical centre of the city. Just like a city neighbourhood, the Museum Quarter has several buildings from different construction phases, a public square and various courtyards that divide up the space. This means that the newly designed city museum is able to express and depict an important topic through its buildings alone — the history and present of the city of Frankfurt. The large exhibition space — measuring nearly 6,000 square metres — is spread over five buildings and nine different exhibition entities. Visitors are able to get closer to the history of Frankfurt via the 800-year-old buildings or can be guided by the thematic exhibitions. However, the museum cannot be experienced in its entirety in a single visit — something the Historisches Museum Frankfurt has in common with the city itself.[6]

The idea of a Museum Quarter was taken up in the communication of the museum, to strengthen the shift of identity from special-interest museum for history to city museum. And in planning the new museum concept, this initially rather architectonic idea of the museum or city quarter became the point of departure for an unusual variety of permanent exhibitions and special exhibition spaces. In the past, most museums offered the one permanent exhibition or "collection", based on the assets of the museum, with one or more special exhibition spaces added to this core of the museum. Starting from the idea of a Museum Quarter, the new HMF developed a variety of permanent and special exhibition spaces. For some of the permanent galleries in the historic "Saalhof", the building itself was chosen as object number one, and the narrative of the

6. See Gerchow & Cillessen (eds.), *Frankfurt Museum — Guide...*, p. 35-49.

The Museum Quarter as a new city quarter in Frankfurt's Old Town, aerial view of Sept. 2016.
Photo: Robert Metsch/HMF

exhibition reveals the historical dimensions of the buildings, so that by visiting the museum buildings it is possible to walk through 800 years of city history (see below "Exhibitions in the Saalhof").

In the following sections, the permanent exhibitions and installations of the new HMF are explained in brief, starting with the two most unusual.

Typical Frankfurt!

Typical Frankfurt! marks the beginning of the new Historical Museum Frankfurt. It is already visible from the new square that all visitors to the museum cross. At its centre, aligned with the museum entrance, stands a brass periscope. It focuses attention on the underground level: the connecting level between museum entrance and exhibition gallery beneath the museum square. A striking exhibition installation is a veritable eye-catcher. A city model can be seen beneath an oversized Snow Globe, and after a few moments, a new city model is presented on a round disc, raised by an industrial robot.

People walking across the museum square are curious enough to want to take a closer look at the unusual Snow Globe — and immediately on looking downwards they understand that the two new buildings of the museum underneath the square are connected to one another. People's curiosity is increased by the fact that when one of the models is replaced, the "eye" of the periscope

The Typical Frankfurt! Snow Globe has become one of the attractions of the new HMF, here the model "Eternal Building Site" on show. Photo: Petra Welzel/HMF

closes. This reduces the daylight in the underground room so that the projections shown on eight wall segments around the Snow Globe can be fully appreciated. With moving images and animations, they serve to flesh out the statement made by a particular model.

The Snow Globe is the introduction to the topic of the museum, namely the diverse identities of Frankfurt. Although the eight models under the glass globe differ greatly in terms of content and design, all of them only depict this city. They provide an unusual introduction to a museum visit, both for international tourists and "experts on Frankfurt" from the region.

The idea for this introduction was developed by the museum team in close cooperation with the exhibition designers of Kossmann.dejong from Amsterdam — work that began back in 2010. Initially, the museum conceived of a kinetic city model as an introduction to the museum. Herman Kossmann proposed a snow globe with eight different city models all representing Frankfurt: essentially a jukebox with eight models rather than records. Subsequently, eight typical features characteristic of Frankfurt were selected and the museum conducted research on the content and images, while Kossmann de Jong commissioned artists to create the models and accompanying films.

Hardly any other city in Germany is so strongly associated with clichés as Frankfurt/Main. That goes for self-images and public images alike. Its strongest

image today is doubtless that of the banking city; the locals themselves speak of *Mainhattan* — a popular image with an ironic, if not megalomaniac, undertone — while the term *Bankfurt* tends to have negative connotations. As many as 500 years ago Martin Luther referred to Frankfurt as "the Empire's gold and silver hole". In other words, this cliché goes back a very long way. And it is precisely such stereotypes that the Snow Globe addresses: something like the city's "DNA", in other words, distinct traits that have long shaped Frankfurt and are still dominant or readily visible today. From 2013 onwards, the eight selected clichés were discussed with invited experts and museum visitors in a series of "Snow Globe Talks".

What is missing, however, in the Snow Globe at the Historical Museum is the snow. This sentimental veil was given a new interpretation by the film animations, shown on the eight wall segments surrounding the Snow Globe. They add both information and a certain aura to the individual models. The visual material stems from the museum's rich holdings: numerous images and films from its collections and exhibitions. The animations not only provide an introduction to the city of Frankfurt, but also to the museum.

The models were made by international contemporary artists such as Tracey Snelling, Edwin Zwackman and Rob Voerman. Specialising in this genre, they explore models as a medium for urban visions, often inspired via photography or film. For them, models become an instrument of artistic urban research. The models of the Snow Globe each show an individual selection of contemporary and historical local architecture, coloured by the artist's own interpretation of a cliché. Like dioramas — another classic museum medium — they contain small scenes featuring events from the city's past and present. Observers approach these models in the same way as numerous visitors to the city do: They look down onto the microcosm that is Frankfurt, as if from a plane, and can delve into the details of its architecture and history.[7]

Frankfurt Now! — a laboratory for the city

The new city-laboratory Frankfurt Now! is the format through which the museum intends to accomplish its mission of becoming an open and relevant cultural institution for all. The lab was launched as an experiment in 2010, and after the main building (dating from 1972) was torn down in 2011, it was forced to go "on tour". It made use of a variety of unused or otherwise available spaces all over the city. An empty office space (Ostend-Ostanfang, 2011), an abandoned car dealer shop (Gallus — A Quarter and a Whole, 2015), a clubhouse on the outskirts

7. Cf. Jan Gerchow & Herman Kossmann, *The Snow Globe — Typical Frankfurt*, Frankfurt, Henrich, 2017.

First City-Lab exhibition in 2011 about and in the city quarter "Eastend". Photo: Seweryn Zelazny /HMF

Workshop-space of the new City-Lab in the exhibition house, in 2017.
Photo: Petra Welzel/HMF

of town (G-Town: Living Room Ginnheim, 2013), the city's oldest outdoor swimming pool (My Stadionbad, 2012), or the five kilometre long public park Wallanlagen (Park in Progress, 2014). The year 2015 saw the addition of a new format, a Summer Tour, which in its first year took the lab through all forty-two city districts, while in 2016 it took the form of a voyage of discovery through Frankfurt, accompanied by various artists. Thanks to these touring workshops, exhibitions, and expeditions, the museum team got to meet countless city residents, commuters, and guests, who were able to inject their voices and their views of Frankfurt into the new museum. So it was with this experience already under its belt that the lab at last moved into the new museum in 2017.

In the most spectacular room of the new exhibition house, under the roof on level 3, with more than 80 windows out to the city, the city lab has become a permanent exhibition machine and workshop space for the growing community of "city laborants" in the new museum. Up to 2020, the museum collaborated with more than a thousand citizens in the city lab. The museum invites them every year for a party and asks them to take part in the upcoming projects, to make suggestions for new topics or keep in touch with the museum via the digital version "City Lab digital". Every year, two new exhibitions are prepared and shown here. Topics like Bought — Collected — Looted? How Things Came Into the Museum (2018), How do the people live? Touring the Ernst May Housing Estates with the CityLab (2019) or I spy with my little eye: Racism, Resistance and Empowerment (2020/21) are shown on 600 m² of space, collaboratively developed with groups of participants from all sections of the city's population. The digital dimension invites everyone to contribute "snapshot" findings and pin them on a digital city map, together with comments, videos, photographs, etc.[8]

The Library of the Generations[9] fits in well with this new approach. Since the artist Sigrid Sigurdsson launched this participatory art and memory project in the year 2000, the museum has recruited and supported more and more authors so that a total of 140 contributions have been collected to date or are still being processed. Here, too, the subject is the individual's view of the city, along with

8. Cf. Susanne Gesser & Angela Jannelli, "Frankfurt Now! The City of Today and Tomorrow", Gerchow & Cillessen (eds.), *Frankfurt Museum — Guide...*, p. 93-108, Jan Gerchow, Susanne Gesser & Angela Jannelli, "Nicht von gestern: Das Historische Museum Frankfurt wird zum Museum für das 21. Jahrhundert", in Susanne Gesser, Martin Handschin & Angela Jannelli (eds.), *Das partizipative Museum. Zwischen Teilhabe und User Generated Content*, Bielefeld, transcript, 2021, p. 22-31, and Jan Gerchow & Sonja Thiel, "The Participatory City Museum", in Carmen Mörsch, Angeli Sachs & Thomas Sieber (eds.), *Contemporary Curating and Museum Education*, Bielefeld, transcript, 2017, pp 131-140.

9. Angela Jannelli (ed.), *Die Bibliothek der Generation — Offenes Archiv 2000-2105*, Frankfurt, Henrich, 2017.

The Library of the Generations as part of Frankfurt Now!, 2017. Photo: Stefanie Kösling/HMF

personal memories and mementos of Frankfurt supplied by members of society. It now forms one of the two mainstays of Frankfurt Now!, the second being the large model of Frankfurt made by the artist Herman Helle of Rotterdam.

This highly unusual model of the present-day city grew out of more than a thousand subjective descriptions of Frankfurt collected during the Summer Tour of 2015. Hence favourite places and non-places, the diversity of the districts, and perceptions of the city, are the focus of the Frankfurt model. It shows how the Frankfurters themselves see their city. The Rotterdam-based artist Herman Helle, with his group Hotel Modern, has translated this into art: he portrays the most important places in large-scale, while some stories are told through the use of allusions and found objects. Sounds and videos convey the liveliness of the perceived city. The city's social groups differ greatly. This is why the opinions of Frankfurters often contradict one another. In Frankfurt, village and city, skyscrapers and timber frames, urban development and greenery, are all right next to each other. These opposites come together and surprising neighbourhoods come to light through the model's use of different media.

The model is a constant inspiration to the museum visitors to engage with the texts, podcasts, films, and photos submitted by the city's residents and users and to continue collecting more of these documents. Between these two poles, the city lab exhibitions are presented and the results of the Summer Tours

The new Frankfurt Model of the present day city, created by Herman Helle and Hotel Modern (Rotterdam), one of the main attractions of the new HMF. Photo: Stefanie Kösling/HMF

or Collection-Check workshops are shared with all museum visitors and users. The Digital City Lab supplies the necessary internet interface. Here, anyone interested can publish material about the city on a special digital map. In addition, four interactive media stations allow this material to be called up and expanded upon inside the museum.

Historical exhibitions

The history of the city naturally still has a key role to play in the museum. After all, until today there are still plenty of city museums where the history of their city, alongside a room for temporary exhibitions, is all they are offering. Such museums basically have just one large exhibition or "collection" that is on show all the time. The current thinking among museologists, however, is that it is precisely these permanent exhibitions, especially in museums of history, that have become a problem. Because after opening to great fanfare, such museums soon see visitor numbers tailing off, and although schools and tourists continue to visit them, their regional target audience does not. Hence the concept of the new HMF wants to turn its permanent exhibitions on the history of the city into something of enduring interest. One part of the answer is thematic and formal variety: Now, five different exhibitions offer aspects of Frankfurt's history, two of them are linked with the historical buildings (The Staufer Age with The Staufer Harbour,

and the Main Panorama in the Toll Tower), one is linked with the history of collectors and collections (Frankfurt Collectors and Donors) and two offer newly created thematic approaches: the exhibitions Frankfurt Once? and Snow Globe/ Typical Frankfurt! The very notion of permanence, moreover, has been redefined so that some exhibition elements can be replaced, updated, or exchanged.

Frankfurt Once? — A history of the city in five chapters

The section Frankfurt Once? was conceived as a counterfoil to Frankfurt Now! The Once? is housed in the new exhibition building, immediately below the Now! The question mark and exclamation mark turn the expected ratio of certainty to uncertainty on its head: The question mark appended to history (Once?) that is supposedly a closed chapter identifies it as anything but, whereas the present (Now!), which normally would not count as a museum piece at all, asserts itself with a mark of surprise. So the history of the city raises questions, while contemporary Frankfurt has taken its place alongside it inside the new museum. The story told in Frankfurt Once? frequently looks ahead to the show of present-day Frankfurt, and ends where Frankfurt Now! begins.[10]

The crucial decision not to tell the story of Frankfurt chronologically, as a journey through time, was made back in 2009. Although this is the ordering system most commonly adopted by historical or city history museums, the museum team felt it would make too much of the content seem predictable. This would mean risking a loss of suspense, excitement, and surprise. The nearly 2,000 m² of exhibition space allotted to Frankfurt Once? were therefore subdivided into five chapters or galleries, each of which covers a different theme: The first of these, Townscapes, presents various views of and on Frankfurt, from the 16th to the 20th-century, with a strong focus on the ongoing debate about old city centres, showing five historical city models in one installation, enhanced by an animated film in four acts, like a "drama". The gallery 100 x Frankfurt offers an alternative approach to Frankfurt's past, specifically 100 intriguing, noteworthy objects lined up on one-thousand-year timeline.[11] The gallery called the Citizens' Town is the first in a suite of three galleries devoted to three key aspects of Frankfurt's long history, which taken together make its history unique, since apart from a brief episode during the Napoleonic period shortly after 1800, Frankfurt has always been a city governed by its citizens. The fourth gallery, called Money Town, homes in on Frankfurt's role as a commercial and financial centre, which began with the

10. Frank Berger, Wolfgang P. Cillessen, Jan Gerchow, Nina Gorgus & Dorothee Linnemann, "Frankfurt Once? A thousand years of City History in Five Topics", in Gerchow & Cillessen (eds.), *Frankfurt Museum — Guide...*, p. 59-91.

11. Jan Gerchow & Nina Gorgus (eds.), *100 x Frankfurt. Geschichte aus (mehr als) 1.000 Jahren*, Frankfurt/Main, Societätsverlag, 2017.

The portrait wall in the gallery "Citizens' Town", part of Frankfurt Once? Photo: Petra Welzel/HMF

launch of its trade fairs in the 13th-century. The fifth and last gallery, Global City, looks at Frankfurt's role as the city that for centuries functioned as Germany's unofficial capital. It was here that the German kings and emperors were elected and later crowned; it was here, for fifty years in the early-19th century, that the government of the German Confederation sat in session; just as it was here, that Germany's first democratic National Assembly was convened in 1848-49.

A curatorial guideline was to group the exhibits to form impressive object collages. The aim was to make a visit to the museum an aesthetic experience that visitors will hopefully wish to repeat. Usually, historical museums offer an aesthetically unambitious selection and presentation of exhibits, which seems to be one of the reasons why permanent exhibitions in these museums do not tend to be visited repeatedly. The object installations of 100 x Frankfurt, the portrait wall of Frankfurt Faces, and the flags in the Citizens' Town provided excellent opportunities for object collages, as did the Coin Empire in Money Town and the Schöner Globe in Global City.

While this concentration on just a few key themes makes for very focused content, it inevitably means paying rather less attention to other topics of interest. To remedy this, several Theme Trails through the whole museum were created, so that visitors can explore subjects such as Frankfurt under the Nazis, the History of Migration, or the History of Women (to be continued), across all sections.[12] Compared with earlier permanent exhibitions, moreover, there is now a much larger selection of interactive objects and exhibits as well as Learn More levels to encourage repeat visits. In addition to the extensive use of digital display media, there is also a Family Trail designed specially for younger visitors and the adults accompanying them, as well as special Study Rooms on every floor with further reading and additional materials for groups and school classes. Here, interactive hands-on stations or analogous material collections for free use are dominating.

Exhibitions in the Saalhof

The museum's historical premises also have an important role to play in the new concept, for this is where the special themes that set the HMF apart from the city's many theme museums are housed. Among them is the exhibition on Frankfurt Collectors and Donors that occupies nearly 800 m² of the Burnitzbau and Stauferbau. Spread over four floors, this show unfurls a panorama of Frankfurt's great collectors, from those of the early 17th century such as Johann Martin Waldschmidt (1650-1706), the first librarian of the municipal library, and Johann

12. See the download material on the museum website: https://www.historisches-museum-frankfurt.de/de/schulen/downloads?language=de.

Wilhelm Dilich (1600-1657), a builder of fortifications, to Wilhelm Kratz (d. 1945), the collector of Frankfurt faience, and the remains of the private museum that the Jewish banker Julius Heyman (1863-1925) installed at his home on Palmstraße. Visitors here are cast in the role of "educated" travellers who are welcomed as guests into the collectors' "private homes." There they learn about the history of Frankfurt from twelve unusual, often very personal perspectives.[13]

The basement of the 12th/13th-century Stauferbau houses a small exhibition (200 m²) on Frankfurt during the Staufer Age. After all, as the seat of the kings and emperors, this very building was at the heart of the city in those days. It thus played an important role in establishing Frankfurt as the city where German kings and "Roman" emperors were elected from 1152 onwards. The exhibition of architectural remains is flanked by spolia and other archaeological finds from the Hohenstaufen period, as well as a model of Frankfurt's centre as it evolved over centuries. In 2017, this section was enlarged to include the spectacular find of the Staufer Harbour. This quay, dating from ca. 1200, was built as part of the royal palace but filled in again just 150 or so years later — which explains how it survived the intervening 700 years so well. It was uncovered by chance only during the excavation work for the new building in 2012.[14]

The Rententurm (toll tower) opened to the public for the first time in its 600-year-long history in 2012. Visitors to this building can now climb its 15th-century spiral staircase, stopping on each floor to view the series of exhibits explaining the building's various functions. The pace here is set by the tower's 19th-century clock, whose movement is both visible and clearly audible. The Main Panorama (surrounding view over the river Main) from which this section of the museum derives its name can be admired on the second floor of the tower.

An inclusive museum

When developing all these concepts, special importance was attached to making both buildings and content as inclusive and barrier-free as possible. This ambition not only informed the measures taken for visitors with disabilities (such as the guidance system for the blind and easy-to-understand audio guides), but it was also enshrined in the museum's mission statement right from the start.[15]

When developing the new exhibitions, the most important partners were the exhibition designers Ursula Gillmann and Matthias Schnegg of Basel (Arge

13. Historisches Museum Frankfurt (ed.), *Frankfurter Sammler und Stifter*, Frankfurt/Main 2012.

14. Jan Gerchow, Caspar Ehlers & Andrea Hampel, *Der Staufische Hafen des Frankfurter Saalhofs: Cura 2013*, Frankfurt/Main, Historisches Museum, 2013, p. 4-27.

15. Jan Gerchow, Christiane Van den Borg & Anne Gemeinhardt, *Das inklusive Museum, Cura 2016*, Frankfurt/Main, Historisches Museum, 2016, pp 6-23, and Anne Gemeinhardt, "The Inclusive Museum" in Gerchow & Cillessen (eds.), *Frankfurt Museum...*, p. 17-20.

Gillmann+Schnegg) for those in the historical buildings and for Frankfurt Once? in the new exhibition building, Herman Kossmann (Kossmann.deJong) of Amsterdam developed the experimental formats Frankfurt Now! and Typical Frankfurt! (the Snow Globe).

Experiences and perspectives

This text was written three years after the opening of the renewed museum in October 2017. The museum attracted more than 200,000 visitors during the first twelve months, in the calendar year 2018, 187,694 and in 2019, 178,253 visitors. This is more than three times as many as in the construction period 2008-2017 (with reduced exhibitions) and more than double as many as before. More than half of the visitors come to see the permanent exhibitions, in particular the three new sections Typical Frankfurt!, Frankfurt Once? and Frankfurt Now! They are able to attract tourists from all over the world as well as the regional audience, who repeatedly visit the museum with their guests and friends.

The experimental format City Lab(oratory), as part of the gallery Frankfurt Now!, has been firmly established in the new museum. Before 2017, every project had been a risky venture which could fail over simple questions such as finding adequate rooms, security, installations etc. The generous space of 600 m² in the most spectacular room in level 3 of the exhibition house has helped a lot to establish this experimental format. It seems to be very important for participative projects like this that the framework and conditions for this voluntary engagement of citizens are solid, dignified and serious, so that the museum operates on eye level with the participants. The small city lab team managed to enlarge the group of "city laborants" to over 1,000 people, of which ca. one third repeatedly cooperates with the museum's projects — not only in city lab projects. The museum doesn't count the visitors of the city lab separately from the other museum visitors, since no extra fee is charged for this section. So there are no figures of the development of visitor numbers to report here. An important incentive for city laborants is their membership in a "club" with a membership ticket offering free access to the museum, including one accompanying person. It is valid for two years after actively taking part in one of the projects of the city lab and can be constantly renewed. With our projects about migration history or racism, the museum was able to win more city lab members from diverse backgrounds. Thus the museum makes progress on its way to "mirror" the city's population, as well as the city's topics, in a really encompassing way.[16]

16. A series of documentations of the city lab projects has been published, see the museum website:https://www.historisches-museum-frankfurt.de/de/frankfurtjetzt/stadtlaborarchiv?language=en.

Special exhibitions, including the almost 1,000 m² large gallery at Level 0 of the new exhibition house, stage big themes such as Votes for Women — The 100th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage in Germany (2018/19) or Forgetting — Why We Don't Remember Everything (2019):[17] they attracted only ca. 40 per cent of the museum visitors. Planning the museum, the team had assumed the opposite, hence from an overall 6,000 m² of exhibition space 1,800 m² were dedicated to special exhibitions. The team now is thinking about ways to invest more time and money in the upkeep and updating of the permanent shows. The change of objects or clearly-cut sections in the permanent galleries already began one year after opening the new premises. We try to combine an exchange of objects for conservational reasons (mainly exposure to light) with new stories (mainly biographies) or new series of images — so that we can attract the public with changes and new elements in the museum galleries every half a year. The small museum team quickly experienced the limits of this new practice: these small changes are very demanding, competing with a big programme of ca. five special exhibitions per year.

The mission statement of 2019 sums up and focusses on the core elements of the new museum concept: "The HMF is the city's oldest museum, collecting and preserving, researching, conveying and exhibiting Frankfurt's cultural heritage. As a city museum it is a centre of knowledge and critical information, reflection and discussion on the past, present and future of Frankfurt; as a history museum it links local town issues with broader social history.

The museum is open to everyone. Its Young Museum offers opportunities tailored specifically to families and schools. The museum draws upon the wealth of experience and knowledge from Frankfurt's people and their guests, working in a participatory and inclusive manner. It invites everyone living in the city to participate in the museum as a cultural forum and help shape it. Multiple perspectives and diversity play a central role in this context. The diversity of urban society is reflected in its collections, exhibitions and communication.

Based on current topics of debate, historical objects are scientifically researched and linked to subjective stories and points of view; this includes all relevant artistic, city-researching as well as everyday-life perspectives. Additional museum objectives include expanding and consolidating its digital strategy and its networks within the city and the region.

The museum preserves the cultural heritage of its urban community for future generations. It features extensive collections of art and the history of

17. See the archive of special exhibitions on the museum website:https://www.historisches-museum-frankfurt.de/de/vorschau?language=en.

everyday life, with outstanding inventories at its disposal. The museum team carefully preserves the objects and manages their conservation. Important priorities include the digital documentation and publication of collections, and the researching of provenances.

Our museum team fosters a cooperative and respectful working environment. Together with our colleagues from the Young Museum and the Porcelain Museum, we form a team comprised of diverse expert skills that complement each other and allow for differing views. The museum team is active in international museum networks. We are an open-minded and learning institution: we are curious, work on an interdisciplinary basis, and confront the challenges of a constantly changing urban society."

The success of the new museum led to a heavy work overload in the museum team which had not grown in numbers with the new exhibition spaces and formats. In order to limit the flood of projects and events, the first mission statement of 2009 was renewed in 2019 by the entire team — not only by the curatorial staff and management as in 2009. To reach more with less activity, by focussing on central functions and few formats, was the main outcome of this process. The team realised, that a "universal" city museum runs into problems if it doesn't maintain a clear profile. Monothematic museums don't have this problem, but a museum with a 360-degree perspective on a city runs the risk of losing a clear profile. Selecting more precisely its activities according to the mission statement is one of the museum's ways to cope. In particular, the development of digital interfaces with the public and the enhancement of open-source content on all of the museum's assets on its web platform are top targets for the years to come.

The Museum of Lisbon — a city museum on a journey

Joana Sousa Monteiro

The Museum of Lisbon is one of many cases of older history museums focused on a city, which have been lately transformed into a new type of museum, following the international trends in the field. This chapter is about the path taken over the last five years, including the major doubts, stumbling blocks and achievements.

The museum's founder, Irisalva Moita, wished, in the late 1970s, to create a museum relevant not only to Lisbon, but also to the country. After a long period of slowing down, the urge is now to update the founding goal, repositioning the museum within the trajectory of city museums today.

Brief history of the museum

The Museum of Lisbon was formally established in 1909, with the designation of Municipal Historical Museum of Lisbon, temporarily installed at the Council headquarters, aiming to research and promote the long history of the city. Prior to the establishment of the Museum in the definitive premises, some collections were shown in different temporary locations, of which the most relevant was at the Mitra Palace, from 1942. The Museum of the City opened in 1979 at the Pimenta Palace, acquired by the Lisbon Municipality in 1962, showing part of the permanent exhibition which was to be on display for a long period of time.

The Pimenta Palace is an 18th-century manor house in the north part of Lisbon, built in 1746 by Diogo Sousa Mexia (a distinguished character close to King João V), of which there remains the small palace comprising two floors, walls covered in tiles, and three gardens around it. One of the owners of the house and farm was Manuel Joaquim Pimenta, giving the site its name up to today. The museum permanent collections occupy the house's whole ground and first floors, across its small rooms, partially changed by the works the Municipality engaged in the 1970s.

The plan designed by the first museum director, Irisalva Moita, was ambitious and innovative on the national scene of that time. It was completed in 1971, shortly before the Museum of London's reopening in 1973, one of the first city museums with a comprehensive view and language consistent with its times. The philosophy behind the city museum programme resonated with the thinking of museum specialists such as Per Uno Agren, Kenneth Hudson and Hughes de Varine.

The programme was designed to highlight the long and very rich history of the city, from prehistory to the late 19th-century, complemented by relevant

Pimenta Palace. Photo: Museu de Lisboa

temporary exhibitions presented from the 1980s to the late 1990s. After that, due to various reasons, there was a slowing down of exhibitions and publications. The permanent exhibition remained similar to the founding exhibition from the late 1970s, with few updates, until 2014, while the temporary exhibitions were as much about contemporary art and other themes as about the city.

Strategies for change

The remodelling of the former Museum of the City was part of a broader programme of major municipal services' reform, which included reviewing and reshaping the management of Lisbon's municipal museums, between 2010 and 2015. It was necessary to reconsider the administrative, financial and programme dimensions of Lisbon's municipal museums, whose management was divided between the Municipality, and the public municipal company for culture, EGEAC.[1]

The group of municipal museums under the same umbrella of the Municipality Department of Culture covered the Saint Anthony Museum (a small sacred art museum opened in 1962), the Roman Theatre Museum (opened in 2001), the Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro Art Museum (opened in 1926), alongside the Museum of the City.

1. This project was part of the Working Group for the Network of Municipal Museums, established in 2010 under the aegis of the Councillor for Culture.

Under the public company for culture in Lisbon, EGEAC, there were the Fado Museum (since 1998), the Puppet Museum (opened in 1987), the Castle of St Jorge (under municipal administration since 1995), the Discoveries Monument (in EGEAC since 2003), and also the House for poet Fernando Pessoa (since 2012). Two other museums joined the group, the Aljube Museum of Liberty and Resistance and the Art Studio-House Julio Pomar (both opened in 2015).

After a process of negotiation and reprogramming, all municipal museums have been united under the EGEAC's administration since 2017, including the Museum of Lisbon.

In parallel with the wider reflection carried out by the Municipality, advisory boards and other stakeholders, there was a need to focus attention on the Museum of the City, given the lack of strategic renewal of programmes and premises. An Advisory Group for the Museum of the City of Lisbon was created under the auspices of the Councillor for Culture, which gathered specialists in museology and Lisbon history.

Almost 40 years after the founding movement of Irisalva, the goal for the Museum was to become relevant again, about and for Lisbon, under updated museological paradigms. The key aspects in moving towards the new phase of the museum were: the clarification of the museum structure (a museum with five places as a clear motto); the museum name (from "Museum of the City" to "Museum of Lisbon"); a refreshed programme of exhibitions, focused on identity values and innovation; a new communication strategy, regular publications and the promotion of steady community engagement.

Museum structure — one museum, many places

The Museum of the City led a grouping of four museums: the Museum of the City, the St Anthony Museum, the Roman Theatre Museum and the Bordalo Pinheiro Museum. The same museum directorate managed, in addition, the heritage conservation service and the municipal archaeology service. The council reforms included the creation of an independent archaeology department and the revision of the museums' managing structures, either as being part of the city museum, or as independent museums. It was unanimously agreed that the new Museum of Lisbon should keep, within its core, those museum sites which were of most relevance for telling the story of Lisbon.

Hence, the old St Anthony Museum gave way, in 2014, to a new museum site, totally modernised, about the life of the patron of Lisbon, in the Middle Ages, along with the popular festivities of the present, referring to the imaginary roots of Lisbon's identity.

The Roman Theatre Museum reopened in 2015, following the renewal of the permanent exhibition, expanding the collections through new museographic

Museum of Lisbon logo and map. Photo: Museu de Lisboa

solutions, in addition to a considerable improvement in physical accessibility and working conditions.[2]

It was understood that, unlike the two aforementioned museum sites, the Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro Museum, a monographic museum specialised in the artist, should remain independent of the City Museum, as would other municipal museums, i.e. the Fado Museum, the Puppet Museum, the Aljube Museum of Resistance and the Júlio Pomar Art Studio Museum.

Additionally, between 2013 and 2014, investments were made in two other spaces, which became the fourth and fifth museum sites of the Museum of Lisbon: an archaeological site at the Casa dos Bicos, and the West Tower in the Praça do Comércio, the main city centre square. Located on the ground floor of Casa dos Bicos, which currently hosts the Saramago Foundation, the archaeological site presents elements of relevance for the Roman and modern periods of Lisbon's history. Finally, the West Tower in the Praça do Comercio, used by a ministry until 2013, has become a location for temporary exhibitions since the Museum of Lisbon opened the exhibition Sea-air, Lisbon and the Tagus 1850-2014. In addition, a subterranean Roman monument, known as the Roman Galleries of Rua da Prata, is managed by the Museum and opens to the public twice a year.

Finally, there is an ongoing plan for the conservation and musealization of a late 19th-century factory mill that was part of a large military installation

2. The St Anthony's Museum was reprogrammed by its coordinator Pedro Teotónio Pereira. The Roman Theatre Museum has been excavated and researched by its coordinator, Lídia Fernandes.

Roman Theatre museum. Photo: Museu de Lisboa

in West Lisbon, Marvila, within the new Creative Hub of Beato, promoted by the City Council, which can help to foster research on recent industrial history, while covering a less well-served area of the city. The old factory is among the best-preserved industrial facilities of cereal milling in the country, operating from the late 19th-century until early 2000, when the large Military Maintenance hub ceased to function. The future Beato Hub will comprise start-up companies in technologies, organic food and industrial design. The old cereal mill is earmarked as a future 6th site of the Museum of Lisbon, due to research and share memories on the Military Maintenance community, contents about Lisbon's industrial heritage and the characteristics of the Western part of town.

Designation change — what's in a name?

Interestingly enough, one of the designations considered for the first city Museum in 1908 was Museum of Lisbon, having been registered in 1909 as the Municipal Historical Museum of Lisbon. Later, the vaguer designation of Museum of the City prevailed, even though other "Museums of the City" were created in the country (in Almada, Porto, and Aveiro, among others). In 2015, there were two options, both conveying "Lisbon" in the name, being the subject matter of the museum: either Museum of the City of Lisbon, or Museum of Lisbon, which we chose, being the simplest version that follows the international trend over the last twenty years.[3]

3. As in the case of the Museum of London, Museum of Amsterdam, Museum of Berlin, Museum of Kraków, Museum of Moscow, Seoul Museum, etc.

Museum of Lisbon Newsletter cover. Photo: Museu de Lisboa

Museum category — is it a city museum?

Prior to the development of museology as we know it, the founder of the Museum of the City, Irisalva Moita, delivered two of the pillars of what we conceive of today as a city museum: its raison d'être in the identity of an urban place; the specification of the scope of the collections according to their degree of relevance to the evolution of the city in question.

City museums have had international recognition as a specific type of museum since the 1990s, with the International Council of Museums having created in 2005 an international committee for them, CAMOC, the International Committee for the Collections and Activities of City Museums.[4] The CITYHIST Network, an informal European Network of Museums of the History of Cities coordinated by Joan Roca (Museum of the History of Barcelona) and Renée Kistemaker (Museum of Amsterdam), has also been developing an important role in conceptualising and questioning where city museums are going.

For about 20 years, there has been an exponential increase in city museums worldwide, both through the creation of new museums, and as a result of the updating of old museums about cities. This movement goes along with the explosive phenomenon of the growth of cities in the world, posing new

4. See http://camoc.mini.icom.museum/. CAMOC is about the city and its people — their history, their present and their future. The Committee reflects the growing focus worldwide on cities: their economic importance, their spectacular growth, and the problems and possibilities they present. The matters for debate regarding cities are almost endless: pollution, regeneration, private cars, public transport, the suburbs, the destruction of heritage.

questions that are reflected in the very identity of urban centres. This identity is shifting and getting ever more complex, as a result of migration movements, challenging economic flows and sustainability issues.

A second generation of city museums seems to be increasingly evolving (Lanz, 2019; Basso Peressut, Lanz & Postiglione, 2013). The first generation of museums was dedicated to the general history of the city, sometimes resonating with decorative arts museums. Museum stories were told in a static way, in line with other types of museums including those about art, archaeology, or anthropology, even if some started to rethink themselves and to shift their position towards the engagement of audiences sooner than some city museums.

The second generation of city museums presents itself not only as about the city, but also for the city. That is, they are museums that see themselves as agents of engagement with people and places, promoting the relationship between city history and the evolution of urban territory, acting as urban labs, rising up to the challenges of the ever-changing reality of cities.

As stated in the CITYHIST Barcelona Declaration, these museums "contribute to the dynamic process of writing and rewriting the city's history, actively involving citizens, who provide their own definitions of their urban history and heritage within a single historical framework."[5]

Museum programmes seek to be meaningful in some way for the current city residents, fostering the sense of belonging and empathy between people and urban space. Paths are opened for museums to tackle themes previously unthinkable in traditional city museums, such as migrations, sustainability, urban gardens and food, housing, activism, social rights and underground culture.

The reprogramming of the Museum of Lisbon led to a clarification of the museum type and, inevitably, of its mission statement. The Museum has been identified, since 2015, as a city museum instead of a history museum. The assertion of this new form of city museum does not mean the undermining of historical approaches. Rather, it identifies the main subject matter and the main artefact — the city in itself. The aim for relevance in the communities is more present, not only passively, but also interactively.

Its mission statement refers to curiosity about the geographical location of Lisbon and its human occupation throughout time, connecting the past and the future of this unique multicultural diverse community.[6] History is an

5. See https://cityhistorymuseums.wordpress.com/, 2013.

6. Museum mission statement: "The Museum of Lisbon is a multi-site city museum that researches and presents the history of the city and its people. It strives to awaken curiosity about the geographic location and its human occupation throughout time. By interpreting Lisbon through the tangible and intangible heritage, we get to know the city's multicultural heritage — past and present — and so contribute towards the future."

underlying factor in every goal and programme, even if interacting with diverse crossover perspectives from contemporary views.

Exhibitions — identity values and breakthroughs

Regardless of the scarce available space at the Museum of Lisbon's main site, the Pimenta Palace, for a permanent exhibition on the very large history of Lisbon, some key questions were raised: should we remake a long-term exhibition with a new approach to the history of Lisbon? Or should we just set up temporary exhibitions? If a new long-term exhibition is to be presented, is the Museum supposed to present a chronological view of the city's history or could it be thematic, randomly crossing ages?

A new long-term chronological exhibition prevailed, in response to the requests of consultants and their view on the audiences' expectations about the delivery of an exhibition where people can find a reliable story of Lisbon over time. A temporary exhibitions programme should be open to a wider scope of themes and ages, both in the Black Pavilion at the Pimenta Palace and at the Museum of Lisbon — West Tower.

Unlike the old permanent exhibition, the new display would focus on highlights of the 2,000 years long history, up to 1998 with the effects of the Expo in the city (instead of finishing in 1908, the year of the most recent object on display in the old exhibition). The focus would depend on the relevance of the collections and the chosen themes, without attempting to encompass the entire chronology. Some new topics were introduced, such as the ceramics industry, the inquisition, and slavery.

Prior to the installation of the new exhibition, it was necessary to carry out the restoration and updating of the building itself (including electricity, lighting, plaster and tiles). After the resolution of extensive legal and administrative issues, the reopening of the Museum's ground floor showing the first part of the new long-term exhibition on the history of Lisbon is due to happen in 2021, followed by the refurbishment of the first floor, which will complete the new narrative.

The visionary Museum founder, Irisalva, stated as early as in 1955, that temporary exhibitions have the power to "pull the museums that organise them out of their traditional lethargy, instilling movement and life".[7] One of the pillars of the city museum's reprogramming is precisely the setting up of a new exhibition programme in line with the diverse dynamics of the contemporary city.

In designing an exhibition programme, more questions arose: should the Museum risk tackling issues of the present times, or even about the future of

7. Margarida Almeida Bastos, José Meco, Joana Sousa Monteiro, Rita Fragoso De Almeida & Irisalva Moita *Um Percurso Fotobiogràfico*, 2019, p. 70.

Lisbon? Should historical, safer approaches prevail? Should the museum tackle difficult issues such as slavery, migration, sustainability, housing, etc., breaking through the usual themes related to art and local history?

Since 2015, there have been exhibitions and publications on subjects considered historical or traditional, mostly using thorough research projects as means of showing the invaluable collections held by the Museum that should be better known.

Reference can be made to the following exhibitions and publications: "Fragments of Colour — Tiles of the Museum of Lisbon",[8] showing the best unique tiles in the collections; "The Lisbon That Could Have Been",[9] displaying unbuilt projects mainly from the 19th and 20th centuries; the surprising "Under Our Feet — Historic Pavements of Lisbon",[10] leading us to a story of the city looking down at the pavements' development; "Lisbon, Sad and Happy City – Architecture of a Book", referring to the city in the 1950s through the lens of two architects and photographers, authors of a special artists book;[11] and "The Place of the Tower — Image of Lisbon",[12] which told the fantastic story of three succeeding iconic towers built on the river front main square, between the 16th and the 20th-century.

The Museum has also set up research and exhibition multivocal projects related to cultural diversity and identity values. In this regard, we can refer to exhibitions such as "Sea Air, Lisbon and the Tagus, 1850-2014" about the last 150 years of urbanism and ways on life in the river front (from palaces and factories, to night clubs); "Fishermen's Wives — Memories of Lisbon", about the community of fishermen's wives, their families and work in the first half of the 20th-century in Lisbon;[13] "Coexistence: Plural Lisbon, 1147-1910", about the way diverse religions and cultures coexisted in the city since the Middle Ages, including perspectives on conflicts and slavery.[14]

The Museum has also been tackling themes related to Lisbon's identity values, the subject of research and exhibition for the first time. In this regard, we should refer to "The Light of Lisbon", using scientific and artistic

8. Museum of Lisbon, Black Pavilion, 2016, scientific commission by José Meco, coordination by Margarida Almeida Bastos and Fernando Peixoto Lopes.

9. Museum of Lisbon, Black Pavilion, 2017, curated by Raquel Henriques da Silva and António Miranda.

10. Museum of Lisbon — West Tower, 2018, curated by Lídia Fernandes, Jacinta Bugalhão and Paulo Almeida Fernandes.

11. Museum of Lisbon, Black Pavilion, 2018, curated by Rita Palla Aragão.

12. Museum of Lisbon — West Tower, 2019, with scientific commission by Nuno Senos and coordination by Joana Sousa Monteiro and Mário Nascimento.

13. Museum of Lisbon, Black Pavilion, 2015, curated by António Miranda.

14. Museum of Lisbon, Black Pavilion, 2019, curated by Paulo Almeida Fernandes and Ana Paula Antunes.

perspectives on the unique light of downtown Lisbon;[15] "Vicente. The myth in Lisbon", on contemporary art perspectives about the mythic patron of Lisbon, St Vincent, and the idea of founding myths;[16] "Futures of Lisbon", a risky research and exhibition project on multidisciplinary perspectives of the future of Lisbon, with scientific, anthropological and artistic views, covering themes such as sustainability, housing, aging, urbanism, transportation, work and pleasure, climate change;[17] and the exhibition on display now, "Lisbon Vegetable Gardens — From the Middle Ages to the 21th-century", about the way vegetable gardens have been affecting the urban landscape in the long run, focusing on food sovereignty and sustainability in cities. The vegetable gardens are seen as resources, but also as places of enjoyment that reflect the diverse cultural configurations of the urban fabric and the demographic composition of the city.[18]

In parallel with all exhibitions, the Museum puts on a programme of talks and debates, as a way to deepen knowledge and the exchange of ideas between the different partners of each project and the audiences. Sometimes, the most important achievement is to raise new questions about the city and its people.

From invisibility into the spotlight: inventory and conservation

As well as the basic and seminal activities of research and documentation in museums, actions related to conservation and security also tend to be invisible.

The quality of inventory and access is expected to match the thoroughness of the research led by the Museum's team about the collections and the history of Lisbon. Since 2019, the first part of the inventory data has been published on the web documentation tool, while the communication service was first created in 2016, which granted the Museum formal social media pages, digital newsletters, and a new website to be presented soon, among other ongoing features.

Apart from the regular preventative conservation and restoration actions, a key requirement was to solve, in the best possible way, the configuration of the museums' storage to ensure standard conditions of conservation, security and handling for all collections. An international programme was undertaken in 2018 to secure the best possible conditions for the Museum's Central Storage:

15. Museum of Lisbon — West Tower, 2015, concept and coordination by Joana Sousa Monteiro, curated by Ana Eiró and Acácio de Almeida.

16. Museum of Lisbon, Black Pavilion, 2019, curated by Mário Caeiro / Travessa da Ermida Gallery, in collaboration with Paulo Almeida Fernandes.

17. Museum of Lisbon — West Tower, 2019, concept and coordination by Joana Sousa Monteiro and Mário Nascimento; curated by João Seixas, Manuel Graça Dias and Sofia Guedes Vaz).

18. Museum of Lisbon, Black Pavilion, 2020-21, curated by Daniela Araújo, in collaboration with Mário Nascimento and Joana Sousa Monteiro.

Futures of Lisbon talk. Photo: Museu de Lisboa

the ICCROM programme Re.Org, for the improvement of museum storage according to space optimization and sustainability values.[19]

Similar steps have been taken in other warehouse spaces, with now altogether three museum storage areas equipped with appropriate conditions of conservation, accessibility and security, grouped by types of objects and materials. Following the work done in Re.Org and subsequent tasks, the Museum was granted the first prize of the Share.Org 2020 competition.

Publications, learning activities and tours: dissemination and engagement

Since 2015, the Museum of Lisbon has been endeavouring to publish catalogues for all exhibitions, mostly bilingual. A set of research books is also being published: the "Invisible Collections" series, with two volumes so far.[20] Other books include The Universal Square of the Whole Orb — A View of Lisbon in 1619

19. Re.Org is directed by Gael de Guichen, ICCROM. Re.Org Lisbon was supervised by Aida Nunes, the Museum of Lisbon's coordinator of the Conservation and Restoration Service.

20. Testimonies of Slavery, The African Memory at the Museum of Lisbon (2017, Paulo Almeida Fernandes and other historians from the Museum staff); a monograph about leather furniture in the museum collections (by Luis Guerra and Franklin Pereira, 2018).

City tours from St Anthony. Photo: Museu de Lisboa

(coordinated by Pedro Flor, 2019); *Devotion and Faith — Tiled Records in the City of Lisbon* (Margarida Almeida Bastos and Fernando Peixoto Lopes, 2019); *Irisalva Moita, a Photobiographic Journey* (Margarida Almeida Bastos and Rita Fragoso de Almeida, 2019); and *Museum of Lisbon Highlights* (Scala, 2020).
In the learning programmes, the Museum has been enhancing the tours in the city, apart from the usual exhibition tours and family activities, as well as outdoor events, some of a more scientific nature, and some more recreational, such as the Baroque Carnival Ball, Lupercalia, a Roman carnivalesque supper, and others. The focus on long-term projects with both teenagers and mentally disabled adults has proven to be useful and interesting due to the possibility of achieving medium-term results and greater maturity.

Challenges, difficulties and achievements – steps of the journey

Our main challenges have been, so far, related to existential issues — whirling between a traditional history museum and the wish for an urban lab; to the need for perseverance in the face of some bureaucratic and financial problems influencing the building works and some other projects; and to the need to be flexible and to adjust to every change in the plan, without losing the overall goals.

The Museum of Lisbon seems to be half-way through its journey to becoming a "second generation" city museum (Lanz, 2019), in terms of the international city museum movement. This journey is building knowledge based on the city, but open to the world, as a gateway that mirrors the metropolis and its neighbourhoods, connecting spaces and historical narratives, bringing together centres and peripheries (Roca, 2019).

Lupercalia. Photo: Museu de Lisboa

Like most contemporary cities, Lisbon is also a restless multidimensional organic body, with constant changes and endless cultural variety. Hence, the Museum strives to be well grounded in knowledge of the city's history, but also capable of venturing along paths of experimentation and interdisciplinarity, in a growing relationship with its communities and its diverse stakeholders.

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Creating the new Museum of London at West Smithfield — an interim report

Glyn Davies

Context

In the coming years, London will acquire a major new museum destination in its city centre. The Museum of London will transfer its displays, collections and offices to a new site within part of the historic Smithfield meat market, taking its place at the western end of the City of London's Culture Mile. Culture Mile aims to create in the north-west corner of the City of London — stretching from Moorgate to Farringdon — a vibrant cultural district bringing together a group of venues and institutions already in place at the site to act as anchors. The core Culture Mile partners include Barbican, the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, London Symphony Orchestra and the Museum of London. In addition to the creation of the new Museum of London site at West Smithfield [Fig. 1], the project originally included the building of a new Centre for Music at the site of the current museum building.[1]

Smithfield will be an especially evocative setting for the museum, this area just outside the Roman and medieval city walls having witnessed many events of enormous significance to London's history. Smithfield (or the 'smooth field') was an open space used from at least the 12th-century as a livestock market, and as the site of a number of important religious foundations such as the Augustinian nunnery, priory and hospital of St Mary's and St Bartholomew's, and the priory of St John Clerkenwell of the Knights Hospitaller. During the Middle Ages, Smithfield was also used for military drills, jousting tourneys and executions, such as that of Sir William Wallace in 1305. In 1381, Smithfield was the scene for the denouement of the Great Rising (also known as the Peasants' Revolt), where the Rising's leader Wat Tyler was killed during a parley with the young King Richard II and the Lord Mayor William Walworth. During the Reformation, Smithfield saw the burnings of many people for their religious views. Until the 19th-century, it was also the site of the notorious annual Bartholomew Fair.

1. The Centre for Music Project was cancelled in February 2021, and the Corporation now plans to bring forward plans for the current Museum of London site in the coming months. A major project to renew the Barbican will be launched in 2022.

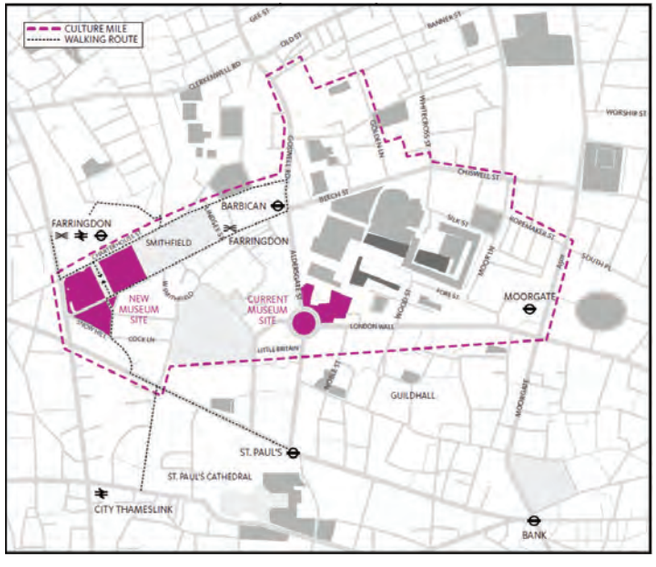


Fig. 1. Plan of the West Smithfield area with current and proposed new site for the Museum of London

The current buildings at Smithfield owe their existence to the decision in 1852 to relocate the crowded, noisy and unhygienic livestock market to another site, and to create instead a state-of-the-art meat market. The project was headed by Sir Horace Jones, who also designed Tower Bridge. In 1864, he was elected architect and surveyor to the City of London and in this capacity, over a period of twenty years, he designed and constructed three markets at West Smithfield. The last of these, the Fruit and Vegetable Market of 1879-83 (now known as the General Market), is one of the buildings that the new museum will occupy. Jones's markets were remarkable in that they were built over an underground railway yard that was served by the newly-constructed Metropolitan Railway, that connected to the Great Western, Great Northern, Midland, and London, Chatham and Dover Railway lines. Having survived the Blitz relatively unscathed, Jones's Poultry market was destroyed by a devastating fire in 1958. A new Poultry Market was constructed. Designed by T. P. Bennett and Son with Ove Arup and Partners, it features a huge parabolic concrete roof, with an open clerestory below that floods the space with light.

Changes in the way the capital's food is distributed led, over years, to the gradual disuse of parts of these market buildings. In 2008, the UK government rejected a proposal that would have involved the demolition of the General Market. In 2014, a redevelopment proposal that would have transformed the

Fig. 2. The current Museum of London site shortly after construction. Photo: Museum of London

site into offices and retail was also blocked. At around this time, the Museum of London was also considering its future. The museum's London Wall building had been opened next to the historic Roman walls in 1976. Designed by Powell & Moya, the building forms part of the Barbican Estate, which is constructed on the principal of separating people from vehicles through the use of elevated walkways. From the street, the Museum of London presents itself as an imposing, mostly blank façade, with a drum which also functions as a traffic roundabout [Fig. 2]. The site was deemed notoriously hard to find. The design of the galleries, which presented a chronological run through London's history in a single route across two floors, left little room for the expansion of the museum's exhibition and engagement programme.[2] Moving the museum to a new site would represent one potential solution to these problems.

In 2015, the Corporation of London approached the museum to ask whether the market buildings at the western end of Smithfield might make an appropriate new home. Having commissioned a detailed options appraisal, the museum concluded that a move to this site would represent the best future for

2. For a contemporary discussion of the building's issues, see Michael Brawne, 'The Museum of London by Powell and Moya', *Architect's Journal*, 23 July 1977, available online at https://www.architectural-review.com/archive/the-museum-of-london-by-powell-and-moya.

the organisation. On 28 July 2015, the museum's Director Sharon Ament announced this ambition at the museum's annual fundraising dinner.

Scope

Over the following years, the exact scope of the areas that would be occupied by the new museum was considered and negotiated, and the viability of the museum's business plan for the new site was tested and agreed. With the support of the Corporation of London and the GLA, the museum's two major funding bodies, an ambitious fundraising target was set. By the time the project went to public consultation in 2019, the museum had established The Goldsmiths' Company (with its affiliated charity) and the Linbury Trust as Founding Partners. It had also obtained initial support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and law firm DLA Piper as the project's inaugural Corporate Champion. By this point, the areas to be occupied by the new museum had been established as the General Market building and the Poultry Market building, with their associated subterranean spaces.

The museum's new home comprises over 26,000 square metres, doubling its current public space. The new location is minutes from Farringdon station, which itself is being redeveloped as part of the mammoth Crossrail project. Farringdon will be the only place where London Underground, the Thameslink rail system and the newly-constructed Elizabeth Line interlink. It will become one of London's major transport hubs [see Fig. 1].[3]

Curatorially, the new site is an entirely different proposition from the existing museum. The Museum of London's current run of galleries was designed during the period 1969-76 by the architects Powell and Moya, design consultants Higgins, Ney and Partners, and the curatorial team working closely together.[4] As a new build, the approach was systematic throughout. The museum's new home is a found industrial space, in which the fabric of the building currently bears all the marks of its history, and its layout was never intended to facilitate a museum experience. The opportunity, however, is that the new museum buildings will not only present London's history; they will embody it. The new Museum of London will therefore thrive when curators work with the texture and peculiarities of the space as a 'given', around which they can tell an approachable, human, and layered story.

3. For a summary of the Crossrail project, see William Tucker, 'Crossrail Project: the execution strategy for delivering London's Elizabeth Line', *Civil Engineering*, vol. 170 issue CE5 (May 2017), p. 3-14.

4. For a history, see Francis Sheppard, *The Treasury of London's Past* (London, HMSO, 1991), p. 164-176.

Style and Content

Sprawling across two buildings, which are separated by a road and a subterranean railway, and over three levels, the new museum calls for a new approach not only to the displays but to the role of the museum within London. The new museum is permeable, with multiple entrances. It will be open in every sense — the museum will keep long hours, and its character will change over the course of day and evening. The museum will aim to become a new shared space for London, where visitors can go to relax, learn, debate or have fun. It also aims to be more fully-embedded in London's communities, and to spark meaningful encounters across place, time and difference. In 2019, the museum adopted a new mission statement intended to spur work towards this vision. Rather than concentrate on the museum's role as a custodian of its collections, the new mission statement focuses on its constituency and the organisation's place in London's cultural life: "The Museum of London is here to enrich the understanding and appreciation of London and all its people — past, present, future. A home for learning, exploration and adventure, we aspire to be a force for good in London, as London must be for the world." The final clause, which adds an ethical dimension to the museum's work, reflects wider recent trends within the museum sector, trends that have been characterised by Robert Janes and Richard Sandell as a move from seeing the museum as a "mall" to an approach that prioritises people, relationships and social sustainability.[5]

Planning for the museum's content began in 2015. Alex Werner, formerly head of the curatorial team, was designated Lead Curator for the museum project. On 24 September that year, the Curatorial team held an Open Space event at the Museum of London Docklands. Each of the curators and archaeologists gave a presentation on a different question that then led to a general discussion. Topics included "What can we do as the Museum of London that no one else can?", "Do the roles of curators need to be defined or redefined?", "Whose Museum of London?" and "Are permanent collections an asset or liability? A regular "New Museum Conversation" was established, with an open invitation to the entire museum staff to attend talks from staff and external speakers on topics of relevance to the project.

An ambitious vision was developed for the visitors to the new institution. A target was set for two million visitors a year. In 2016, the museum released an Interpretation Strategy for the new museum which, in the words of Alex Werner, set out the "museum's role as central to the interpretation of the history of London as well as the present and the future city. It reveals a people-centred approach.

5. Robert R. Janes & Richard Sandell, "Posterity has arrived: The necessary emergence of museum activism", in Robert R. Janes & Richard Sandell, *Museum Activism*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2019, p. 1-21.

Fig. 3. Artistic impression of the interior of the General Market created by Asif Khan. Photo: Museum of London

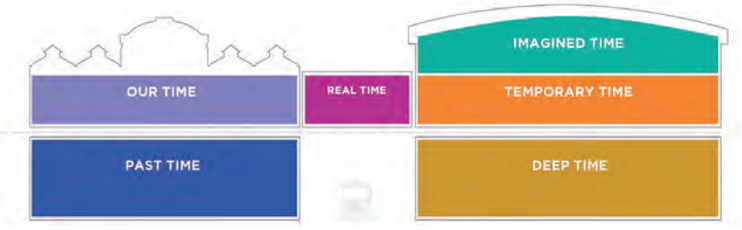


Fig. 4. New Museum organising principles, developed with Ralph Appelbaum Associates

Through its public programmes, the museum will interrogate issues and subjects that concern and challenge Londoners today, and consider what the future might hold."[6] Some of these ideas were trialled the following year in the City Now, City Future programme which is discussed in another chapter of this volume.

Building design

Following an international competition, the architects for the site were selected in July 2016 as Stanton Williams and Asif Khan working with conservation architect Julian Harrap and landscape design consultants J&L Gibbons [Fig. 3]. Working with RAA (Ralph Appelbaum Associates), the museum spent much of 2017 and 2018 interrogating the Smithfield spaces and finessing the initial interpretation ideas. These discussions were supplemented by consultation with academic partners, and visits to other museums in the UK and Europe. From 2016-2020, the museum undertook over 30 research, consultation and engagement projects with existing and potential audiences, including 15 quantitative surveys conducted by independent academics and research agencies, over 900 qualitative interviews, and 76 focus groups. In addition, research was undertaken on the Smithfield area and its changing character by Monica Degen of Brunel University.[7] The museum set a goal of engaging 100,000 Londoners in the development of the new museum.

The work with RAA led to the development of a broad vision for the use of the sprawling site [Fig. 4]. The concepts for the spaces were based around time, and the relationship of both visitors and collections to it. West Poultry Avenue, the street between the two buildings, would become the main entrance

6. Alex Werner & Finbarr Whooley, "Current Thinking about New Museum's Content", Report to the Museum of London Academic Panel, 26 May 2017.

7. Monica Degen, Camilla Lewis, Astrid Swenson & Isobel Ward, *The Changing Feel of Smithfield: exploring sensory identities and temporal flows*, London, Brunel University, 2017.

for most visitors. This would be themed around Real Time, time as it was happening right now throughout the city. The Victorian General Market building would house two themed areas. The first of these, Past Time, would be in the goods depot beneath street level. This space would look at London through the prism of its history. The ground floor would be themed around Our Time — London in living memory, a fundamentally democratic space that would respond to the recent history of the city around it. The Poultry Market building would have three levels. The basement would be themed as Deep Time; it will hold both the collections store and a collections showcase, a visually striking experience within which visitors will be able to engage with objects in creative and multifaceted ways. The ground floor is Temporary Time — the two major exhibitions spaces, which will provide changing windows onto London. The floor above, which will also give onto the majority of the museum's offices, will be Imagined Time, a space for a more playful look at a London that may only ever have existed in our imaginations.

The Interpretation Masterplan

Armed with this fundamental insight, the teams began work on taking the Interpretation Strategy of 2016 and turning it into a full Interpretation Masterplan for the museum's content. This was an extensive project, and the document was finalised in June 2019, by which time some aspects of gallery development had already begun. The Interpretation Masterplan adds a number of elements to the overall picture described above. First of all, the concept of "360 degree curation", that the entire site will be used for encounters with the collections, or for the framing of the area's history, in a manner that threads throughout the building's display spaces, public areas and commercial sites. "360 degree curation" means that visitors might encounter surprising or provocative objects in unusual spaces — the shops, restaurants or toilets, for instance. It also means that curators will exploit the texture and particularities of the building itself to produce responses that might look at the history of the site, or give a window onto the stories of individual Londoners. The Past Time galleries, which will form perhaps the most traditional displays in the museum, were divided into three large zones, which will explore London's past through the lenses of people, place and time. These are: London's Story, which is a concise chronological journey through London's history in five chapters; London Life, which looks thematically at life as it has been experienced over centuries in the city; and Physical City, which explores how the form and infrastructure of the city shapes and has been shaped by us all. By taking a thematic approach, the latter two areas enable the curators to juxtapose objects from different periods in a way that the galleries at the current museum simply cannot accommodate. In addition, a further area would be set aside to explore one of the highlights of the collection, the Cheapside Hoard, looking at its place in the history of London's goldsmiths' trade, and in the culture of the Stuart city.

In the words of the Interpretation Masterplan, "Key narrative threads include the diversity of London's population throughout its history and the impact of urban life on ordinary Londoners. The displays reflect how London became a magnet and a place of refuge for people from around the world, while not overlooking the intolerance that has marked the experiences of some communities at different times in its history. They also explore the city's sometimes difficult relationship with the rest of the country and the brutal history of slavery and exploitation that underpinned its position at the centre of a vast empire. London's role as a capital city is explored, as a place of power and dissent, as well as a trading, manufacturing, commercial and creative hub. Iconic events are covered — those that visitors would expect to find, such as the Great Fire and the Blitz — as well as others that may be less known or understood."[8] The Our Time zone was described as a "social, congregational place, where visitors share memories and make new ones". Installations in this space would explore London's recent history, and its present, through the intermingling of different peoples' expertise — the museum's, its partners', and that of Londoners more widely.

Exhibition design underway

To date, only one of the new museum spaces has gone beyond the Design Brief phase. Stuttgart's Atelier Brückner were awarded the contract to design the Past Time exhibition spaces, and concept design began in 2019. London's Story had by now identified a number of Expanded Moments, more immersive spaces that would allow for the presentation of a particular topic or event in an engaging way. Atelier Brückner identified another area, at the far end of the basement space, from which the Thameslink trains can be seen passing, as the potential site for an installation that would evoke the city's systems — the City Machine. It was during the concept design period that the chapters of London's Story were pinned down — there would be five of them, they would cover the urban history of the site, and the chapters would be governed by London's changing relationship with the rest of the UK and with the world. Thus, the first chapter covers the period of the Roman foundation of the city, through its growth, decline and abandonment, and the development nearby of a Saxon trading port. The second chapter begins with Alfred the Great's re-occupation of the Roman city, and the foundation of what would become modern London. The third

8. Annette Day & Alex Werner (eds.), *A New Museum of London at West Smithfield – Interpretation Masterplan*, June 2019, p. 34.

chapter begins in the early-17th century when voyages of discovery began to open London up to global trading opportunities. Chapter four covers London as an Imperial capital, from the 19th-century and through two world wars. The final chapter begins with the breaking up of the British Empire after 1948; it is bookended by London hosting two Olympics, the first the "austerity Olympics" of 1948, the second the triumphant, pre-Brexit Olympics and Paralympics of 2012. Expanded Moments will look at Before London, the pre-urban story of the site; a recreation of a Roman Shop, inspired by recent excavations; the Great Fire, told with a particular emphasis on the school curriculum; and Votes for Women, which explores the story of the fight for women's suffrage.

London Life developed a number of different "rooms", each examining a different aspect of lived experience. These are: Faith; Entertainment; Work; and Home. Each of these areas explores the stories and experiences of Londoners from across the city's history, although with an emphasis on the Victorian period to the present. London Life looks at both the public and the private, and attempts to give voice to a wide and diverse cast of Londoners.

The Physical City displays were conceived around three overarching concepts: Built City, Lived City and Natural City. Built City encompasses London's streets, its open and public spaces, the city as collage, and destruction & rebuilding. Living City looks at how people's experiences of London are shaped by who they are. It also includes a large-scale model of one of the city's former landmarks — the medieval London Bridge, which for much of the city's history was the only way into London from the south. Natural City will explore the river, parks, air & pollution, and humans & wildlife.

The content of Past Time was developed by a number of teams each comprising a Content Lead curator, an Audience Lead and a Client Project Manager. They worked closely with other curators, the exhibition designers and external experts. A number of specific external advisors were brought in. These included Dr Kristy Warren for colonial and post-colonial histories, Dr Simon Jarrett for disability histories, Jan Pimblett for LGBTQ+ histories, Dr Mark O'Neill for faith, and Shrabani Basu as an overall critical friend. In addition, the museum's Academic Panel continues to offer significant input. Several topics were given their own roundtables. One focused on narratives of empire; another focused on the post-1948 chapter of London's Story. In addition, the museum commissioned a piece of quantitative research on London's changing population from the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure. Further work with external advisors and critical friends is ongoing.

Public engagement

A substantial piece of research went into thinking about engagement. The museum worked closely with the Research Centre for Museums and Galleries at

Fig. 5. Proposed night time activity at the General Market. Photo: Mir

Leicester University to discuss ways of taking forward its relationship with Londoners in an ethically-informed way. There was a particular focus on opening up conversations with groups that do not typically visit museums, and on supporting the museum's ambition to be a "force for good". This led, in October 2020, to the museum adopting a new Engagement Framework.[9] While aspects of the displays in Past Time will be developed in partnership with Londoners, it is envisaged that the Our Time space will be focused to a much greater extent on co-creation. Our Time will be an active and responsive place, which is made with Londoners and works with the rhythms of the city. The displays in this area will be of three different durations — long-term, to provide a "spine"; medium-term, to allow for the fruits of partnerships and projects to be shown; and short-term, very responsive areas. Sometimes, in both the medium- and short-term areas, complete creative control might be given to one of the museum's partners. The longer-term displays will focus on topics such as Belonging, Resistance, Resilience and Creativity.

9. Museum of London, *Engaging the City: an engagement framework for the Museum of London* (October, 2020).

Moving into the future

Public consultation for the project began in July 2019, and in January 2020, a formal planning application was submitted to the City of London Corporation. On 23 June, these plans were approved, confirming this as one of the largest museum projects anywhere in Europe. [Fig. 5]

Much remains to be achieved. This ranges from such large-scale questions as the name of the new institution, to the details of how offices and programming will function on a day-to-day basis. The new museum will have a much greater focus on its large-scale exhibition programme, and this also requires further thought in the coming years. The displays in Our Time, Deep Time, Real Time and Imagined Time still need to be developed. In the meantime, the COVID-19 pandemic has meant that museum staff have carried out much of the development of the Past Time displays while working from home, in collaboration with designers based in Germany, and with only very limited access to the collections. The team's success in managing this further complication is a satisfyingly positive indicator for the project's ultimate completion. We look forward to opening our doors to an enthusiastic public.

Part 3:
City museum themes

Research in a city museum (Historical Museum Frankfurt)

Jan Gerchow

City Museums practice various forms of research, in order to fulfill their mission as institutions of knowledge — institutions that not only show collections and related educational content, but generate and publish knowledge about their cities and their collections. Research in the sense of profound academic analysis, based on the study of archives, publications and own investigations of museum collections or field research: this is usually attributed to other museum types such as natural history museums, archaeological museums or ethnographic museums. In these museums the collections are — or used to be — in the focus of the corresponding academic disciplines. In Germany, some of these museums are even called *Forschungsmuseum* (research museum) as with the Senckenberg Naturmuseum in Frankfurt, and they belong to research networks such as the Leibniz Society.[1] Not all museums which can be classified as art or decorative art museums, history museums or city museums have such close relationships with academic research and its institutions. But even in a "normal" city museum such as the Historical Museum Frankfurt (HMF), research is regularly and intensively conducted to enhance knowledge about its collections, in order to prepare exhibition projects and in order to generate knowledge about the city itself, the main topic of the museum. This paper explains, with recent examples from Frankfurt, different types of research projects in a city museum.

Research and publications on collections

Johann Valentin Prehn's — Cabinet of Miniatures ("Kleines Gemäldekabinett")

The collection of Johann Valentin Prehn (1749-1821) could be considered as one of the typical universal collections that many wealthy patricians, bankers, merchants and members of the intellectual elite in Frankfurt owned, as it contained not only works of art but also natural objects, ethnological objects, curiosities and a library. But for Prehn, the situation is different. On the one hand, he belonged to the craftsmen's class as a pastry chef, and on the other hand, he acted

1. See https://www.leibniz-gemeinschaft.de/en/research/research-museums. See also Bernhard Graf, Reinhold Leinfelder & Helmuth Trischler, "Museen als Orte der Wissensproduktion", in *Museen zwischen Qualität und Relevanz. Denkschrift zur Lage der Museen*, (ed.) by Bernhard Graf & Volker Rodekamp (*Berliner Schriften zur Museumsforschung* vol. 30) Berlin G+H Verlag 2012, p.73-88.

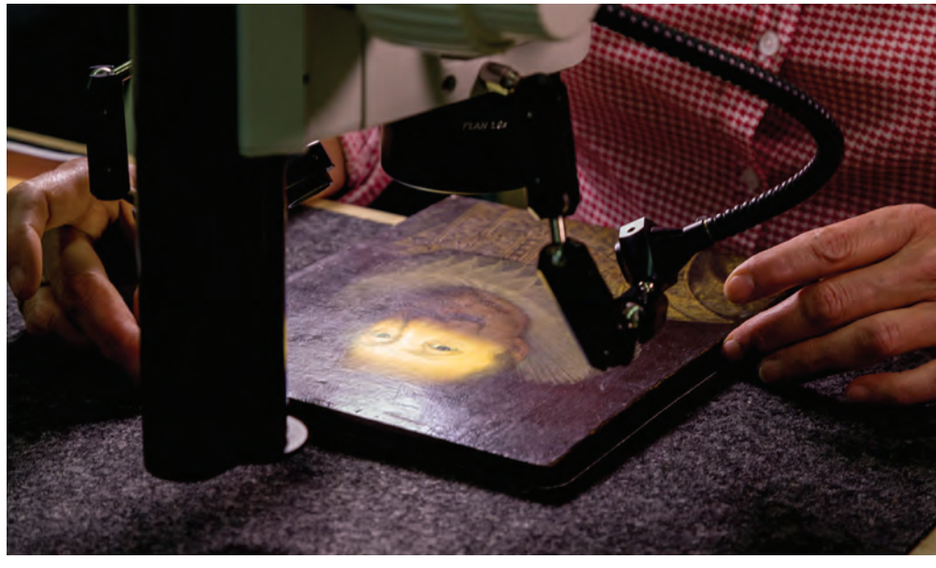
as an art connoisseur and collector with his own artistic ambitions. His collection had a special character: Prehn had collected more than 800 small-format paintings in 32 wooden folding boxes, a picture gallery in miniature: originals, copies and fragments by artists from the 15th to the 19th-centuries. There has probably never been a comparable collection in Germany; for this reason it is an important historic document in terms of collection and taste. But Prehn's "Kleines Kabinett" (small cabinet) also contains famous paintings; the most famous is the "Paradiesgärtlein" (Little Garden of Paradise) by an Upper Rhine master, created around 1410/1420 (on permanent loan in the Staedel Museum).

The son and heir of the collector, Ernst Friedrich Carl Prehn, removed the "Kleines Kabinett" from the sale of the collection in 1829, obviously because he wanted it to be preserved in the city as a memorial to his father. The City of Frankfurt accepted the Cabinet as a gift by Ernst Friedrich Carl Prehn in 1839 and transferred it to the City Library, where it has been on display since 1842. Johann David Passavant, the "administrator" (director) of the Frankfurt art museum Staedel (a private foundation of 1815), completely rearranged the cabinet's paintings according to national schools on twelve large and eight small wall panels and published a catalogue of the collection. The cabinet finally came into the ownership of the Historisches Museum Frankfurt in 1878. It was not until 1988 that the museum's curator of paintings, Kurt Wettengl, reconstructed it on the basis of the auction catalogue of 1829 and arranged the paintings again in 32 boxes.[2]

Prehn's miniature cabinet with its 812 small-format paintings in 32 hinged boxes is a godsend for academic art history, as it has been preserved in its original composition — in contrast to many other old painting collections, which underwent a long selection process and, in the sense of a "canon", were reduced to a selection considered important, or later enriched with other works. In the process, valuable information about the collectors' intentions and preferences, about the composition of their collections and historical attribution practices, about the hanging of the paintings and the practical handling of them, was lost. In Prehn's miniature cabinet, all this can be studied exemplarily and thus conclusions can also be drawn about other painting collections of the time (see illustration).

With its 874 small-format paintings (812 in the folding cases and 62 others), the Miniature Cabinet not only shows the most diverse techniques, materials and functions of paintings, such as cabinet pieces and remnants of

2. Viktoria Schmidt-Linsenhoff & Kurt Wettengl, *Bürgerliche Sammlungen in Frankfurt 1700-1830*. Exhibition and Catalogue, Historisches Museum Frankfurt, Selbstverlag, 1988.



One of the 874 small-format paintings of Johann Valentin Prehn's "Small Cabinet" is examined by the paintings conservator of the Historical Museum Frankfurt, 2016. Photo: Horst Ziegenfusz/HMF

domestic altarpieces and painted cabinets. It also opens up the entire spectrum of artistic creation from various epochs from the Middle Ages to the 19th-century at all levels of quality. The densely filled cases combine dozens of aesthetically inconsequential items with inexpensive copies and fragments of paintings, but also unique works of high art such as the medieval "Paradise Garden" — and often in daring and amusing combinations. The current research project of the Historical Museum Frankfurt has been underway since 2011. In 2021, a scientific inventory catalogue of the 812 small paintings in the folding cases was published: Wolfgang P. Cillessen and others (eds.), Historisches Museum Frankfurt and Societätsverlag Frankfurt 2021; 512 p. (ISBN 978-3-95542-374-2). And an online database was created: https://bildersammlung-prehn.de/en/prehn/start.

Setting Clothes in Motion — Women's Fashions after 1850

This example describes a project generated by a university department and focussed on the textile collection of a city museum. From 2015 until 2020 the German Volkswagen-Foundation funded the collaborative research project of the University Paderborn with the Historical Museum Frankfurt, as part of a funding line labelled "research in museums". The two researchers, Professor Kerstin Kraft (project director Paderborn) and Regina Lösel worked together

Discussion about the choice of textiles for the research project "Setting Clothes in Motion", 2015, in the textile collection of the Historical Museum Frankfurt. Photo: Horst Ziegenfusz/HMF

with the curator of the fashion and textile collection of the museum, Maren Christine Härtel (project manager in Frankfurt) (see illustration).

The project description was "an object-based examination of clothing as a reconstruction of movement in textile form". Before, virtually no research had been done on the clothing between 1850 and 1930 from the collection of the Historical Museum Frankfurt. In an entirely new approach, the cut and the material character of the clothing, i.e. the characteristics of the textile product, were researched with respect to motion, speed and mobility of those persons wearing it. This object-based research into clothing served to make the various modes of experience of human movement visible through the run of the seams, the textile quality and the cut. The museum's additional aim was to present the results of the research project through new forms of museum presentation and display — as well as in an extensive catalogue publication in print. The exhibition in the Historisches Museum Frankfurt ran from 5 May 2020 to January 24th, 2021.

The context in terms of urban history can be described as follows: In the late 19th-century, society began to undergo major changes. Class barriers were contested or fell, democratic movements challenged monarchies, industrialization and electrification created new urban spaces and social milieus. This rapid social and political change is reflected in clothing, and particularly in women's fashions. Clothes and the physical movement they permitted were fundamental

expressions of changing gender roles and living circumstances in the societies of the German Empire and the Weimar Republic.[3]

The exhibition covered a broad spectrum from the nature of the presented clothing itself to inherent aspects of movement and mobility as well as the changes and adaptations in both between 1850 and the early 1930s — a period decisive for new conceptions of gender. The rooms of the exhibition introduced various areas of life and the everyday world (household, work, sports, free time and politics) in which women attained "movement" or began to have an impact despite the confinements posed by their clothing.

The areas most relevant for changing womens' positions and activities were office work ("white collar" jobs in the new administrations of companies and governments), sports (such as cycling or tennis) and urban traffic (the possibility to use public transport systems such as omnibuses and tramways instead of private coaches). This rapidly — in particular for women — changing world around 1900 produced new forms of clothing adapted to new forms of movement among the public, such as the two-piece secretary's suit, worn with a blouse, the tennis dress or the cyclists' costume with knickerbocker trousers.

The catalogue, with 258 pages and 265 illustrations, publishes twelve fully annotated essays from specialists in textile history, conservation studies, gender history, fashion history and urban history. Twenty-one costumes are studied in detail: *Kleider in Bewegung — Frauenmode seit 1850*, ed. by Maren Ch. Härtel, Kerstin Kraft, Dorothee Linnemann and Regina Lösel (Schriften des Historischen Museums Frankfurt, vol. 39), Frankfurt: Societäts-Verlag Frankfurt 2020.

Research on the provenance of collections (in the context of Nazi history)

The legacy of Nazism still poses legal problems to museums to this day. Through the so-called "aryanisation" of Jewish possessions in the "Third Reich", cultural assets — sometimes of considerable value — ended up in exhibitions and repositories through forced under-value sales or expropriations. The museum inventories of the objects were often being consciously left incomplete, so that experienced and complex research in public archives is necessary in order to determine the rightful owners.[4]

3. See Maren Ch. Härtel, Kerstin Kraft, Dorothee Linnemann & Regina Lösel (eds.) "Kleider in Bewegung — Frauenmode seit 1850", *Schriften des Historischen Museums Frankfurt* vol. 39, Frankfurt, Societäts-Verlag Frankfurt, 2020, in particular the essays of Regina Lösel (p. 72-77), Kersrtin Wolff (p. 78-83), Kerstin Kraft (p. 114-119).

4. Cf. Inka Bertz & Michael Dorrmann (eds.) *Raub und Restitution — Kulturgut aus jüdischem Besitz von 1933 bis heute*, Jüdisches Museum Berlin/Jüdisches Museums Frankfurt am Main, Göttingen, Wallstein-Verlag, 2008.

Funded by the "Arbeitsstelle für Provenienzforschung" in Berlin (today, the Stiftung Deutsches Zentrum für Kulturgutverluste in Magdeburg), a research project for provenance research was established between 2010 and 2015 in the Historisches Museum Frankfurt. During this time, an art historian examined the past of the painting acquisitions and various objects from other collections in the museum dated between 1933 and 1945. The focus of research about these objects was on their previous owners, the reasons for them being sold or donated. This was done by identifying and decoding lettering on the back panels of paintings, the notes of artists and owners on paintings, the handwritten records, dedications, initials or stamps on books, as well as by researching previous owners in catalogues, records such as sales documents or letters as well as official documents about confiscations before 1945 and indemnifications after 1945.

Based on the Washington Principles and the Joint Declaration of 1998, the museum strives to come to a just and fair solution with the rightful owners in cases of unlawful revocation or involuntary sale due to National Socialist persecution. One of many examples of a successful restitution of a painting to the heirs of its original owners is the painting by Hans Thoma: "Sommer (Frau mit Kind)" (Summer, Woman with Child).[5] (see illustration)

All objects of the museum acquired between 1933 and 1945 with remaining doubts or serious uncertainties as to the circumstances of acquisition are published in the LostArt internet database of the "Deutsches Zentrum für Kulturgutverluste" (German Centre for the Loss of Cultural Property).[6] Parts of the research results were used in the first presentation of the new permanent exhibition of the Historisches Museum Frankfurt in 2012. The focus here was on the art collection of Jewish collector Julius Heyman (1863-1925). The Heyman collection of artworks, craftwork and paintings from the Middle Ages, Renaissance and Baroque periods was initially presented in themed rooms staged in Heyman's house at the address Palmstraße 16 in Frankfurt. Heyman bequeathed the house and its works of art to the City of Frankfurt in 1925 and ordered that the house and its inventory be made open to the public and added to the Historisches Museum Frankfurt as its own department.

The collection was broken up against the donor's wishes by the Nazi city government in 1940. Some of the art objects were placed in different museums in the city; others were sold on the art market. The aim of the museum project

5. Cf. Zurückgekehrt. Ein Frankfurter Renaissance-Pokal aus der Sammlung Ullmann. Zweite Kabinettausstellung im Saalhof des Historischen Museums Frankfurt, 17. April bis 25. August 2013. With texts by Maike Brüggen and Thomas Richter (Kabinettstück des Historischen Museums Frankfurt, vol. 2), Frankfurt, Henrich Druck + Medien, 2013, p. 5-8.

6. https://www.lostart.de/en/start.

The painting "Summer" by Hans Thoma in the exhibition "Bought Collected Looted? How Things came into the Museum" in 2018. Photo: Horst Ziegenfusz/HMF

(2010-2012) — which continues to work on completing the data — was to trace the collection pieces so that the collection could be united once again, at least in virtual form.

The Historical Museum has published two books about collection and provenance research:

- *Frankfurter Sammler und Stifter* ("Frankfurt collectors and donors") (Schriften des Historischen Museums Frankfurt, ed. by Jan Gerchow, vol. 32), Frankfurt: Henrich Editionen 2012, 240 pp, 285 illustrations, in particular pp. 190-205: Ursula Kern, "Verkauft und vergessen — das Privatmuseum des jüdischen Sammlers Julius Heyman" (1863-1925).
- *Bought Collected Looted? How Things came into the Museum* — a cooperation by four of Frankfurt am Main's municipal museums, exhibition documentation, ed. by Angela Jannelli and Gottfried Kößler for the Historical Museum Frankfurt, Frankfurt: Henrich Publications 2018.

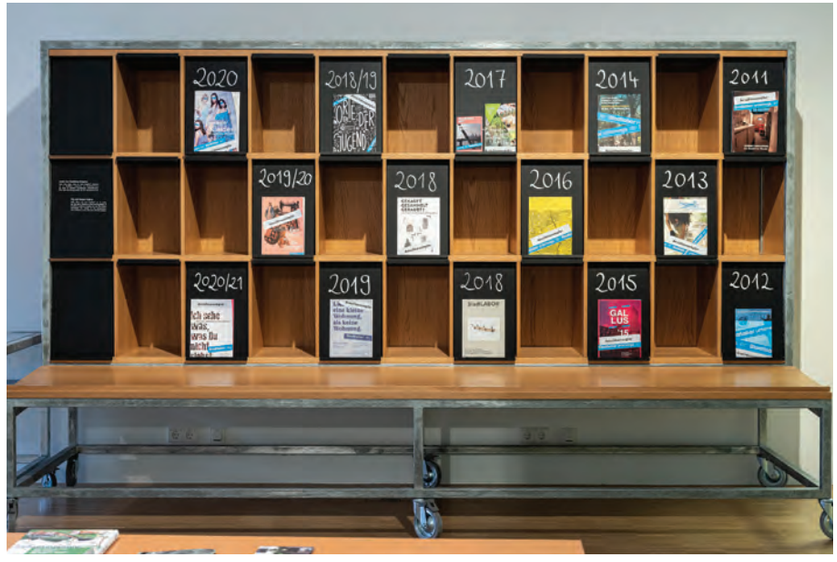
Citizens' Science and artistic research in the City Lab projects

City museums differ from other museum types in their special relationship to the citizens, who represent or "make" the city. In cities the term "citizen" is not limited to citizenship in the sense of nationality.[7] In cities such as Frankfurt live citizens from a multitude of nationalities (in Frankfurt currently 177). In this respect, an urban citizen signifies the city's inhabitant or resident. Urban citizenship is the only quality shared by all inhabitants of a city — in contrast to other qualities such as nationality, language, religion or confession, education etc. Therefore, the relationship of a city museum to the urban citizens has more potential than the relationship of specialised museums such as art or natural history museums to the public. Urban citizens can be much more than "the public" or the "visitors" of a city museum, because they form a collective which "makes" the city the central topic of the museum. The radical conclusion of this insight is: urban citizens are not only representing their city, they are also experts for their city. Their expertise is subjective, but it is generated by the daily use of the city, in most cases over a long period, sometimes for a lifetime or even over generations. In many cases, this subjective and practical knowledge of the city is linked with professional knowledge generated by the work or occupation of urban citizens. A third source of knowledge about the city can be generated by personal interest and engagement for aspects of the city, e.g. the history of a city (quarter) or the care for public monuments. This is often shared with other citizens in associations, societies or initiatives.

In the course of its new conception as city museum between 2008 and 2017, the HMF chose to be a museum not only about a city (Frankfurt on the Main), but also for a city and with its citizens. Already existing participative formats such as the "Bibliothek der Generationen" (Library of Generations) were strengthened and new formats were created — in order to open the museum for the expertise of the urban citizens of Frankfurt. In the new museum, not only the academic and museological expertise and perspective of the museum curators was to be seen and heard, but also the diverse expertise and perspectives of the urban citizens. Both, the museum experts and the urban citizens, should explore the city together and use the museum as a platform to exchange and publish this new kind of knowledge.[8] In the beginning, the museum team was

7. Cf. generally Henri Lefebvre, Eleonore Kofman (ed.) & Elizabeth Lebas (ed.), "The Right to the City" in *Writings on Cities*, Oxford, Blackwell's, 1996, p. 63-181; and Tuula Gordon, "Urban Citizenship" in William T. Pink, George W. Noblit (eds.), *International Handbook of Urban Education* (Springer International Handbooks of Education, vol 19), Springer, Dordrecht, 2007, p. 447-462.

8. See, in this volume, Jan Gerchow, p. 207-226, and cf. Jan Gerchow & Wolfgang P. Cillessen (eds.), *Frankfurt Museum — Guide to the Historical Museum Frankfurt* (Kunststücke des Historischen Museums Frankfurt, vol. 4), Frankfurt am Main, Henrich Editionen, 2017.



The "archive of projects" in the City Lab of the Historical Museum Frankfurt, 2021. Photo: Horst Ziegenfusz/HMF

strongly inspired by digital citizen science-projects such as Wikipedia. Later on, the museum with its multimedia approach, with its capacity to present content in spaces, and with its quality as a venue for discussions and events, became a stronger point of reference. But the new qualities of digital culture — openness, sharing, user-orientation, democratization, networking — became an important guideline for the development of the new city museum for Frankfurt.[9]

In 2011, the HMF started the experimental format "Stadtlabor" (City Lab) for the collaborative exploration of the modern-day city, together with citizens of Frankfurt who are seen as "experts" regarding their city. Since then, more than 15 projects have been realised together with more than 1,500 urban citizens:[10] (See ill. 137) Until the opening of the new museum facilities in 2017, the City Lab exhibitions were generated and exhibited outside the museum, in the suburbs ("Ostend — Ostanfang" 2011 — see illustration, "Mein Stadionbad" 2012, "Wohnzimmer Ginnheim" 2013, "Gallus — ein Viertel und ein

9. Jan Gerchow & Susanne Gesser (eds.), *CURA 19: Digitale Museumspraxis* by, Historisches Museum Frankfurt (museum publication), 2019.

10. See a list of all projects and relating publications: https://historisches-museum-frankfurt.de/de/stadtlabor-archiv?language=en-.

The first City Lab exhibition "Ostende — Ostanfang" in 2011, presented in a vacant office building in the Frankfurt east harbour area. Photo: Petra Welzel/HMF

View into the City Lab exhibition "Urban Gardening" in 2021. Photo: Jens Gerber/HMF

Ganzes", 2015) or even in the public space ("Park in Progress. Stadtlabor unterwegs in the Wallanlagen" 2014, "Stadtlabor Sommertour" 2015 and 2016). In 2017 the HMF created a large exhibition space called Frankfurt Now!, giving the City Lab its permanent and prominent place in the museum, framed by two fixed installations: The "Large Frankfurt Model" created by the artists' collective "Hotel Modern". The second major installation in Frankfurt Now! is the "Library of the Generations": an artistic memory project initiated by Hamburg based artist Sigrid Sigurdsson. Here biographies of Frankfurt citizens and their views of the city are being collected, stored and interpreted. Between the two installations there is an area reserved for the City Lab exhibitions. Since 2017 the City Lab has generated exhibitions in its new museum space about the history of migration ("Sammlungs-Check Migration partizipativ sammeln" 2017/18, "Kein Leben von der Stange — Geschichten von Arbeit, Migration und Familie" 2019/20), about looted art in municipal museums ("Gekauft Gesammelt Geraubt — Vom Weg der Dinge ins Museum", 2018), about places of young people ("Orte der Jugend" 2018/19), about life on housing estates ("Wie wohnen die Leute — Mit dem Stadtlabor durch die Ernst May-Siedlungen" 2019), about racism, resistance and empowerment ("Ich sehe was, was Du nicht siehst — Rassismus, Widerstand und Empowerment", 2020/21), about urban gardening ("Gärtnern Jetzt! — Die Stadt und das Grün", 2021 — see illustration) and about remembering the Nazi past ("Mit dem Stadtlabor auf Spurensuche im Heute — Frankfurt und der NS", 2021/22).

All three elements of Frankfurt Now! are dedicated to fostering dialogue with and among various groups and individuals as well as the museum about current topics of the city. The overall aim is to discuss, collect and present the multiperspectivity of a modern city, encompassing diverse individual — and often subjective — as well as artistic and museological perspectives.

The New Frankfurt Model shows the contemporary city and depicts it as a "landscape of experiences". The museum commissioned artist and playwright Herman Helle and his team "Hotel Modern" from Rotterdam with producing the model. Unfamiliar with Frankfurt, the artists had to depict a city that is constantly changing and which is a permanent building site. The Frankfurt Model is not a true-to-scale depiction of the city; it simply shows it as described in 2015/2016 by residents and interpreted by the artist. 1,300 questionnaires had been collected by the City Lab team in 2015 and 2016 visiting all of Frankfurt's 42 districts, asking local people for their views of the city and their quarter. This phase of research was brought to a close with district portraits produced from the collected data, which served the artist as inspiration for his work. Given that urban society is highly diverse, the opinions of Frankfurt citizens are often contradictory. Village and city, high-rise and half-timbering, development and green spaces are often very close together. Favourite places and non-places, the

The New Frankfurt Model by Herman Helle and Hotel Modern in the exhibition Space Frankfurt Now at the Historical Museum Frankfurt, October 2017. Photo: Petra Welzel/HMF

diversity of the districts and the perception of the city are at the centre of the Frankfurt Model. In other words, the model is the artistic translation of how the Frankfurt residents (those who took part in the summer tour interviews) view their city. Herman Helle depicts the most important places on a larger scale, with some stories related by way of allusions and found items. Sounds and videos convey the vivacity of the perceived city. This model portrays the city as experienced living space structured and constructed through everyday perception. In the multimedia material mix of the model, the contrasts of the lived city come together and surprising juxtapositions come to light.

The Frankfurt Model is being expanded to incorporate the constant changes the city is undergoing and the personal perspectives of its residents. To this end, the museum has given the model a digital version: The "Stadtlabor Digital" (Digital City Lab) is a website with a city map as a user interface.[11] Frankfurt residents can mark certain places and add stories and relevant information. Users can tell their stories in the form of video and audio files,

11. https://historisches-museum-frankfurt.de/stadtlabor-digital.

The Library of Generations in its new form after the opening of the new exhibition house of the Historical Museum Frankfurt in 2017. Photo: Stefanie Kösling/HMF

photos and texts, and in this manner communicate their subjective experiences and recollections. The contributions are short, audio-visual and produced using mobile technologies. The goal is to jointly collect practical knowledge, personal stories, special relationships to certain places, different ways of using the city and data that open up new perspectives: a constantly expanding city portrait from users' contributions. From this collection, the museum selects alternating contributions that are shown at various media stations in Frankfurt Now!

Finally, the "Library of the Generations" is an artistic reminiscence project by the Hamburg-based artist Sigrid Sigurdsson.[12] It began in 2000 as an artistic position in the temporary exhibition Das Gedächtnis der Kunst (Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt and HMF), after which it was handed over to the museum.[13] It

12. Angela Jannelli (ed.), *Die Bibliothek der Generationen. Offenes Archiv 2000-2105* (Kunststücke des Historischen Museums Frankfurt, vol. 5), Frankfurt, Henrich Editionen, 2017.

13. Sigrid Sigurdsson & Kurt Wettengl, "Die Bibliothek der Alten, begonnen 2000", in Kurt Wettengl (ed.), *Das Gedächtnis der Kunst. Geschichte und Erinnerung in der Kunst der Gegenwart. Catalogue of the exhibition of the Historisches Museum Frankfurt in the Schirn Kunsthalle*, Ostfildern, Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2000, p. 178-179.

is realised by contributions (in form of books or cassettes filled with documents, texts, images, videos) of authors who are living, or have lived, in Frankfurt. Already more than 150 authors have taken part, more than 130 contributions have been deposited, two new authors are added every year. The Library of the Generations preserves an alternative history of the city of Frankfurt, related from (finally) hundreds of subjective perspectives. The Library of the Generations is one of four "Open Archives" of the artist spread over Germany.[14] Their common principle is that individuals or groups are invited to contribute. The archive is open to be studied, its content can be searched with a database in use in the museum, and the original contributions can be used by the public in the museum; academic studies have already been written with its material. An alternative city archive is emerging, collecting individual and diverse perspectives and stories of and about Frankfurt, distinct from those in the official city archive.

14. Martina Pottek, *Kunst als Medium der Erinnerung. Das Konzept der Offenen Archive im Werk von Sigrid Sigurdsson*, Weimar, VDG Weimar, 2007.

City museums and "explaining" the city: Narratives of past, present and future. Part 1: the United Kingdom

Glyn Davies

> "How do I define history? It's just one fucking thing after another"
> Alan Bennett, *The History Boys* (2004)

Bennett's acerbic remark above — which is at the centre of the issues explored in his play — is a knowing reworking of a sentiment usually attributed to the historian Arnold J. Toynbee, itself seeming to derive from a commonplace observation at the beginning of the 20th-century. It neatly encapsulates the challenge of the historian, that of taking seemingly random and unconnected events, and attempting to weave a coherent pattern from them. The challenge is particularly pronounced for curators and educators in city history museums when they seek to present a narrative of the city's past. The challenge is not simply to provide a compelling and digestible storyline. There is also an expectation, either underlying or avowed, to somehow embody the city's character or personality in the telling.

While every European city has its own unique character and history, it is remarkable how many city history museums have adopted similar strategies and structures to introduce and explain that history to their audiences. The following two chapters explore this theme across examples in both the United Kingdom and Poland, introducing different local and national approaches. Together, they provide a range of options that are now available in the presentation of city narratives. This first chapter begins with some general thoughts about the challenges facing the city museum in its aspiration to present a meaningful history of place; this is followed by three recent case studies, in Liverpool, Cardiff and London.

What makes the narrative of a museum gallery presentation typologically unique is that it derives from text, visual stimuli and other elements displayed in space, through which the visitor passes on a self-selecting journey. This has been usefully termed by Susanna Sirefman as an "experiential narrative".[1] Despite all of the disputes and changes in curatorial practice of the

1. Susanna Sirefman, "Formed and Forming: Contemporary Museum Architecture", *Daedalus*, Vol. 128, No. 3 (Summer 1999), p. 297-320.

last forty years — including moves away from and back towards "grand" narratives, an increased focus on story rather than objects or collections, and the involvement of communities and visitors themselves in the creation of museum displays and narratives — this self-selecting journey through space to create meaning remains a constant of everything apart from virtual presentations of museum content.

The expectation that a city could (or should) be "explained" in a museum — its character illuminated through the display of its past — dates back at least as far as possibly the most famous city museum of all, the Musée Carnavalet, which even now is proud to declare that it does not just present the story of Paris but that it is "le reflet vivant de son histoire".[2] Few curators would today be so bold. A recent polemical discussion of the role of the social history curator in Britain described as one of the common values of this group that knowledge does not reside with the curator, but is "dispersed between many people, contingent, specific".[3] Yet on an institutional level, this kind of aspiration persists in both bombastic (the Museum of London's current "We Are London" slogan) or less obvious ways (for example, the Museum of Liverpool's desire that "local people have a strong emotional engagement to its content and identify with multiple and diverse historical and contemporary narratives").[4] It is probably in this desire for emotional engagement, truthfulness and authenticity that we can usefully locate the idea of "explaining" the city.

Deep Time — the role of archaeology

For any city with a past dating back to the medieval period or earlier, there will inevitably be a degree of interdisciplinarity in the construction of a gallery narrative that runs from this past to the lived experience of the present. Many city history museums begin their narratives with archaeological finds before gradually transitioning to other sorts of collections — artworks, quotidian objects, documents, and latterly photography, film and "born digital" items. The differing work practices, expectations and values of archaeologists, historians, art historians and social history curators must be seamlessly blended if the intention is to produce a coherent narrative.

Unlike many U.S. city museums, which were often formed from the interests of local historical societies, a number of European city museums

2. Jean-Marc Leri, *Musée Carnavalet. Histoire de Paris*, Paris, Fragments Editions, 2000, p. 12.

3. Michael Terwey, "Social History Curatorship in Crisis", *Social History in Museums*, Vol. 39 (2015), p. 4-7, p. 6.

4. *Museum of London Strategic Plan 2018-2023* (2018), p. 3; *National Museums Liverpool Strategic Plan 2019-2030* (2019), p. 16 (unpaginated).

(typically those which can trace their history to the Roman period) have at their core an archaeological collection.[5] Some European cities such as Frankfurt and Köln have chosen to split their Roman archaeological displays from their city museums, and this gives them a distinctly different character. Those city museums that do choose to deal with archaeology face an immediate issue in terms of the narratives they present — the past revealed through archaeology is usually buried beneath the modern city, and it yields only partial information that must be painstakingly reconstructed for the benefit of a general public. Furthermore, it is not unusual for such museums to retain an interest in the presentation of archaeological sites in situ around the city — as for example, in Lisbon and London. To truly experience this lost urban environment, the visitor must be encouraged to range out more widely from the museum site itself.[6] Archaeology requires expert interpretation, although paradoxically its concern with everyday life also means that it lends itself well to community engagement projects. However, these projects usually focus more on the practice of archaeology than on the kinds of synthetic narratives that are essential to museum displays that "tell the story" of an urban settlement.

Lived experience

At the other end of the chronological scale is the world of lived experience, and shared history. The last forty years have seen the triumph of the view that museums present their narratives best when they involve the people whose stories are being told within the telling. Although most curators do not yet subscribe to the view that "visitors are the new curators", the related practices of co-curation, guest curation and community-engaged curation are the standards in pulling together any display that covers the last eighty-odd years.[7]

Between these two poles, best practice is less clear. The more that city history displays try to present a single story, the more they inevitably represent the values and attitudes of dominant groups in society — such displays also

5. For the U.S. see, for example, Michael Wallace, "Razor Ribbons, History Museums and Civic Salvation" in Gaynor Kavanagh & Elizabeth Frostick (eds.), *Making City Histories in Museums* London, Leicester University Press, 1998, p. 19-39, p. 20-22; and Barbara Franco, "The Challenge of a City Museum for Washington, D.C.", *Washington History*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (2003), p. 4-25. European examples include the Museum of London, the Museu d'Història de la Ciutat de Barcelona, the Musée Carnavalet, the Museu de Lisboa, and the Museum of Copenhagen.

6. For more on city museums and archaeology, see Max Hebditch, "Approaches to Portraying the City in European Museums", in Gaynor Kavanagh & Elizabeth Frostick (eds.), *Making City Histories in Museums*, London, Leicester University Press, 1998, p. 19-39, p. 104-106.

7. Jonathan Wallis et al., "The SCHG Debate: This Conference believes that visitors are the new curators", *Social History in Museums*, Vol. 37 (2013), p. 4-9. In the U.K. the most radical approaches to community-led gallery displays are undoubtedly those being developed by Derby Museums Service.

have an inevitable pull towards a narrative of "progress". This begs the question of whose stories the city museum is there to tell.

Diversity and decolonisation

Since their earliest days, there has been a consciousness among curators and directors of urban history museums that their narratives could not simply represent the stories of the wealthy and the powerful. One of the earliest such museums to embrace this view was the London Museum.[8] With the founding of the Museum of London from the collections and staff of both the London Museum and the Guildhall Museum in 1965, there was an explicit desire to represent the city's history as it had been experienced by ordinary Londoners.[9] In practice, this tended to mean the lives of London's industrialised working class. The lives of women in London were also addressed comparatively early.

It was not until the ground-breaking exhibition The Peopling of London, in 1993, that the Museum of London began to seriously engage with London's post-War (and by implication, post-colonial) history, and with London as a city of diversity.[10] In the years since then, city museums all over Europe have increasingly emphasised their diverse communities, both in the past and in the present, as well as seeking to tell the stories of these communities increasingly in partnership with them.

Sometimes, this involves looking again at the historic collections, through new lenses, and with the benefit of others' expertise. Projects of this sort have, for example, been successfully carried out with LGBTQ+ communities — such as recent reassessments at Liverpool and Sheffield.[11] Just as often, it involves new collecting activity and work with groups and communities to tell otherwise "hidden" stories, as was extremely effectively done at Liverpool with the exhibition April Ashley: Portrait of a Lady (2013), a collaboration with the arts and social justice organisation Homotopia to tell the story of one of the most famous transgender individuals in recent UK history.[12]

8. Catherine Ross, "Collections and Collecting" in Gaynor Kavanagh & Elizabeth Frostick (eds.), *Making City Histories in Museums*, London, Leicester University Press, 1998, p. 114-132; Samuel Aylett, *The Museum of London 1976-2007: Reimagining Metropolitan Narratives in Postcolonial London*, (PhD Thesis), London, The Open University, 2020, p. 78-83.

9. Aylett, *The Museum of...*, p. 87-93.

10. Aylett, *The Museum of...*, p. 163-266.

11. Matt Exley, "Get Out of the Closet and the Stores! How the Museum of Liverpool is uncovering LGBTQI stories and objects from its existing collections in their Pride and Prejudice project", *Social History in Museums*, Vol. 41 (2017), p. 4-11; "Proud! Telling LGBT+ Stories in Sheffield": https://www.museums-sheffield.org.uk/about/proud (accessed 9/11/2020).

12. Kay Jones, "Working in collaboration to tell the history and stories of the transgender community: April Ashley, Portrait of a Lady", *SHG News*, No. 73 (June, 2014), p. 10-12.

What has become increasingly clear in recent years, however, are the limitations of this approach. Primarily, this comes down to two main factors — the continuing role of museum curators as gatekeepers, and wider societal inequalities. For this reason, Bernadette Lynch and Samuel Alberti could describe their experiences in putting on an exhibition on Race in Manchester by saying that "Encounters between museum professionals and external individuals, particularly those from diaspora communities, still bear traces of coloniser meeting colonised".[13] One way of combating this is for the museum to step back and become, in effect, a mute "host" for content developed by others. But this still does not avoid the issue of who the museum chooses to collaborate with in this way, and why. As has been highlighted in the UK by the group Museum Detox, this situation can only positively change when a more truly representative workforce is active within the museum.

The decolonisation debate also has far-reaching reverberations, some of which are currently only on the radar of specialists. For instance, the study of the early English Middle Ages as a discipline is usually referred to as "Anglo-Saxon studies". This nomenclature has recently undergone a sustained challenge, led primarily by historians of colour, which has pointed out both the explicitly colonial context in which "Anglo-Saxon" as a term was first employed by Victorian historians, and the ways in which it continues to be used by far-right groups to embody a supposed period of white European "purity".[14] When museum narratives refer to "Anglo-Saxons", "Vikings", "Normans" or even "Romans", certain signals are given about these people that rely on cultural stereotypes and widely-held assumptions which may have little reality in history. Yet the use of such terms in educational curricula, and the fact that museum displays cannot problematise or fully explicate everything that they touch on, means that the museum cannot but be implicated in wider narratives of culture, race, colonialism and power.

UK case studies

In the UK, we can consider three separate case studies that all chose to look at the question of how to tell the story of the city in a variety of new ways.

The first is Liverpool, where the approach of the National Museums has, since the early 2000s, led to the pooling of collections and the creation of a

13. Bernadette T. Lynch & Samuel J. M. M. Alberti, "Legacies of prejudice: racism, co-production and radical trust in the museum", *Museum Management and Curatorship*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (2010), p. 13-35, p. 13. See also Sumaya Kassim, "The Museum will not be Decolonised", *Media Diversified* (2018): https://mediadiversified.org/2017/11/15/the-museum-will-not-be-decolonised/ (accessed 9/11/2020).

14. See M. Rambaram-Olm, "History Bites: Resources on the Problematic Term 'Anglo-Saxon'", Medium (September 2020), https://mrambaranolm.medium.com/history-bites-resources-on-the-problematic-term-anglo-saxon-part-1-9320b6a09eb7 (accessed 9/11/2020).

The People's Republic gallery at Museum of Liverpool. Photo: Glyn Davies

number of new museums, including the World Museum and the International Slavery Museum. In 2011, the group opened the Museum of Liverpool, a newly-constructed building that took over the functions of the old Museum of Liverpool Life, but which represented a complete re-think of that museum's purpose, contents and approach.[15]

The new museum's approach to the city is to carry out projects with different groups of Liverpudlians on an ongoing basis, and for these projects to be reflected in changing displays and content. This was already underway during the preparations for the museum, which drew on the 4 million relevant objects held across the National Museums' collections. A large number of workshops were undertaken with locals, initially to discuss what should be included, and later to test content ideas. The new museum was structured into six thematic galleries. These were: Great Port, which is mostly conceived around Liverpool's industrial history, but which also includes the role of the Mersey in pre-history; Global City, which has a small permanent element relating Liverpool to each continent, complemented by changing displays; History Detectives, which spotlights archaeology as a way of learning about the area; City Soldiers, which draws on the regimental collections; Peoples' Republic, which deals with political struggles and which has included displays on emotive topics such as the Orange Lodge; and Wondrous Place, which is intended to celebrate Liverpool's achievements in music, sport and entertainment. The majority of the displays cover the last two hundred years, and this relatively tight focus on more recent history mitigates the general lack of an overarching narrative. For those visitors who would like more chronological orientation, there is a large "visual timeline" display case near the entrance, an element that was partly included in order to make the museum more useful to school groups.

The Museum of Liverpool neatly juggles its relationships with nearby institutions within the National Museums family. The International Slavery Museum is the major statement on Liverpool's role in the transatlantic slave trade, but this does not get glossed over within the Museum of Liverpool, where the story of the British Empire in particular is clearly relevant to the Global City gallery. The museum is next door to the Maritime Museum, which deals with some of the same industrial history that is addressed in the Great Port gallery and elsewhere. These sorts of overlaps seem not to trouble visitors unduly. On the whole, the Museum of Liverpool's narrative approach seems to attempt to give a sketch of the city's character and communities, more than it does its story through time.

In practice, there have been two main issues with the approach taken by the museum. The first was a lack of temporary exhibition space. This has meant

15. I am grateful to Dr Liz Stewart of Liverpool Museums for having discussed the Museum of Liverpool project with me.

that certain gallery displays have had to be displaced in order to accommodate major displays. Most obviously, the Wondrous Place gallery was decanted to make way for *Double Fantasy* (2018), which told the story of John Lennon and Yoko Ono in their own words. The other problem has been that, although the intention was for large parts of the displays to regularly change, this has often been difficult to achieve, and this failing has been recognised in the 2019-2030 Strategic Plan.[16]

In Cardiff, a museum of the city has only recently been created.[17] The project was initiated in the early 2000s, was greenlit by Cardiff City Council in 2004, and opened to the public in 2011. The creation of the museum was partly rooted in a desire for Cardiff not to be "outdone" by cities such as Bristol and Liverpool which were also creating city museums at this time. Furthermore, the project looked explicitly to the Peoples' Palace in Glasgow as a potential model.[18] The museum began from a standing start, since there was no collection, nor were there large numbers of relevant objects in such potential partner organisations as the National Museum of Wales.[19] Decisions about the chronological parameters of the project were pressing, since Cardiff Castle was in the process of developing a visitor centre that would explore Cardiff's Roman and medieval pasts. The 2004 feasibility study recommended concentrating on Cardiff's history from 1800 to the present day, a periodisation that covered Cardiff's enormous growth into a major port city during the Victorian period, and its subsequent evolution into Wales's capital city.[20] There was already a recognition that the collections would of necessity start small, with loans and items obtained from a public callout, but that they would grow and evolve with time. A site was also selected, the Old Library building in Cardiff's city centre.

By the time the museum opened in 2011, some of these initial plans had been altered. The museum displays, designed by Redman Design, were intended to present the city's history as an introduction for visitors to Cardiff, and as a community resource for residents. The Sense of Cardiff gallery was designed as a largely open space, with broadly themed areas defined by bold

16. *National Museums Liverpool Strategic Plan 2019-2030* (2019), p. 17 (unpaginated).

17. Indeed, the lack of such a museum was lamented in Gaynor Kavanagh, "Buttons, Belisha Beacons and Bullets: City Histories in Museums" in Gaynor Kavanagh & Elizabeth Frostick, *Making City Histories in Museums*, London, Leicester University Press, 1998, p. 1-18, p. 11.

18. Report — *Living Museum of Cardiff* (Cardiff Council, 5 February 2004) including the feasibility study *Cardiff Alive! The Museum of Cardiff Life* by Chadwick Jones Associates, sections 2.1 and 2.2. http://archive.cardiff.gov.uk/Government/english/Cabinet_Papers/04_02_05_Cab/Reports/publiccab5feb04Cardiff%20Museum_tot.pdf (accessed 17/11/2020).

19. Chadwick Jones Associates, sections 3.2 to 3.9.

20. Chadwick Jones Associates, sections 2.9 to 2.10.

Wales Is... gallery at St Fagans. Photo: Wales News Service

colour coding. These included such topics as Changing Cardiff and Working Lives. One section, A Port of Some Importance, specifically addressed Cardiff's pre-industrial past. A sense of the city's chronological history was further reinforced through five "monoliths" representing different time periods, with key events and projected images. However, the real emphasis within The Sense of Cardiff was, as with the Museum of Liverpool, to attempt to characterise the city, and to provide a voice for its inhabitants' lives and experiences. This was perhaps made most explicit in the Object Theatre, a display that gave voice to some familiar Cardiff objects through the use of oral histories.

The Museum of Cardiff's concentration on the city's industrial history is particularly striking since the city is also home to the St Fagans National Museum of History, an institution that broadly conforms to the folk museum model, but which has, in recent years, reinterpreted its role to be a peoples' museum of everyday life for Wales. In 2018, the museum opened three new galleries, Wales Is..., Life Is... and Gweithdy (the workshop). Wales Is... attempts to "explain" Wales through objects, history, lived experience and debate. It takes the form of a white laboratory-type space, divided into a series of stereotypical statements

Gallery installation at the Museum of Cardiff: Photo: Redman Design

or questions about Wales, which are then explored in a display, many of which prompt the visitor for a response. In this sense, the displays are provocative in a way that the Museum of Cardiff's more comfortable reminiscing is not, reflecting the curators' stated aim of adopting a more embedded, activist stance for the museum.[21]

At the Museum of London, the monolithic suite of galleries telling London's chronological history has sometimes been perceived by the curators as a straitjacket preventing them responding nimbly to what is happening in the city around them. As part of the organisation's preparations for moving to a new site at West Smithfield in 2024, the decision was taken to organise a season of programming in 2017-2018 to run alongside the exhibition *The City Is Ours*. The season was called *City Now, City Future*, and comprised 15 displays

21. Sioned Hughes & Elen Phillips, "From Vision to Action: the journey towards activism at St Fagans National Museum of History" in Robert Janes & Richard Sandell (eds.), *Museum Activism*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2019, p. 245-255.

and 87 public events.[22] It took as its starting point the fact that with increasing urbanisation will come a number of environmental and social challenges; cities will therefore be at the forefront of the requisite innovation and solutions. The season explored how we live in London today, what it might be like in the future, and how we can all be part of making our city better. The programme was developed in partnership, and the museum worked with over 300 artists, organisations, companies, charities and universities.

City Now, City Future was designed to meet a number of the museum's aims: to build new partnerships, and to develop the museum's capability in developing and sustaining them; to encourage engaged citizenship; to be experimental and risk-taking, recognising that sometimes the outcome of an experiment can be failure from which it is possible to learn; and to create a collections legacy, through new kinds of commissioning and collecting, including digital as well as physical items. The intention was to help reposition the museum as engaged with the present and future as well as the past, as a provoker of debate, a convener of conversations and an inspiration to action.

The season included a number of salon discussions on topics such as Emotion, Protest and Edgelands. It also included a number of "Initiatives". Each of these was a partnership with a project in London working to improve the city. The initiative would be explored in a digital interactive, and every week during the season, one initiative delivered a talk, tour or workshop in the galleries or local area. Initiatives ranged from co-housing to community energy companies. There were also a number of displays. For example, *Voice Over Finsbury Park* was a partnership with Umbrellium and Furtherfield to work with residents of a tower block in Finsbury Park to provide a hyper-local social radio that aimed to bring residents together and give neighbours a reason to chat.[23] Research for *City Now, City Future* also enabled the museum to make important new contemporary acquisitions, such as images of a future London by the digital design studio Squint/Opera, or community currencies such as the Brixton Pound.

City Now, City Future was a way of bringing the Museum of London's presentation of the city to life, and engaging visitors in the city's past, present and future. It also repositioned the museum as a space for debate and action. The challenge for the Museum of London now is to take what has been learned and to embed it into a new telling of London's Story.

22. For a full list, see the archived web page: https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/discover/city-now-city-future-celebrating-season (accessed 17/11/2020).

23. The Views of London: a behind-the-scenes exploration of Voiceover Finsbury Park (Museum of London, 2018), https://pastexhibitions.museumoflondon.org.uk/city-now-city-future/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/VoiceOver.pdf (accessed 17/11/2020).

Part of the City Now City Future programme. Photo: Museum of London

Conclusion

The recognition that curators (and museums) can no longer expect to be the expert gatekeepers to knowledge of the city provides a challenge to anyone setting out to communicate the history of a place. A plethora of voices and approaches risks becoming formless and confusing for visitors, and often sits awkwardly with the rather more conservative historical approaches still favoured in schools. At the same time, the involvement of contemporary city dwellers in the presentation and discussion of their own city's history offers opportunities to involve visitors in empathising with life experiences perhaps very different from their own. Museums now have a much greater understanding of the barriers that they put up as institutions, as well as a sense of the sorts of groups and communities that are typically excluded or ignored. Community engagement, co-curation and other strategies for greater inclusion are now well-established, but it is also true that museums are inextricably enmeshed in wider societal issues of power, wealth and discrimination — three primary barriers to access. The character of a city is perhaps always in the eye of the beholder, and the "story" of a city will always be contested and changing. A preparedness to change, and to make change a central element of the storytelling process, is perhaps the surest approach for the future.

City museums and "explaining" the city: Narratives of past, present and future. Part 2: Poland

Michał Wisniewski

The history of Central and Eastern Europe still rarely can be seen as one entity. Contradictions and conflicts that determined the region's fate from at least the early 20th-century up to today interrupt one narrative that might be accepted by the majority of stakeholders. Instead, there is an archipelago of various narratives presented mainly from the national or nation state perspective. The political turn of 1989 allowed the initiation of the revision of Central and Eastern European histories and the discussion of many topics that were so far omitted or censored. Besides the topics that made the region's history image problematic, there were some that helped to find similarities and common spaces. One of the most important was represented during the last three decades by the growing interest in the history of cities.

During the postwar era, which for Central and Easter Europe meant the period of Soviet dominance, the city was never an important independent topic of research, rather a reason for the critique of the Western, capitalist economy. However the more sophisticated historical research dedicated to social history or urban history was brought into the curriculum of the universities in this part of Europe relatively early. But, for a long period of time, they were not represented in the main discourse. The revolution of 1989 reversed the already existing model and opened the space for the new ways of interpretation of the region's history. Since the early 1990s, Central and Eastern Europe has been observing still growing interest in urban studies, which is represented by the newly established city history museums and new city narratives. In many places they are contradicted by the big, official constructs of the nation states' history narratives.

In this part of the continent, especially during the 20th-century, the political borders changed much more often than the cultural ones.[1] The political results of both World Wars pushed this part of the continent into deep structural changes including the collapse of states, transfers of the borders, ethnic cleansing and genocides, destructions of urban space and vast migrations. Within,

1. Timothy Garton Ash, "Does Central Europe Exist?", *The New York Review of Books*, 9 October 1986, https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1986/10/09/does-central-europe-exist/ (accessed 21/12/2020).

this context the city narratives are structured in the form of a palimpsest with overlapping layers of different and usually contradictory histories that do not necessarily follow the official state history discourse. In many ways, the lack of parallelism between the history of the city and the history of the state or the nation may still be a reason for political conflicts and attempts at interference.

Poland, being one the largest states in this region, with its difficult past linked with its re-emergence post World War I and then with the transformation of the borders and deep changes in the social structure during and after World War I, finally with the memory of the existence of the communist regime, is today, from the point of view of museum narratives, an especially intriguing place.[2] One of the most important changes that occurred in Poland because of the political transformation post-1989 is related to decentralisation of the state administration and rearrangement of local self-government. Already during the 1990s, whilst struggling with economic difficulties, Polish cities developed their new agendas in culture.[3] The EU enlargement of 2004 gave them resources to build new strategies, institutions and infrastructure that allowed them to present their identity and to construct and exhibit the local narratives, sometimes for the very first time. A very important moment came a decade ago with competition for the title of the European Capital of Culture 2016, which was finally won by the city of Wrocław. Because of this competition, ten of the biggest Polish cities established their new cultural agendas, identifying culture as a major force for city development and museums as important tools for social integration.[4]

Until 1989, Polish history, as in the whole Eastern Bloc, was censored, manipulated and determined by official state discourses linked with the Soviet interpretation of Marxism, which was focused on the problem of social progress and class struggle. Only a few Polish cities at that time could honour

2. Since EU accession in 2004 the Polish museum sector has seen growing interest among its audience. In 2018 there were about 38 million visitors, almost twice as many as in 2010: *Rocznik Statystyczny Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej / Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Poland*, Warsaw 2019, p. 402, file:///C:/Users/m.wisniewski/Desktop/statistical_yearbook_of_the_republic_of_poland_2019.pdf (accessed 21/12/2020).

3. Agata Wąsowska-Pawlik, "Polityka kulturalna Polski po 1989 roku" in Jerzy Hausner, Anna Karwińska & Jacek Purchla, (eds.) *Kultura a rozwój*, Warsaw, Narodowe Centrum Kultury, 2013, p. 113-125, https://nck.pl/badania/aktualnosci/kultura-a-rozwoj-bezplatny-podrecznik (accessed 21/12/2020).

4. Pawel Kubicki, Bozena Gierat-Bieroń & Joanna Orzechowska-Wacławska, "The European Capital of Culture 2016 Effect. How the ECOC Competition Changed Polish Cities Studies in European Integration" in Magdalena Góra, Zdzislaw Mach & Katarzyna Zielińska (eds.), *Studies in European Integration, State and Society*, vol. 9, Berlin 2020, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341797292_How_the_European_Capital_of_Culture_2016_Competition_Changed_Polish_Cities (accessed 21/12/2020).

5. The first Polish city history museum was established in Kraków in 1899, http://muzeumkrakowa.pl/en/historia (accessed 21/12/2020).

their history with their own city museums.[5] The political transformation of the last three decades has opened the way to look into many times previously forbidden or deeply manipulated. Especially post-2004, Poland has been able to investigate its history once again using new tools, establishing new museums and working with the narratives of the state, region and the cities. This process brought many success stories but in some cases produced also conflicts between the bottom-up locally oriented and constructed narratives and the political demands of the state institutions.[6]

One of the most important problems that Polish museums had to face was connected with the history of the regions that before 1945 were a part of Germany and have been incorporated into Poland due to the Yalta and Potsdam Treaties. Until 1989, the official narrative of the Polish presence in Silesia, Pomerania and Masuria was linked with the slogan "We were here! We are here! We will be here!" and was concentrated on the presentation of the figures and places representing the so-called Polish involvement in the history of the mentioned regions, mainly during the "deep past" of the Middle Ages. In this discourse, there was simply no place for the memory of the religious wars of the 17th-century, and the history of the Prussian aristocracy was omitted, as was also the case of the industrial revolution, not to mention the social history of Germans who used to live in these lands before 1945.[7] Last but not least among the absent or unhearing members of these conflicted narratives were the local communities and nations such as Silesians, Kashubians or Masurians, who were the victims of German and Polish nationalisms and conflicts during the 19th and 20th-centuries. The political shift of Poland post-1989 has allowed work with such absent or forbidden histories as well as bringing them back into the spotlight. City history museums were among the first that recognised this past and started to work with it.

Another fundamental part of the whole region's history that was forgotten or exposed in an artificial way was the 1,000-year-long presence of Jews in Poland as well as in some other parts of Central and Eastern Europe.[8] It is

6. The most problematic case was dedicated to the World War II Museum in Gdańsk, Joanna Berendt, "Court Clerks Takeover of Poland's New World War III Museum", *New York Times*, 5 April 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/05/arts/design/poland-new-world-war-ii-museum-court-clears-takeover.html (accessed 21/12/2020).

7. Gregor Thum, *Uprooted. How Breslau Became Wroclaw During the Century of Expulsions*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2011.

8. Slawomir Kapralski, "Jews and the Holocaust in Poland's Memoryscapes: An Inquiry into Transcultural Amnesia" in Tea Sindbæk Andersen & Barbara Törnquist-Plewa (eds.), *The Twentieth Century in European Memory Transcultural Mediation and Reception*, Volume: 34 European Studies, 2017, pp. 170-197, https://brill.com/view/book/edcoll/9789004352353/B9789004352353_010.xml (accessed 21/12/2020).

impossible to present the history of Warsaw, Kraków, Łodź or Lublin without the history of the Jewish communities that used to inhabit these cities. The narratives of those cities are far from being complete without presentation of the Jewish culture that used to flourish there but also without reflection on the history and on the aftermaths of the Holocaust. Within the last 30 years, the city history museums in Poland have approached the Jewish past by incorporating it into the narratives of the cities. In this case, this followed the projects initiated by the state museums and institutions as well as historians dealing with the history of the Polish Jews and the history of the Holocaust.

Last but not least, one more very important element of Polish history that was reflected recently in the narratives of Polish museums is dedicated to the aftermaths of World War II and to the history of the communist regime. After the political transformation of Poland, the era of communism in many ways was mythologised and linked with mainly political issues. During the 1990s Polish history studies, but also culture and pop culture, saw construction of the postwar era narratives that were usually focusing on the political figures, important events and the role of institutions such as the Solidarity Trade Unions or the Roman Catholic Church in the struggle with the regime.[9] City history museums open new narratives concerning the postwar history of Poland, dealing with such topics as reconstruction of cities, migrations, industrialisation, urbanisation, social and demographic changes as well as everyday life. Each of these topics did not exist in the museum discourse previously and it is especially important to emphasise that the work of city history museums was in many ways in conflict with the official state history narrative This is why in some cases, focusing on the social aspects of communist Poland was a reason for the outbreak of conflicts between the state authorities and the museum institutions.

Three museum case studies

In the year 2000, the city of Wrocław saw the establishment of its city history museum. The history of the Lower Silesia region capital is a perfect representation of the complexity of the Central European past. Since being established in early 13th-century, Vratislavia/Breslau/Wrocław was a part of Poland, Bohemia, Hungary, Austria, Prussia, Germany and again Poland. In 1945, the city was turned by the Nazis into a fortress and during the last months of World War II was 70% destroyed by the Red Army. During the postwar years it faced the

9. Valentin Behr, "Historical policy-making in post-1989 Poland: a sociological approach to the narratives of communism", *European Politics and Society*, Vol. 18, 2017 — Issue 1: Governing the Memories of Communism in Central and Eastern Europe: Policy Instruments and Social Practices, p. 81-95.

The Kings Palace in Wrocław, Seat of the City Museum of Wrocław.
Photo: Anna Gasior, The City Museum of Worcław

exchange of its entire population. The prewar citizens, those who survived, were forced to leave and were replaced by the new inhabitants, who were many of the people forced to leave the former eastern territories of Poland then incorporated into the Soviet Union. For almost half of the century, the vast social migration and postwar reconstruction of the city was linked in official propaganda with the myth of historic return of Poles to the so-called "Regained Lands".

The new museum, located in the former Prussian Kings' Palace was initiated to break the dominant discourse and present the multiple narrative of Wrocław's history. On the one hand, it presents the postwar struggle with reconstruction but, on the other hand, it commemorates important events in Prussian history, e.g. the proclamation An Mein Volk ("To my People"), which was issued by King Frederick William III of Prussia in Wrocław, then Breslau, in 1813. The multilayer exhibition was inviting many such forgotten or politically difficult narratives. In a city that was devastated, it is always a problem

1000 years of Wrocław, a permanent exhibition of the City Museum of Wrocław, image by Tomasz Gasior. Photo: The City Museum of Worcław

to bring back the objects and let them speak their stories, not overusing multimedia. In the case of Wrocław, with the support of many Polish museums, this process was completed with success. Once presented in 2000, the main exhibition entitled "1000 years of Wrocław" was an eye opener, which led the main transformation in the museum narrative in the Western part of Poland.[10]

In 2010, the Museum of Kraków (then the City History Museum of Kraków) opened the exhibition entitled Kraków During the Nazi Occupation 1939-1945, a permanent presentation of the critical years in the city's history exposed inside the former office building of the Enamel Factory, which during World War II was managed by Oscar Schindler. The World War II history of the building was presented in Steven Spielberg's 1993 movie *Schindler's List*. The museum exhibition is confronting the history of the people who worked in the factory during World War II with the bigger image of city history during the years of Nazi Occupation.[11]

10. Maciej Łagiewski, Halina Okólska, Piotr Oszczanowski (eds.), *1000 years of Wrocław: exhibition guide*, Wrocław, The City Museum of Wrocław, 2014.

11. M. Bednarek, E. Gawron, G. Jeżowski, B. Zbroja, K. Zimmerer, *Kraków czas okupacji 1939-1945*, Muzeum Historyczne Miasta Krakowa, 2010.

Oscar Schindler's Enamel Factory, Seat of The Museum of Kraków, the branch presenting Kraków under Nazi Occupation 1939-1945 exhibition. Photo: Tomasz Kalarus, The Museum of Kraków

The curators responsible for this exhibition decided to build the narration using the newly produced objects, especially the ones that are connected with everyday life and to combine them with multimedia. In the city of Kraków and its vicinity, one can easily find places dedicated to the tragedy of World War II that help to give authentic contact with the past. Some of these places are managed and presented to the public by the Museum of Kraków.[12] The Kraków During the Nazi Occupation 1939-1945 exhibition is dealing with the past in a different way. Instead of objects, the exhibition is focusing on the people and the everyday life of various ethnic groups existing in Kraków during World War II: the Poles, the Jews and the Germans. Based on the city history chronology it interweaves three drastically different stories and points of views raising questions about the ways the big tragedies such as the Holocaust should be presented and what kind of historical material might be used to discuss them.

12. Besides the Enamel Factory, Kraków Museum is presenting WWII history at Ulica Pomorska (Former Gestapo Headquarter in Kraków) and Apteka Pod Orłem (Former Pharmacy located in the territory of the Jewish Ghetto in Kraków). At present Kraków Museum is preparing the new exhibition and the new way of presentation of the KL Płaszów, the former Nazi Concentration Camp located in the city of Kraków. To find more visit: http://muzeumkrakowa.pl/en (accessed 21/12/2020).

The office of Oscar Schindler, Kraków under Nazi Occupation 1939-1945 exhibition, The Museum of Kraków. Photo: Adrian Grycuk

In 2014, the POLIN Museum of the History of the Polish Jews was established, located in the very heart of the Muranów district of Warsaw, which during World War II was turned into the Jewish Ghetto and was a place of martyrdom of the biggest Jewish city community of prewar Europe. The large scale museum project aims to discuss two layers of the history of Polish Jews.

On the one hand, it goes back to the 10th-century and presents the chronologically-based narrative of the history of the Polish Jews, the unique and crucial part of the society that used to inhabit the territory of Poland and the neighbouring states and exists no more.[13] On the other hand, it deals with the local narrative of the place, which represents the vivid Jewish life during the 19th and early-20th centuries as well as atrocities of the World War II Jewish Ghetto.[14] The exhibition is formed of newly made objects, replicas and multimedia. Moreover, through temporary exhibitions, it raises questions concerning

13. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Antony Polonsky (eds.), *Polin: 1000 year history of Polish Jews*, Warsaw, Museum of the History of the Polish Jews, 2015.

14. Kamila Radecka-Mikulicz (ed.), "Tu Muranów. Dzielnica ponad gruzami", Muzeum Historii Żydów Polskich POLIN, 2020.

POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw, architecture: Rainer Mahlamaki, Lahdelma & Mahlamäki Architects, 2009-2012. Photo: Wojciech Krynski

The reconstruction of the Synagogue in Gwozdziec, POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw. Photo: Magdalena Starowieyska and Dariusz Golik, POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews

the place of the Polish Jews in the bigger image of the history of diaspora as well as about memory and Jewish heritage in postwar and contemporary Poland.

Conclusion

During the last three decades, the cities of Central and Eastern Europe have been able to look back at their histories, approaching the forbidden topics of the communist era. This major shift opened up the space for new discourses in history and urban studies as well as in cultural activities and, last but not least, in the activities of museums. Since 2004 and EU enlargement, countries of the region can use the EU funds for the purpose of the development of new infrastructure, including new buildings for culture.

In Poland, during recent years, one can observe the growing number of investments in city museums and the establishment of many new city history narratives. The Polish museum boom that occurred in the early years of the 21st-century is represented today by a plethora of new institutions and exhibitions. In this chapter, three cases were presented informing how the Polish cities of Wrocław, Kraków and Warsaw are dealing today with such topics as the history of Germans who used to live in Silesia, the traumatic events of World War II or the millennium-long history of the Polish Jews. The new narrative exhibitions attract high interest from the audiences, allowing them to reinterpret the problematic and painful subjects of Polish city history. From the perspective of museum studies, the case of contemporary Polish city museums is useful in understanding how museum narratives can build and moderate discourses concerning the identities of urban societies.

Collecting contemporary cities[1]

Jette Sandahl

The 21st-century poses immense challenges for museums and opens up equally vast new opportunities and obligations. The year 2020 seems to pointedly epitomise these challenges and expose some of the fault-lines in our relationships with our societies and communities.

Snapshots from 2020

For Europe, 2020 set yet another record as the hottest year in recorded history, forest fires have devastated huge swathes of land, and yet more species have been lost and the biodiversity further decreased.

Close to two million people across the globe died from the Covid-19 pandemic, millions of people around the world lost their jobs or were struggling to get by on government schemes, while the wealth of global billionaires rocketed.

Millions of people are displaced from their homes, and the richer countries of the Global North, desensitised to the suffering of others, tighten our borders, retain refugees in camps under atrocious conditions and sit back and allow them to drown at sea.

Continued calls for acknowledgement of the violence beneath the surface of our collections are ignored, denied and marginalised, and demands for reparation, restitution and repatriation are met with the same passive-aggressive retort from the trenches of museum leadership as twenty years ago.

Current and former staff and core stakeholders take museums to task for the continued systemic racism, sexism, supremacy as well as the personal exclusion, discrimination and exploitation practiced with staff and partners. Monuments and trustees, directors, curators fall from their pedestals.

These are times that call for long overdue societal contextualization of museums and for a genuine personal and institutional self-reflection and self-critique for those of us who are or have been in positions of institutional power in museums.

1. My personal frame of reference and relationship with city museums is rooted in my period as director of the Museum of Copenhagen, which remains the lens through which I see city museums. As this publication is generated with the so-called Barcelona city museum network, it recounts examples of what some of these European city museums have communicated to me as their most radical new collecting, in terms of themes and content, and/or in terms of methods employed in the collecting. I have been interested here in new collecting on the borders or boundaries rather than in the overall collections policies of city museums. Focusing on a European museum context, without fully exploring and situating it in its larger global setting, is, obviously, a quagmire these days, as the differences between Europe as a waning (neo)colonial power and other parts of the world are — maybe increasingly — pronounced.

Revitalising collections and democratising collecting

Increasingly aware that failing to address major global and local concerns will jeopardise their continued relevance, museums are showing a new commitment to addressing social issues. This shift is often initiated in the areas of public programs, education, exhibitions and events, with collections and collecting the last area in which changing objectives, principles and methodologies take a real hold.

Over recent decades, new collecting has become minimal in many city museums. Decades of prolific collecting led to a lack of space and resources, huge back-logs of documentation and a subsequent lack of overview and reluctance to deaccession.[2] In some cases, new collecting has become almost solely digital.

Urban life is chaotic and complex, and fundamentally interconnected. Its scale is enormous. It resists order and defies linearity. It is too unruly to fit the categories of the museum registration guides. Its qualities cry out in protest against the divisions into museum disciplines and specialisations.

City museums struggle to create a coherent and cohesive understanding of their city's history which is at the same time both continuous and disruptured,[3] and new collecting is often also halted by a sense of bewilderment, of what to collect, in the infinite mass of objects of a contemporary city.

In 2011, Barcelona History Museum involved the public, partners, and contemporary communities in identifying and locating absent or missing objects to fill in gaps in its historic collection and thereby also gaps in a coherent narrative of the trajectory of Barcelona as a modern European metropolis and as the capital of Catalonia.

A research based "non-exhibition", as it was called, was used as a collecting tool.[4] A big exhibition room was set up as an historical overview exhibition, but among the rich display of objects empty frames, empty podiums and pedestals punctuated and marked the holes in the story line.

2. The UK Museum Association offers a series of recommendations towards different paradigms to short-circuit this paralysis, see Empowering Collections — Museums Association, accessed 15.01.21.

3. Few city museums manage to unify archaeological finds with historic and contemporary objects. Even when, in terms of periods, these objects overlap, they tend to be assigned different systems of documentation, categorisation and interpretation. In this chapter I am leaving out the whole area of archaeological excavations and collecting which tends to follow different logics of their own.

4. Josep Bracons Clapes, "Buits que s'omplen, nous objectes per a la història de la ciutat", *MUHBA Butlletí*, 27, 2012, and MUHBA exhibition brochure, and personal communication, Edgar Straehle Porras, email 17.09.20.

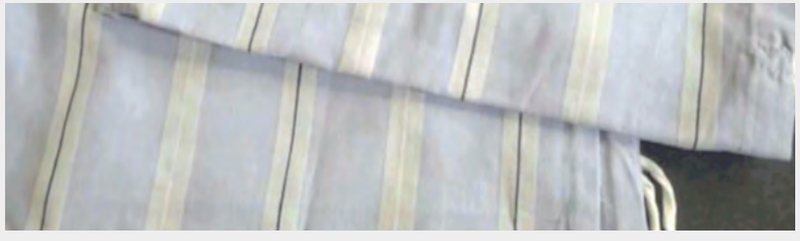
You enter a workspace destined to build relationships between the museum, citizens, agencies, companies and institutions with the aim of collecting the city, especially that of contemporary times. The collection of new objects, together with the construction of stories based on historical research, should make it possible to improve knowledge of Barcelona and make the museum a mirror of the city. Why do you think [a particular object] should be part of the collection? Would you like to propose it to us the museum asked of its visitors?

MUHBA Lab, Barcelona History Museum. Photo: MUHBA

Collecting is evolving into an active, participatory and public process that includes the constituents and communities of the museum. Democratizing collecting implies expanding both how new collecting is done and what is collected. In city museums, often originating literally or metaphorically in the attics of city hall, it has meant going beyond the focus on public history and powerful founding fathers and collecting and integrating the biographical, personal everyday life of, in principle, all of their residents.

Drawing on its experiences from collecting in an interactive digital environment, the Museum of Copenhagen sought to revitalise and renew the relevance of its important, but dormant collection of the few objects left from philosopher Søren Kierkegaard through new collecting, structured and defined through core themes of his intensely personal writing on the different aspects of love.

An on-line app was developed, which leads a donor seamlessly through a standard object registration process, complete with photos and full provenance. This information and narrative followed the objects into the exhibition, where the newly collected objects and the Kierkegaard objects "mirrored" each other through their shared focus on one of the specific themes from Kierkegaard's philosophy — such as friendship, motherlove, erotic or romantic love.



Pillowcase made by a widow from pajamas belonging to her deceased husband, Museum of Copenhagen. Photo: Allan Smith

The use of the expertise and authority of the donors in documenting their own objects empowered them and saved museum documentation resources. The process exemplified the growing permeability of the boundaries of the museum as an institution.

Registering conflicted objects from their own personal biographies, the registration app was also used by museum staff — and subsequently in other museum training contexts — as a tool for strengthening their empathy skills and confidence in dealing with psychological encounters, emotionally charged objects and narratives, and for heightening their awareness of how one's biases and projections, values and world views enter the collecting and documentation process.

Diverse cities and a plurality of lived experiences

Cities often predate their nations, at times they also outlive them. They are growing in importance, independence and confidence. Their densely populated demographics, patterns of life and profiles of opinions are continuously changing. They are diverse and dynamic and tend to share more core traits across borders than they do with their own nations or rural or suburban surroundings.

"The Peopling of London" project at the Museum of London in the 1990s gave a new frame of reference for the plural history and diverse populations of a capital, uncovering and revealing an interpretation of cities as porous and open to new people and new influences. It punctured the myths of the homogeneous, monocultural, walled-off metropolis, and influenced a dynamic

way of thinking about cities and city identities as continuously evolving processes, as was later underscored in, for instance, "Becoming a Copenhagener" at the Museum of Copenhagen. The Museum of London continues to collect to supplement and strengthen its collection of the lived experience of Londoners from prehistoric to modern times.

Cities are important social laboratories and London is one of the world's greatest. For centuries they have been at the centre of global networks attracting all sorts of knowledge and cultures. Curating London will enrich the existing collection by taking up the challenge of collecting 21st-century London to capture the superdiverse nature of contemporary London by working collaboratively with the communities and individuals who call London home. Museum collections are shaped by particular hierarchies of knowledge which have marginalised and often excluded certain worldviews. The knowledge coming from people's lived experience has been traditionally overlooked and deemed unworthy of museum collections.[5]

Curating London — creating a display of Dub music. Photo: Giulia Delprato. Museum of London

5. Domenico Sergi, Curating a new Museum of London, Museum of London, and https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/collections/about-our-collections/enhancing-our-collections/curating-london, accessed 15.01.21.

Relationship building as a framework for collecting and museum re-constructions

Reflecting the diversity and heterogeneity of their city has become a core effort for city museums, not least when trying to build a new museum and create a contemporary profile in tune with a wider, more diverse public. Collecting and curating are increasingly the intermediate results of continual, long-term relationship building in museums. New — or re-constructed — city museums from this century, such as the Museum of Liverpool and the Museum of Helsinki, shaped their approach and their priorities, their displays and tone of voice, their themes of content through extensive and systematic consultations with their surrounding communities. Getting up close to people's everyday lives through objects and displays, museums begin to actually meet the demographics of their cities and overcome the persistent barriers of class and education that continue to haunt museums.

In documenting the past and the present time, museums are also forecasting what the future needs to know, and they become part of shaping these futures. In wide-reaching partnership with other museums, libraries, archives, the university, the municipality, media, as well as diverse urban communities, neighbourhood organisations and artists, the Amsterdam Museum has initiated a multifaceted five-year collecting process, which will be driving and shaping the renewed Amsterdam Museum due to open in 2025 as a self-portrait and mirror for the city of Amsterdam as it celebrates its 750th-anniversary.

In "Collecting the City" the museum asks what does Amsterdam mean to you? What does the city look like in 2025? Which objects, places and collective, polyphonic stories should be preserved or imagined to "unlock" the city of 2025 for present and future generations? These memories will sometimes be beautiful and loving, but also sad and hurtful. They make friction visible, put important issues on the agenda and establish connections.
An open invitation, "in-take events", assignments for artists, a mobile studio, an educational programme and storytelling workshops will support the broadest possible participation. "Collecting the city" will provide material for an interdisciplinary overview exhibition in 2025 with programming throughout the city and publication of the 750 most special, meaningful stories and objects, curated by a diverse committee of Amsterdammers. In the museum, the process is expected to generate a more inclusive idea of heritage, consisting of tangible, intangible and imaginary heritage, and an acquisition policy changed accordingly.[6]

6. Personal communication, email, Maren Siebert, Collecting the City, Amsterdam Museum, 09/09/20.

Collecting the City of Amsterdam. Photo: Jette Sandahl

Part of the narrative of a territory and part of the infrastructure of a city[7]

European city museums are as diverse, amorphous and unevenly outlined as their cities. They sit at the intersection of multifarious lines and hold multifaceted functions and responsibilities — from the deep past of prehistory into contemporary times, from arts and culture into involvement with urban preservation and future planning and development. Many of them are part of or close to municipal authorities and administrations, and work hard to be counted on as an active partner with valued contributions to the discussions, citizen dialogues and solutions of major current issues on the municipal agenda.

Immigration has been one such issue for city museums.[8] Sustainability is emerging as another. Both the Museum of London and the Museum of Copenhagen have focused on themes of waste and trash, as an obvious area of interest for museums with long archaeological traditions and expertise, and over the last decade city museums have begun to research, collect and exhibit the theme of

7. These terms of how city museums are — ideally — situated and grounded have been powerfully phrased by Joan Roca i Albert, *Barcelona History Museums* in a number of different contexts.

8. Migration and City Museums has been a focus for CAMOC, the ICOM committee for museums of the city. See for instance, https://museumsandmigration.files.wordpress.com/2016/12/camoc_review_nr4_jan2017.pdf, accessed 15.01.21.

urban nature. Prompted by an acute need to address the destructive consequences for city infrastructures of changing climates, such as, for instance, floods, current thinking is moving away from the dichotomies between nature and culture, between rural and urban posited in previous centuries. Contemporary urban planning begins to re-conceptualise urban environments as large living landscapes and ecosystems, which need to be shaped in respect and understanding for the laws and balances of nature. The annual European "Green Capital" provided a framework for the Museum of Copenhagen's extensive focus on Urban Nature in 2014, creating new, fertile gardens on its grounds and thematic exhibitions in all its galleries. In 2020, as Lisbon holds the title of "Green Capital", the Museum of Lisbon is likewise opening this as a new sphere of interest and commitment.

As part of a 3-year research and exhibition project on vegetable gardens in Lisbon, the Museum of Lisbon is collecting a series of new objects: two models of urban gardens; a set of seed bombs; eight videos of interviews with eight gardeners currently working in community urban vegetable gardens across the city. It will be the first time the museum is incorporating objects which are totally out of the usual sphere of historic documents, visual and decorative arts, archaeology or industrial heritage. A thematic exhibition showcases the theme for a year from the fall of 2020.[9]

Model of a permaculture vegetable garden.
Photo: José Frade. Museum of Lisbon

9. Personal communication, Joana Sousa Monteiro, email, 15.09.20.

Rapid response to urgent crises

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit cities in 2020 as a major crisis in infrastructures, health, and welfare, city museums in London, Frankfurt and Helsinki moved to collect objects, documents, recordings that for the residents signified the situation in a meaningful way, in what, after the collecting done by the Museum of the City of New York and the New York Historical Society after 11 September 2001, has become known as a rapid-response collecting.

For the Helsinki City Museum, community work and participatory strategies are core as they are for the city of Helsinki as such. With a continued focus on the organization of the City of Helsinki, not least as a key provider of the welfare services for the residents, under the COVID-19 crisis the museum collected the stories of city officials and staff about the exceptional spring with a focus on distance work — a process which became, in itself, an almost therapeutic experience for the participants. New collecting at the Helsinki City Museum is mainly digital. A further COVID-19 project was a documentation of Helsinki residents' Moods in Corona Time, collected via Instagram. This was integrated as an intervention in an existing exhibition of the war period 1939-45, with the current moods almost confusingly similar to those from the wartime, and the current crisis serving to lend new topicality and meaning to the memories of the war.[10]

Boy on a swing. One of the challenges of distance work was to relax between work and school.
Photo: Yehia Eweis. Helsinki City Museum

10. Personal communication, Minna Sarantola-Weiss, email, 7.09.20.

Collecting conflicts, opposition and resistance

Cities are places where space is continuously negotiated and conflicts need to be continuously solved for a functioning, everyday coexistence.

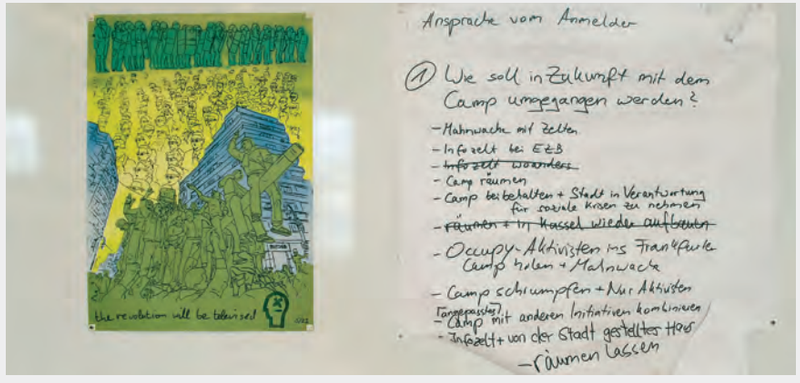
Collecting the contested and conflictual areas of urban life is a balancing act for city museums. As neutrality looks increasingly like a happy self-deception from former times, museums need to be vigilant and reflect which interests they are, implicitly or explicitly, supporting, resisting or opposing.

Particularly when collecting from conflicts over "the rights to the city", from confrontations over symbolic spaces in the city between urban authorities and squatters, youth groups and "autonomous" groups, city museums can find their professional autonomy under political pressure and the personal ethics of the professionals challenged by authorities with whom they otherwise work constructively — with an underlying assumption that being on the side of protest is to be political and activist, while supporting the status quo is not.

In the past decade, the Occupy movement has represented such a contested socio-political movement which both the Museum of London and Historical Museum of Frankfurt have found it relevant to collect.

From its contemporary collecting the Historical Museum of Frankfurt has experienced the deep relationship which people can develop with the museum when donating their stories or objects and which may, in turn, lead to a stronger sense of belonging to the city as such.
The Frankfurt Occupy Camp was torn down by the police in the summer of 2012. In late summer, a series of contemporary objects were collected by the museum in collaboration with the camp's activists. Political movements and protests are ephemeral events, and protest objects are often made for the moment.
Camp activists identified important objects which symbolized the different aspects, purposes and daily life in the camp, and curators and activists discussed the perspectives of "musealizing" contemporary protest. Through the meetings, the teams got to trust each other, the activists developing faith in the museum as a communal institution, a place for every citizen and a forum for different historical perspectives, which was important for the decision in the camp to actually make the donation.[11]

11. Personal communication, Jan Gerchow, email, 24.09.20 and Dorothee Linnemann, email 20.11.20.



OCCUPY. Historisches Museum Frankfurt. Photo: P. Welzel

Museological blind spots of power, wealth and privilege

The socio-economic maps published by many or most major cities present the unambiguous facts about urban inequality, in terms of access to education and jobs, income and a good place to live. They also show the distribution of these resources according to demographic variables as ethnicity or migrant origin and status. Intersecting topographic and demographic data are readily available on such indicators of inequality as life expectancy across the different districts or neighbourhoods of a city. As inequalities are, preposterously, accelerating in our period of time, grasping and collecting them in a broad and profound sense is a major challenge for city museums, which have often seemed more comfortable with a vaguer concept of plurality and diversity than with a more precise perspective of social justice.

Objects and collections are, almost by definition, documented, labelled and interpreted from the privileged frame of reference and points of view of the time of their collecting. Residents who fail to conform to the dominant, conventional norms or who consciously have confronted power and public institutions have had little place in museum collections. Museums are known to be trusted and respected institutions, but they are, on closer scrutiny, also clearly the domain of the white, well-educated upper and middle classes. When city museums, in the name of plurality, attempt to reach out to include and collect from un-, under- or misrepresented communities, as, for instance, recent immigrants or LGBT communities, they may discover, as did the Museum of Copenhagen, that donating the hopeful, shameful, joyful or angry objects from one's conflicted and complex daily life is an act of trust, which the museum may not have earned or does not, as of yet, deserve.

In the formal or informal division of labour between museums, the systematic collecting of objects and narratives from the major protest or resistance movements against patriarchal capitalism, such as unions, workers' movements, tenants' movements, women's movements, have tended, if at all, to go to specialist or national museums.

The absence of "ethnographic" collections in most European city museums has also meant an absence of the tangible reminders of the fraught and violent exchange between Europe and other continents. What colonialism and imperialism — or specific areas as, for instance, the transatlantic slave trade — have meant and continue to mean for the wealth and privilege of European cities and their residents has not been part of or constitutive for the predominant narrative of city museums.

The impetus for filling gaps in collections and setting new strategic directions for collecting and correcting a city's narrative complexity and inclusivity can only to a certain extent come from within the collections themselves. Some gaps are rooted in epistemological and museological traditions that serve as blind spots essential for maintaining a perspective skewed by power, privilege and wealth. In these cases, the impetus will have to come from a theoretical discourse and research, and from living communities demanding representation.

The deep affiliation and multiple allegiances with the past and the status quo

The examples cited in this chapter all bear witness to the willingness and efforts of museums to engage with and respond to the major societal issues of our time from within the core of their museum functions.

Some of these collecting initiatives are part of an already established practice of community involvement and participation, and some are even seen as drivers for new developments in the museum. But one needs to keep asking oneself to what extent this type of collecting is representative for how museums spend the bulk of their resources, and whether, on closer appraisal, the social commitments of museums might come out looking trivial and tokenistic? One needs to keep balancing on that knife's edge between, on one side, our celebration of the rich potentials of museums, and, on the other, a nagging doubt that these potentials will remain exactly that, potentials only. Never underestimating the deep affiliation and multiple allegiances of museums with the past and the status quo and remembering how easily new developments can be turned back, the question one should ask — and which has not been asked here — is how thoroughly this social focus and commitment is embedded in the museum's mission, principles, governance and among core staff to not evaporate or disappear under changing circumstances?

These are days of reckoning for museums, as has been repeated so often in 2020. These are times when museums cannot afford to overstate their societal value and make undocumented claims to societal importance.

What time is this place? City museums faced with the Historic Urban Landscape approach[1]

Ramon Graus

Time and change

"What time is this place?", this was the astute question that urban planner Kevin Lynch asked in 1972 about US cities. In his study, he stated that the built environment was subject to continuous changes: "A change in environment may be a growth or a decay, a simple redistribution, an alteration in intensity, an alteration in form. It may be a disturbance followed by a restoration, an adaptation to new forces, a willed change, an uncontrolled one".[2] Lynch considered that these changes could not be halted, and we would have to settle for understanding them so we could manage transitions: "Changes, when managed, are meant to lead to more desirable states, or at least to avoid worse ones. Nevertheless, all changes exact costs: economic, technical, social, psychological".[3] Concerned with other issues, specifically methods in history of art, George Kubler had reflected on similar problems: "Like crustaceans we depend for survival upon an outer skeleton, upon a shell of historic cities and houses filled with things belonging to definable portions of the past".[4]

The expressions *monument*, *heritage* and *landscape* were not used in Kubler's quote or that of Lynch, who had read Kubler. Lynch had preferred the expression *environment* and Kubler a laconic *things*. Both were well aware that the words heritage and landscape have added values, they are cultural representations, constructions shared by a human group, a community, in a certain place and time.

This is not the place for an in-depth explanation of the origin of these concepts, but we should note the overlap between them. If we look at the French historiographical tradition, both the historian of urban forms Françoise Choay,[5] in reflections on the concept of heritage, and philosopher Alain Roger,[6]

1. The original text in Catalan has been translated into English by Lucille Banham.

2. Kevin Lynch, *What Time Is This Place?* Cambridge, MA, The MIT Press, 1972, p. 190.

3. Lynch, *What Time Is...* p. 190.

4. George A. Kubler, *The Shape of Time*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1962, p. 1.

5. Françoise Choay, *The Invention of the Historic Monument*, translated by Lauren M. O'Connell, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2001; Françoise Choay, *Le patrimoine en questions: Anthologie pour un combat*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 2009. See also, Jean-Pierre Babelon and André Chastel, *La notion de patrimoine*, 6th ed., Paris, Liana Levi, 2016.

6. Alain Roger, *Court traité du paysage*, Paris, Gallimard, 1997.

Martí Llorens, *Triptych*, 1989. "Icària, Cámara Oscura" series. Gelatine silver paper toned in selenium and dyed with tea, 18 x 24 cm. Photo: Martí Llorens Photographic Archive, Barcelona

in a study of the concept of landscape, traced their origins to 15th-century Europe. The way the Renaissance looked back at Antiquity and gazed on nature as landscape, through the window imagined by Alberti, would set the path for the invention and formulation of these two modern concepts.[7] These authors showed how the range of meaning of the two concepts is expanding as they become loaded with values. In less than five hundred years, the terminology that is used has changed from *antiquities*, *ancient monument*, *historic monument*, *architectural heritage*, *urban heritage*, *industrial heritage*, *historic landscape*, *historic urban landscape* and *cultural heritage* to *cultural landscape*.

This would be the framework that could enable a city museum to approach the complexity of a place's time, formed by things from the past to which, in addition, cultural values of heritage have been attached. For example, the series of photographs by Martí Llorens on urban renewal in the area that would soon become the Vila Olímpica of Barcelona attempt precisely to capture the invisible element left by a demolition. The use of a pinhole camera with low-sensitivity negatives required 5 to 10 minutes of exposure. This made it possible to photograph the fall of the walls, which would be underexposed as transparent shadows. In this way, the presence of the absence would activate the memory of the city.[8]

7. For a comparative history of the development of the heritage concept in France, Germany and England, see Astrid Swenson, *The Rise of Heritage: Preserving the Past in France, Germany and England, 1789-1914*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2015.

8. Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, translated by Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer, Chicago, London, The University of Chicago Press, 2006, p. 7-15.

Outside the city museum: the city in all its complexity

What museums tend to conserve are collections of artefacts or works of art. But a city museum has the city itself outside of its premises. This implies a change in scale and necessarily a change in methods and practices. Of course, it is difficult to collect buildings or urban sites. Several years ago, Australian museologist Linda Young argued ironically that "Acquisition was, in any case, a limited practice compared to the alternative project of listing or registering places of heritage significance, which may be seen as a form of conceptual or symbolic collecting".[9]

The modern cult of monuments, to use the title of Riegl's seminal work,[10] has completely transformed western society's relationship with the architecture of the past over the last 300 years.[11] However, the constant change in the built environment that Kevin Lynch demonstrated can also be found in any building, even in any monument; Saint Sernin in Toulouse could serve as an example (see box 1). It is true that every municipality or every state defines its architectural heritage through the listed buildings that it has decided to preserve. However, this does not mean that these buildings or built environments have not been modified, amputated, destroyed and restored several times, often before the 10th-century, or they could be altered in the future. Restoration is a cultural act at a specific time in which the values of a building are recognised.

It could be illustrative to start this approach from the materiality of a Barcelona building's party wall. This wall has strata that represent around 1,800 years of urban history, from the 1st-century CE to the 19th-century. It has been left uncovered as part of the Barcino Plan that recognises the value of the city's Roman walls.[12] The wall could be used to explain the history of Barcelona from its Roman foundation to industrialisation. But why limit ourselves to the Roman period? It could be argued that other medieval monuments, other Baroque churches or other factories from the 18th and 19th-centuries explain each period better. But that does not answer the question with which this piece began: What time is this place? The time that the wall has accumulated is much richer and belongs to the entire city.

Something similar can be seen at neighbourhood and city scale. As early as 1931, Italian urban planner Gustavo Giovannoni stressed that, in the

9. Linda Young, "Museums, Heritage, and Things That Fall In-between", *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 3, 1, March 1997, p. 7-16.

10. Aloïs Riegl, "The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin", translated by Kurt W. Forster & Diane Ghirardo, *Oppositions*, 25, Fall 1982, p. 21-51.

11. David Lowenthal, "Fabricating Heritage", *History and Memory*, 10, 1, 1998, p. 5-24.

12. Carme Miró, "La muralla, estudis arqueològics recents i perspectives de treball futur", in Eduard Riu-Barrera (ed.), *Intervenir a la muralla romana de Barcelona: Una visió comparativa*, Barcelona, Museu d'Història de Barcelona (MUHBA), 2017, p. 78-91.

processes of transforming old cities, a monumental building could not be uprooted from its built environment.[13] For Giovannoni, "the same characteristics that closely link the biggest monuments to the lesser diversity of smaller buildings also links the architecture and the urban fabric in one entity, organised by a logical, coherent idea. These characteristics constitute a crucial extrinsic element for appraising monuments. They are the expression of a single conception of the monument and its environment or, if you prefer, of a collective architecture that is really urban. It is more serious to alter this whole than to spoil a monument".[14]

From this thinking, which was replete with Camillo Sitte's ideas, the concept of urban heritage emerged. Giovannoni's original Italian phrase for this was *patrimonio d'Arte urbanistica*[15] (urban art heritage). Giovannoni, with his writings and his daily work on the master plans of Italian cities, opened the eyes of a generation of architects to a new way of looking at the city. For example, Piero Gazzola, a direct student of Giovannoni,[16] was president of the committee that compiled the *Venice Charter* of 1964, which included the concept of *historic site*. The historical typological research of Saverio Muratori and his followers was also influenced by Giovannoni's reflections.[17] Over time, a long list of recommendations has established the concept of urban heritage as one of the mainstays of cities' conservation activity. Examples are the inclusion of monument, groups of buildings and sites in the broader concept of cultural heritage in the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (1972),[18] the idea of integrated conservation in the *European Charter of the Architectural Heritage* (1975) and the defence of inhabitants of historic centres in the *Washington Charter* (1987).[19]

The step from this cultural construction of urban heritage to that of urban landscape is slightly more complex. Alain Roger argued that land would become landscape when an artist teaches us how to look at it. To clarify this idea, he used

13. Gustavo Giovannoni, *Vecchie città ed edilizia nuova*, Torino, UTET, 1931. See also, Françoise Choay, "Introduction", in Gustavo Giovannoni, *L'urbanisme face aux villes anciennes*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1998, p. 7-32; Steven Semes, "New Design in Old Cities: Gustavo Giovannoni on Architecture and Conservation", *Change Over Time*, 7, 2, 2017, p. 212-233.

14. Giovannoni, Vecchie città ed... p. 26.

15. Giovannoni, Vecchie città ed... p. 183.

16. Choay, *L'urbanisme face...* p. 28.

17. Giancarlo Cataldi, Gian Luigi Maffei and Paolo Vaccaro, "Saverio Muratori and the Italian School of Planning Typology", *Urban Morphology*, 6, 1, 2002, p. 3-14.

18. "Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage: Adopted by the General Conference at Its Seventeenth Session: Paris, 16 November 1972", in *Basic Texts of the 1972 World Heritage Convention*, Paris, UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2005, p. 7-22.

19. *Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas (Washington Charter 1987): Adopted by ICOMOS General Assembly in Washington, DC, October 1987*, Washington, DC, ICOMOS, 1987.

Juan Martín López, *Party wall at the Baixada del Bisbe Caçador of Barcelona*, 2017. Photo: Ramon Graus Collection, Barcelona

a long quote from an essay entitled *The Decay of Lying* (1891) by Oscar Wilde in which, in a Socratic dialogue between the characters Vivian and Cyril, Vivian states that "Life imitates Art far more than Art imitates Life",[20] which would also imply that nature imitates art. To support his position, Wilde used the example: "Where, if not from the Impressionists, do we get those wonderful brown fogs that come creeping down our streets, blurring the gas-lamps and changing the houses into monstrous shadows? To whom, if not to them and their master, do we owe the lovely silver mists that brood over our river, and turn to faint forms of fading grace curved bridge and swaying barge? The extraordinary change that has taken place in the climate of London during the last ten years is entirely due to this particular school of Art".[21] Wilde, and therefore also Roger, considered that "what we see, and how we see it, depends on the Arts that have influenced us. To look at a thing is very different from seeing a thing".[22] Who but the painter Robert Delaunay has shown us how to see the Eiffel Tower invading the streets of Paris? Who but the civil engineer Robert Maillart has revealed the natural beauty of Salgina Gorge after constructing its bridge? Who but art historian Francis D. Klingender[23] has taught us to see the landscape of English industrialisation? Who but photographer Eric de Maré[24] consolidated the 1960s view of the same industrial landscape? Who but architects Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown[25] have shown us how to see the urban landscape of Las Vegas?

Deliberately, none of the selected examples refer to what we could expect from the European landscape tradition that considers a natural, pleasant place. Architecture historian Antoine Picon defined as "anxious" the landscape of the current "endless cities"[26] where the outskirts are saturated with technological infrastructure, much of which is obsolete. Picon described this new landscape: "In a city without perceptible limits, completely devoted to mass consumption and its consequences, the contrast between commercial spaces and garbage dumps might well have replaced — on a level more symbolic than real, of course — the old opposition between center and periphery".[27]

20. Oscar *Wilde*, "The Decay of Lying: An Observation", in *Intentions*, New York, Brentano's, 1905, p. 39.

21. Wilde, "The Decay of..." p. 40.

22. Wilde, "The Decay of..." p. 41.

23. Francis D. Klingender, *Art and the Industrial Revolution*, London, Noel Carrington, 1947.

24. James M. Richards and Eric de Maré, *The Functional Tradition in Early Industrial Buildings*, London, The Architectural Press, 1958.

25. Robert Venturi, Steven Izenour & Denise Scott Brown. *Learning from Las Vegas*. Cambridge, MA, The MIT Press, 1972.

26. Antoine Picon, "Anxious Landscapes: From the Ruin to Rust", translated by Karen Bates, *Grey Room*, 1, 2000, p. 64-83.

27. Picon, "Anxious Landscapes: From..." p. 75.

We accompany this text with two examples that explore the possibilities of cinematographic fiction and photographic reporting to renew ways of looking at architecture or constructing landscapes (see boxes 2 and 3).

The subjective construction of the landscape does not exclude the multidisciplinary approach of sciences such as geography, ecology, anthropology, landscape architecture, history or archaeology. For example, from 1991, English Heritage promoted the Historic Landscape Characterisation approach[28] as an extension of archaeological methods. This approach has a strong focus on managing continuous change in the English landscape — Lynch's insight is again relevant here — considered as material culture. The method adopts the definition of landscape in the *European Landscape Convention* (2000): "'Landscape' means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors".[29] Hence, the entire territory is studied systematically, because everything would be landscape, including the anxious landscape that Picon mentioned. With the help of geographic information systems (GIS), it has been possible to map the natural landscape as well as urban landscapes such as the metropolitan county of Merseyside[30] or Barcelona Metropolitan Area[31], with very revealing results.

Faced with the historic urban landscape approach

At the same time, discussion on the new city's impact on historic city centres was promoted by the *Vienna Memorandum* (2005).[32] This document brought the idea of protecting the landscape to the forefront of the debate on the historic city. This was not an entirely new topic. For example, in London, rules called "St. Paul's Heights" have protected local views of St Paul's Cathedral since as early as 1938. The current rules, "Protected Views", do not allow the construction of high-rise office buildings that block views of the cathedral from various perspectives.[33] In this context, in 2012, UNESCO took elements discussed in the Vienna

28. Jo Clark, John Darlington & Graham J. Fairclough, *Using Historic Landscape Characterisation*, s. l., English Heritage, Lancashire County Council, 2004.

29. *European Landscape Convention: Florence, 20.X.2000: European Treaty Series-No. 176*, s. l., Council of Europe, 2000, article 1.

30. https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/historic-character-of-merseyside accessed 27 June 2020. Merseyside Historic Characterisation Project. Museum of Liverpool, 2011.

31. Pere Sala & Jordi Grau (eds.), *Catàleg de Paisatge: La Regió Metropolitana de Barcelona*, Barcelona, Generalitat de Catalunya, Diputació de Barcelona, Observatori del Paisatge, 2017.

32. *Vienna Memorandum on World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture: Managing the Historic Urban Landscape*, s. l., UNESCO, 2005.

33. Peter Wynne Rees & Philip Everett, *City of London: Protected Views: Supplementary Planning Document: Adopted 31st January 2012*, London, Department of the Built Environment, City of London Corporation, 2011.

Memorandum, reviewed them and applied part of the methods to the city, in an approach called Historic Urban Landscape.[34] The expression was chosen to condense in the broad concept of landscape the complexity of two phenomena: the necessary conservation of urban heritage and the inevitable dynamics of urban change.[35] However, bringing together three such consolidated words in one very ambitious phrase could create a certain amount of confusion. Immediately, controversy broke out in the heart of ICOMOS international. The outgoing president, German art historian Michael Petzet, was sceptical: "Those who as conservationists have been fighting at least for a certain continuity, as expressed in the conservation of monuments and sites, might even assume that the slogan "tolerance for change" is already a sign that neo-liberal tendencies which have caused the present economic disaster, are playing a certain role".[36] In contrast, the incoming president, US architect Gustavo F. Araoz, defended the Historic Urban Landscape approach as a necessary change of direction, despite the risk of biased interpretations: "an important cultural value of the historic city rests precisely upon its ability to be in a constant evolution, where forms, space and uses are always adapting to replace obsolescence with functionality. This gives rise to the paradox — or perhaps the oxymoron — of the concept of preserving the ability to change".[37] Both positions are understandable and, like almost everything in life, the correct application of this approach will depend on decision-makers' capacity for critical judgement, based on a careful assessment of each specific case.[38]

This could be one of the potential conceptual frameworks in which to insert the activity of a city museum in coming years. The Historic Urban Landscape approach continues to make its way and improve strategies and tools.[39] For this reason, it seems that city museums should consider its principles, as

34. "Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape", in *Records of the General Conference, 36th Session, Paris, 25 October-10 November 2011, v. 1: Resolutions*, Paris, UNESCO, 2012, p. 50-55.

35. Francesco Bandarin & Ron Van Oers, *The Historic Urban Landscape: Managing Heritage in an Urban Century*, Chichester, Wiley Blackwell, 2012.

36. Michael Petzet, "Conservation or managing change?", in *International Principles of Preservation*, Paris, ICOMOS, 2009, p. 10-12.

37. Gustavo F. Araoz, "Preserving Heritage Places under a New Paradigm", *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development*, 1, 1, May 2011, p. 55-60.

38. Jukka Jokilehto, "Reflection on Historic Urban Landscapes as a Tool for Conservation", in Ron Van Oers & Sachiko Haraguchi (eds.), *Managing Historic Cities*, Paris, UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2010, pp 53-63; Jukka Jokilehto, "Notes on the Definition and Safeguarding of HUL", *City & Time*, 4, 3, 2010, p. 41-51.

39. Ana Pereira Roders and Francesco Bandarin (eds.), *Reshaping Urban Conservation: The Historic Urban Landscape Approach in Action*, New York, Springer, 2018; Julia Rey-Pérez and Ana Pereira Roders, "Historic Urban Landscape: A Systematic Review, Eight Years after the Adoption of the HUL Approach", *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development*, 10, 3, March 2020, p. 233-258.

they could become a very valuable stakeholder in the discussion on the "limits of acceptable change" (see box 4).[40] That is why we asked at the start: What time is this place? It probably has many layers of time, so we should again stress Kevin Lynch's point: at the most, we could be capable of managing transitions!

BOX 1

And if even the monuments change?

Saint-Sernin of Toulouse, a French Romanesque masterpiece that has been on the World Heritage list since 1998, was restored by Viollet-le Duc (1845, 1859-1879) with the idea of recovering the contour of the original roofs. As the years passed, the stone used in the restoration had deteriorated. Architect Yves Boiret asked whether Viollet-le-Duc's work should be restored or whether the basilica's image before the 19th-century restoration should be recovered based on what was shown in old engravings, which were the only credible document. Boiret decided to undo the restoration (1980 and 1995), but in Toulouse there was no memory of any other Saint-Sernin. For a hundred years, all the postcards had shown the monument in the form that it had been given by Viollet-le-Duc; why change the postcards now?

https://doi.org/10.4000/lha.210

Saint Sernin of Toulouse restored by Viollet-le-Duc, before being unrestored by Yves Boiret. Photo: Ramon Graus Collection, Barcelona

40. Bandarin & Van Oers, *The Historic Urban...* p. 193.

BOX 2

The use of cinematographic language to focus on architectural heritage

How can the value of Barcelona's architectural heritage be shown without detaching it from the present? The filmmaker Carme Puche-Moré proposed a narrative with eight citizens of Barcelona who acted as guides and left some clues on the city's streets to help people to see the architecture. For example, a girl carrying a folder walks along next to the back of the cathedral. The shot changes, and now she is in front of the cathedral putting a large-format photograph on the ground. It is the unfinished gothic façade. The before and after. Suddenly, you discover that the façade, which has been there forever, is only a hundred years old. This is the path of the exhibition Barcelona Flashback by the Museum of the History of Barcelona (MUHBA) to connect the museum with the living city.

https://youtu.be/3Q3CfOHQfe0

Carme Puche-Moré, *Architecture in Barcelona: Urban mirror, seven looks*, 2019. Stills 3:05, 3:25, 3:32 and 3:40. MUHBA, Barcelona

BOX 3

Create urban landscapes

The profound changes in post-Olympic Barcelona sparked a far-reaching initiative in the Institut Barri Besòs secondary school and the Fòrum de la Ribera del Besòs: an exhibition and a book entitled *Barcelona vista del Besòs* (Barcelona, Besòs view). The Besòs is a river, but it is also the neighbourhoods beside the river. Between 1999 and 2008, geographer Joan Roca and photographer Patrick Faigenbaum gradually, radically photographed them and managed to change the predominant centre-suburb view. The first photographs were presented in 1999 at the *Des territoires* seminars in Paris, promoted by Jean-François Chevrier, and at *La ville en récits* in Brussels. Roca and Faigenbaum have created an urban landscape because they have taught how to look at the city in a new way.

https://www.barcelona.cat/museuhistoria/sites/default/files/bcnbesos.pdf [accessed 10/02/2022]

Patrick Faigenbaum & Joan Roca. *Barcelona vista del Besòs*. Edited by Jean-François Chevrier and Jorge Ribalta. Barcelona: Museu d'Història de Barcelona (MUHBA), [La Virreina] Centre de la Imatge, 2018, p. 110-111

BOX 4

Participate in the entire process of protecting the cultural environment

The Finnish legal framework for protecting urban heritage gives a very relevant role to city museums (Antiquities Act 1963, Land Use and Building Act 1999, Act on the Protection of Buildings 2010). Thus, the Helsinki City Museum is the authority for the conservation of built heritage, archaeological heritage and cultural landscape in Helsinki and in six other municipalities of Central Uusimaa. Its Cultural Environment Department carries out historical and archaeological research, inventories, official statements (for example, on building and demolition licences) and protects the built environment. This organisational proposal brings together the criteria of collecting artefacts and that of buildings and sites and forces the city to balance criteria of the city planning departments.

https://www.helsinginkaupunginmuseo.fi/en/pictures-objects-helsinki/cultural-environment/ [accessed 10/07/2022]

Inventory of modern buildings in the centre of Helsinki. Aura Kivilaakso, *Kun Helsinkiin Rakennettiin City: Keskustan Vuosina 1945-1990 Valmistuneet Liikerakennukset*, Helsinki, Helsingin Kaupunginmuseo, 2014, p. 8

The impact of digital formats on city museums: displaying, creating heritage and mobilising cities and citizens

Rosa Tamborrino

Recent changes in museums encompass the use of digital technology to display collections, create narratives and engage visitors. They also include ways of shaping new knowledge through innovative practices. Beyond preserving and exhibiting their collections, museums have become complex engines of culture that develop research, create new kinds of collections and promote social engagement and participation. The creation and implementation of digital formats involves deep transformation. Methods for sharing heritage are joined by societal challenges, such as democratisation and sustainability.

Novel formats can be especially disruptive in city museums, as narratives shape meanings across our living cities. While cities are embedded in the globalisation process, the methods with which city museums are using and focusing their collections concern the contemporary construction of the past and the diversity of urban identities. Questioning formats reveal how city museums are generating cultural strategies by managing their collections and shaping a response to societal and cultural developments.

The increase in audience and public engagement are key objectives to which digital approaches contribute for all kind of cultural institutions. However, curatorship, approaches, tools, and socio-cultural-economic impact account for specific challenges in the case of city museums. Strong relationships link these museums to their territory. Urban space and heritage as well as local developments and public wellbeing are crucial. Current museum formats range from integrating permanent collections and temporary exhibitions with virtual environments to online visitor engagement, from archives and digitally-created collections, to public events and webinars; from formats for training/educating/fun to formats for "recovering". The digital approach is a crosscutting perspective, embedded in the impact of museums on our digital society.

Making history in museums and creating heritage digitally

In recent decades, digital methods have increasingly infiltrated museum approaches and practices. At the most basic level, they are used to digitise heritage collections. Digital technologies have also given museums new ways of displaying and expanding, as well as creating new collections. They include public engagement formats and education programmes. In short, the digital approach

Visitors interact with digital outfitting at Museum of London. Photo: Rosa Tamborrino[1]

is strongly changing museum practices in both exhibition and collection management. It is also affecting how objects coexist with data systems in databases, on websites and in museum galleries.

Digital formats have moved to city museums from other heritage fields (particularly archaeology) where they were first used to entertain visitors, improving the understanding of objects from ancient civilisations.[2] In city

1. Cf. Matthew Battles & Michael Maizels, "Collections And/of Data: Art History and the Art Museum in the DH Mode", in Matthew K. Gold & Lauren F. Klein (eds.) *Debates in the Digital Humanities* Minneapolis; London, University of Minnesota Press, 2016, p. 325-44. Accessed 8 February 2021. doi:10.5749/j.ctt1cn6thb.30.

2. Cf. Sebastian Hageneuer, Sophie C. Schmidt, "Introduction" in Sebastian Hageneuer (ed.) *Communicating the Past in the Digital Age: Proceedings of the International Conference on Digital Methods in Teaching and Learning in Archaeology (12-13 October 2018)*, London, Ubiquity Press, 2020. Accessed 8 February 2021. See also Adolfo Muñoz & Ana Martí, "New Storytelling for Archaeological Museums Based on Augmented Reality Glasses", p. 85-100.

museums, turning digital fosters a novel approach to making urban history and identifying urban heritage.[3] Favourite digital formats seem to be narrative and story-based approaches,[4] which allow them to collect urban memories, enlarging and integrating their original collection with digital born collections (which have no storage issues and can be easily re-used). By integrating exhibitions with digital formats and encouraging people to contribute their own evidence and stories, city museums aim to offer a plural historical perspective.

Digital methods are already in use across parallel academic fields of humanities and social sciences and have fostered new approaches to urban history. In classrooms and museums, digital formats display virtual reconstructions and push dynamic visions of cities. They emphasise past events and changes as a component of urban history.[5] The introduction of digital media also fosters another format, enabling the explicit link with sources and the simultaneous coexisting of different interpretations of historical and material data. They enable non-linear narratives.[6]

Digital transformation initiates a change beyond the museum's mission as a storyteller. It involves a "shift in the positioning of audiences from cultural consumers to cultural producers."[7] This shift not only concerns how digital formats display data but also how they enable other narratives and interactive behaviours.[8] It is especially relevant in city museums because of the immediate link of urban stories with our current civic life. Beside exhibiting the past, these formats play a role in collective memory-making across conflicts and

3. Cf. R. Tamborrino, "The city on display: 'entering' urban history", Donatella Calabi (ed.) *Built city, designed city, virtual city. The museum of the city*, Rome, CROMA Università degli studi di Roma Tre, 2013, p. 35-55.

4. On the matter of digital storytelling see Joe Lambert, *Capturing Lives, Creating Community*, London, Routledge (2009) revised edition 2018. Together with Dana Atchley the author founded the Center of Digital Storytelling at Berkeley University and the digital storytelling movement, https://digitalstorytelling.coe.uh.edu/page.cfm?id=27&cid=27&sublinkid=31 Accessed 8 March 2021. See also some other developments at Story Center website, https://www.storycenter.org/

5. Cf. Sven Dupré, Anna Harris, Julia Kursell, Patricia Lulof, & Maartje Stols-Witlox (eds.), *Reconstruction, Replication and Re-enactment in the Humanities and Social Sciences*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2020. Accessed 10 February 2021.

6. Hageneuer (ed.), *Communicating the Past...*

7. Rhiannon Bettivia & Elizabeth Stainforth, "The Dynamics of Scale in Digital Heritage Cultures" in Tuuli Lähdesmäki, Thomas Suzie & Zhu Yujie (eds.) *Politics of Scale: New Directions in Critical Heritage Studies*, New York, Oxford, Berghahn Books, 2019, p. 50-62. Accessed 8 February 2021.

8. Ian Gwilt, Patrick Mcentaggart, Melanie Levick-Parkin & Jonathan Wood, "Enhancing Museum Visits through the Creation of Data Visualisation to Support the Recording and Sharing of Experiences", in Simon Popple, Andrew Prescott & Daniel H. Mutibwa, *Communities, Archives and New Collaborative Practices* (eds.), Bristol, Bristol University Press, 2020, p. 123-38. Accessed 7 February 2021.

Digital terminal and workstation for visitors at Historische Museum Frankfurt. Photo: Rosa Tamborrino

changes in cities and the lives of their people, affecting controversial memories and memory removal.[9]

Digital formats can be quite expensive for city museums, which rely heavily on municipal support. Are digital methods really changing the face of city museums? How do digital formats affect urban memory building? Do participatory processes, community, and "openness" really have an impact? These questions have taken our survey to European city museums and beyond. The

9. See the Red Location Museum of Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality devoted to apartheid in South Africa. Cf. Naomi Roux, "Memorial Constructions: The Red Location Cultural Precinct" in *Remaking the Urban: Heritage and Transformation in Nelson Mandela Bay*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2021, p. 33-83. See also Moniek Driesse, "Mapping traditions: a dynamic notion of urban heritage and the changing role of the city museum", *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* 30, 1, 2018, p. 87 accessed 3/14/2021.

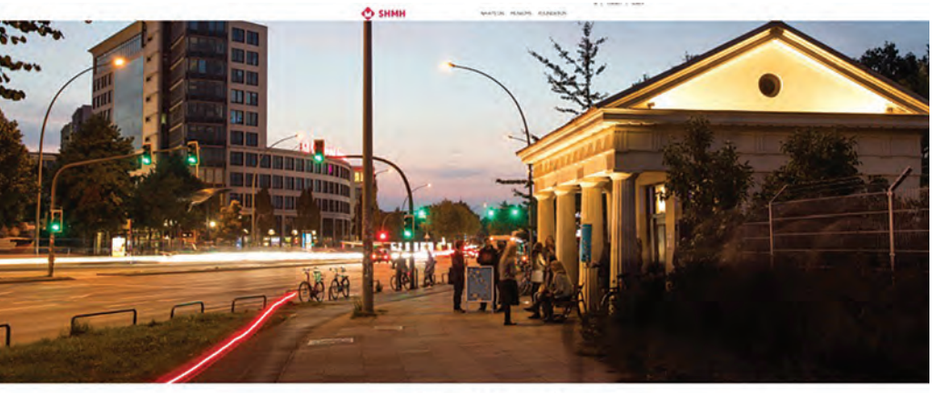
Video cabin for collecting collective memories at Historische Museum Frankfurt. Photo: Rosa Tamborrino

survey has been conducted through a literature review, various visits just before the pandemic, and museum websites. This analysis also benefits from research and meetings during recent collaboration with city museums.[10] Some data and reflection are provided below.

The recent new exhibition at the refurbished Historische Museum Frankfurt provides an updated good practice example of a general reconsideration of museum narratives which encompasses traditional and digital formats.

The permanent exhibition in situ is chronological and thematic, and pays attention to issues that emphasise the highlights of urban history and some problematic crossroads. It should be noted that a limited number of museum pieces are

10. Several meetings organised by the Museum of Barcelona of the intersectoral group History City Museum and Research Network of Europe, and debates conducted by its director, Juan Roca, offered a chance to reflect through a comparative perspective.



Millernton Guard House Museum of Oral History from the website of Stiftung Historische Museen Hamburg. Accessed 01/04/2021 https://shmh.de/en/millerntor-guard-house

displayed to create a dense narrative. In parallel with the collection, the museum has devoted extensive space (ca 600m² entitled *Frankfurt Now*) to new projects that create collaborative stories. New stories are clearly shown as ongoing curated projects of the *CityLab* format: they have specific focus and designated positions.

The *CityLab* in the museum is complemented by two other formats: a street-format (which triggered the others) taking curators outside the museums to meet people on the streets, and a *Digital CityLab* in the form of a digital platform where users can expand the collected and geolocated information. Invited users are expected to be the people of Frankfurt.[11] A department of expert staff is available for this purpose.[12]

Digital formats for crowdsourcing and/or participatory projects have been undertaken by several city museums in the last few years. Some museums foster online projects while others prefer to focus on real urban space, encouraging people to physically interact with the museum and the city. The Hamburg Museum represents a case of museums devoting a special urban site to engaging visitors in a project for the construction of a new oral history collection. Shown

11. This web page and the urban city map navigation contents are in German only. Cf. https://stadtlabor-digital.de/de/stadtlabor-digital?language=en accessed 8/3/2021. Historische Museum Frankfurt, Digital City lab.

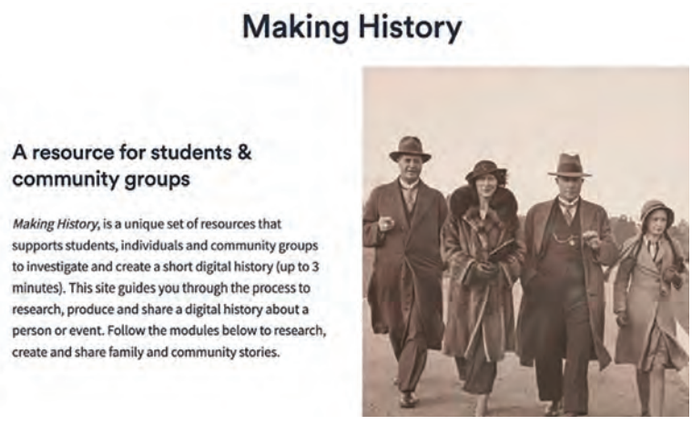
12. I would like to thank the director, Jan Gerchow, for the visit and our discussion on the matter of the new setup, together with my colleague from Antwerpen University, Peter Stabel, in December 2019.

Detail of the book cover of *Lyon sur le divan* (Gadagne Musées, Libel éditions, 2017) with an urban image portraying Lyon produced at the occasion of the campaign

in the presentation on the museum website, the neoclassical Millerntorwache, is a guard house which was once part of the city walls, and this site is a component of this city museum-visitor interaction.

Visiting "a piece" of living urban heritage establishes the first contact. Contributors can arrange appointments to deliver their private memories about urban past events that they have witnessed.[13] By moving from an historical reconstruction of the event to its perception ("How does it feel if you are caught up in a catastrophe in the middle of a cold night in February?"), these kinds of museum stories are also supporting a people-centred approach to disaster and social resilience. Moreover, people-centred projects encourage reflecting on changes of urban image perception. The campaign *Lyon sur le divan* in 2017 encouraged citizens to discuss with researchers of the National Agency of Urban

13. The project is located in the neoclassical Millerntorwache, a guard house which was once part of the city walls. It identifies this "cosy place" to invite citizens "to share their personal memories and to listen to others". https://shmh.de/en/millerntor-guard-house accessed 7/2/2021 Stiftung Historische Museen Hamburg, Millerntor Guard House.



The online format "Making History" developed by Victoria Museums as it appears at museum website, https://museumsvictoria.com.au/learning/making-history/1-introduction-to-digital-history/accessed 29/1/2021

Psychology (by sitting in a sofa in the middle of the city) and to draw their own portrait of the city. The following exhibition, organised by the Musée de Histoire de Lyon, added a "et pour vous?" asking visitors' points of views.

As a parallel path, *"Making history: research, create, share"*, created by Australia's Victoria Museum, is an online format made available through its website.[14] It enables users or a group of users to create their own family or community story based on a set of resources provided by the museum's digital archive.

Digital formats also question the figure of the format's curator. By engaging people, city museums are enabled (or would enable) non-linear format in order to create a plural urban perspective in today's multicultural multi-ethnic cities. Accordingly, the curator becomes a cultural mediator. *Cleveland Historical* is a format developed by the Center for Public History and Digital Humanities that suggests a new kind of curation.[15] It provides a transformative way of understanding "the place" in cities.[16] In this collaborative oral history project,

14. Cf. "Making History", the online format developed by Victoria Museums https://museumsvictoria.com.au/learning/making-history/1-introduction-to-digital-history/ accessed 29/1/2021. Victoria Museums introduction to digital history. It includes Melbourne Museum and other museums, such as Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre. The online format allows the use of a set of resources, supporting students, individuals and community groups with investigating and creating a short digital history. https://museumsvictoria.com.au/learning/making-history/.

15. Cleveland Historical website Cf. https://clevelandhistorical.org/ accessed 4/1/2021.

16. Mark Tebeau, "Listening to the City: Oral History and Place in the Digital Era", *The Oral History Review*, 40, 1, 2013, p. 25-35. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43863453 accessed 8/2/2021.

the community actively participates in reworking understandings of places and community identity.

The German museums mentioned above foster gradual engagement to increase awareness in citizens as witnesses and experts of their city, contributing to the museum collection. The Cleveland perspective focuses more on people as users of urban space. The Victoria Museum's approach combines collecting and displaying with educational activities. It bases its online potential on oral history videos and classrooms.

The formats target people/users of all provenance, age and genders. Their engagement with events contemporary to their lives as well as the focus on subjectiveness aim to build a new narrative of urban heritage. This approach overcomes urban identity as a notion based only on the specificity of city history and traditions, taking into account the sense of belonging and cultural identity[17] provided by collective memories that shape current urban identities, both in practices and players with different backgrounds.

Not only do these new formats impact the urban heritage on display by incorporating different storytelling, they also influence novel teaching/learning approaches. Open-ended narrative and egalitarian dialectic have an enormous impact on education formats. Some parallel aspects have been identified both in museum practices and in digital humanities scholarships.

On one hand, authors have identified a kind of *performative format*. The activation of digitally enabled doing has been described as a form of "enactment" (Parry 2019; Dupré 2020). This term, pertinent to theatre and music, frequently recurs in digital humanities relating to the "senses of action" of its approach.[18] The same recurrence and meaning characterises forms of education and public engagement that bring "bodily knowledge and sensory skills" to classrooms and museums.[19]

On the other hand, city museum practices and digital humanities methodologies share data-driven rebuilding processes that require technological

17. The recommendations of international organisations such as UNESCO and ICOMOS underline the need to include plural identities and intercultural dialogue by fostering the notion of "belonging" rather than identity. Examples include the integration of the concept of "cultural significance" in the Burra Charter (ICOMOS, 1979, Burra Charter. https://australia.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/Burra-Charter_1979.pdf). Cf. UNESCO (2015), Recommendation Concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, Their Diversity and Their Role in Society. Available online http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/museums/recommendation-on-the-protection-and-promotion-of-museums-and-collections/.

18. See Kyle Parry, "Reading for Enactment: A Performative Approach to Digital Scholarship and Data Visualization" in Gold & Klein *Debates in the Digital Humanities...*, p. 141-60. See also Elisa Mandelli, *The Museum as a Cinematic Space: The Display of Moving Images in Exhibitions*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2019. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctvnjbh8k accessed 2/7/2021.

19. Cf. Dupré, Harris, Kursell, Lulof & Stols-Witlox (eds.), *Reconstruction, Replication and Re-enactment...*

Visitors at the digital terminal of the Museum of Liverpool. Photo: Rosa Tamborrino

supports. The Museum of Liverpool, for instance, offers a multimedia approach to listening for music groups, immersive panorama projection to experience a football game, and a designated place where visitors become users of a digital platform to explore in situ geolocated contents and search for place-related contents in the museum database.

The content in question appears "computationally domesticated to the database".[20] Moreover these emerging models also implicate new methods for assessing the social impact and public mission of museum.[21]

The pandemic formats: the portrait of time

Since the 1990s and the launch of the first museum websites, museums have developed new channels to engage their public.[22] Museums publish data on the Internet

20. Battles & Maizels, "Collections And/of Data...", p. 334.

21. Cf. Enrico Bertacchini & Federico Morando, "The Future of Museums in the Digital Age: New Models for Access to and Use of Digital Collections", *International Journal of Arts Management* 15, 2, 2013, p. 60-72. Accessed 7, 2, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/24587113.

22. Cf. Caitlin Chien Clerkin & L. Taylor Bradley, "Online Encounters with Museum Antiquities", *American Journal of Archaeology* 125, 1, 2021, p. 165-75.

and in closed networks (intranets) for their visitors. However, most museums have not fully benefited from this tool as a new kind of cultural online offer until now.

In many cases, city museum websites are just a component of municipal websites. The Museo de Historia de Madrid provides an interesting example.[23] There are two web developments. The double path appears as a way to underline a choice by creating certain specifications. The city's official tourism website provides some information on the city museum in Spanish and English.[24] The municipal website integrates the museum's online offer into urban life. Monthly museum curators introduce "a piece", linking it to the related urban heritage site and pertinent documentation. The Musée de Histoire de Lyon does something similar. A new city museum website was recently launched, offering details of programmes, projects and curators involved in the remaking of the museum as well as webinars.[25]

In other cases, online formats interact with onsite museum formats. Following the digitisation of the Amsterdam Museum's entire collection, the museum decided to make everything accessible online. This gives people an insight into the complete collections of both the Amsterdam Museum and Museum Willet-Holthuysen, and the museum is free to be more selective in the presentation of its collection in the permanent exhibition (90% of the pieces are not on display in the museum but clearly visible online).[26] The museum asks researchers and members of the public for contributions. Online visitors are asked for their "assistance" item by item, with comments and suggestions. There are some difficulties in the transition between the objects and their immaterial representation, involving the distinction between real and digital formats (museum collection and digital libraries). Linguistically too, the call mentions "piece" while it actually means data.

In general, even if they have their own website, city museums usually see it as a tool for reaching the public instead of a format. Social media also had been mostly used to spread information rather than analyse it. The development of a real platform to meet people and deal with the museum mission in a new

23. Cf. https://www.madrid.es/portales/munimadrid/es/Inicio/Cultura-ocio-y-deporte/Cultura-y-ocio/Museo-de-Historia-de-Madrid?vgnextfmt=default&vgnextoid=ab18a1ead63ab010VgnVCM100000d90ca8c0RCRD&vgnextchannel=c937f073808fe410VgnVCM2000000c205a0aRCRD. Accessed 6, 2, 2021 Madrid municipality web site Museo de Historia de Madrid.

24. Cf. Madrid official tourism website https://www.esmadrid.com/en/tourist-information/museo-de-historia.

25. Cf. https://www.gadagne-lyon.fr/ Accessed 6, 2, 2021 Musée de Lyon-Gadagne Cf, also https://www.lyon-france.com/Je-decouvre-Lyon/culture-et-musees/musees/musee-d-histoire-de-lyon-musees-gadagne only Lyon Musée d'Histoire de Lyon-Musées Gadagne.

26. Cf. Amsterdam Museum official website, https://www.amsterdammuseum.nl/en/collection/online-collection accessed 26, 1, 2021 Amsterdam Museum Online Collection.

digital environment requires expertise and investments, and online tools have been used poorly due to their novel disruptive potential.

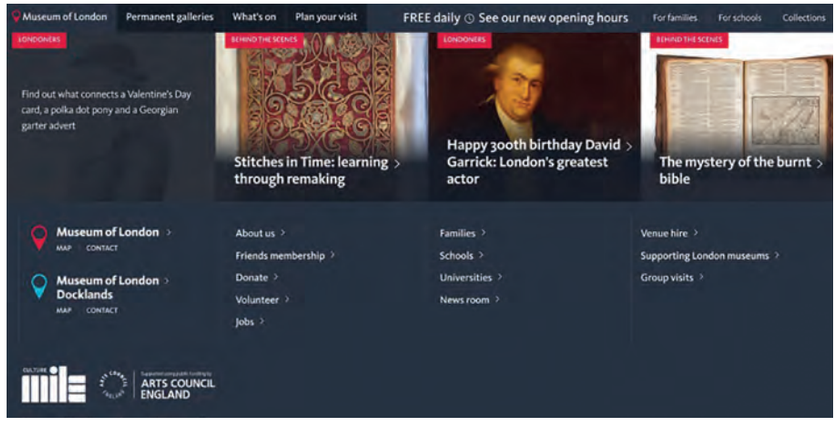
However, while online educational formats were seen by authors as still needing to be explored and the museums' learning-centred approach still had to be transferred to the web,[27] the COVID-19 pandemic suddenly encouraged new online curation formats. City museums using digital technologies have made huge progress in making their collections and narratives digitally accessible over the last year. Two kinds of format are currently in use: synchronous technologies such as live webinars and online digital archives, along with collaborative environments where you can interact and create a sense of community. The first makes resources available to visitors for their entertainment, while interactive formats aim to go beyond the notion of "visitors" and actively engage people in creating.

In March 2020, in Italy, with the first lockdown in the world a new need for an online cultural offering arose. While cultural institutions were closing, some of them felt the need to offer a "comfort format" to encourage people to stay at home with virtual public entertainment. Despite a lack of digitisation of Italian museums, they set to work creating formats to "re-open online" in response to the dramatic situation. I call this response a *new pandemic format* which provided evidence of cultural and social resilience.

The ongoing Italian project MNEMONIC — by Politecnico di Torino in partnership with Fondazione Polo del 900 — will provide a digital platform to collect "the memory of the present" and offer Italian museums productions and collectively changed uses of urban and marginal spaces in locked-down Italy.[28] Unlike elsewhere in Europe, Italy's urban heritage is spread among a myriad of museums. The online platform will allow the networking of the current digital and real-world transformations of urban heritage practices by mapping formats (tools, interactions, stakeholders) in Italian cities and cultural institutions as a form of urban resilience. The final *MNEMONIC Atlas* aims to know more about new ways "to make and provide" heritage, culture, entertainment, education at the time of the pandemic era.

27. William B. Crow & Herminia Din, "The Educational and Economic Value of Online Learning for Museums". *The Journal of Museum Education* 35, 2, 2010, p. 161-72 (p. 162). http://www.jstor.org/stable/25801345 accessed 2/9/ 2021.

28. MNEOMONC is a research project (coordinated by the author of this paper) by the Department of Urban and Regional Studies and Planning in partnership with Fondazione Polo del 900. The foundation is a museum and cultural center in Turin clustering 22 Turin cultural institutions. MNEMONIC website http://www.mnemonic.polito.it/. The project was launched in July 2020 and is supported by Politecnico di Torino. It follows the initial observation of changes in the use of private, collective and public spaces since the beginnings of lockdown in Italy. Cf. R. Tamborrino, "Coronavirus: locked-down Italy's changing urban space", *The Conversation*, 20 March 2020, https://theconversation.com/coronavirus-locked-down-italys-changing-urban-space-133827. accessed 2/11/2021.



Museum of London website, some online digital formats at https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/discover/emma-hamiltons-copy-haydns-creation accessed 01/04/2021

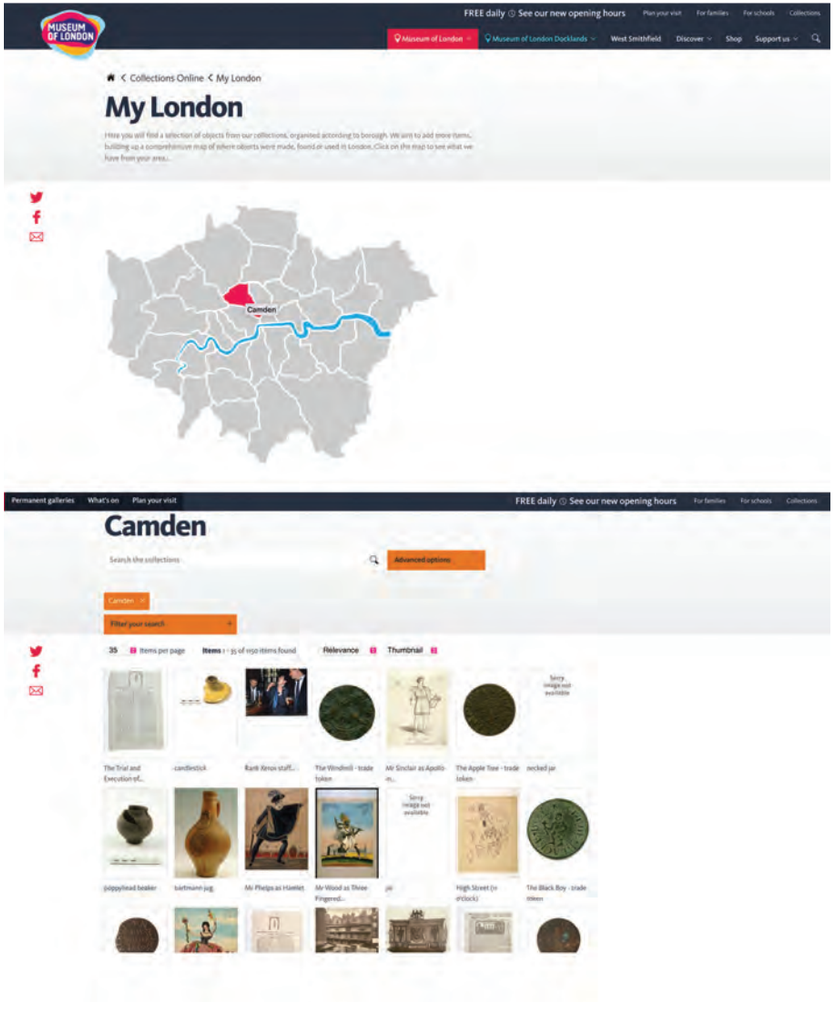
The spread of the pandemic around the world has generated the offer of special online formats everywhere. Several city museums are "open online with loads of content to keep you entertained".[29] The Museum of London website offers several online exhibitions on various aspects of urban history, such as fashion, the Roman period, black history, Londoners, Hidden London; the *Behind the scenes* is a container-format that also offers access to a series of online exhibitions.

My London format groups together items from the museum collections linkig them to urban boroughs.

The offer is continuously updated and formats are reorganised. Since January 2021, the museum has also been acquiring "viral tweets for collecting COVID-19".[30] Users of the Wien Museum website can visit the online *"History and City Life Collection"* searching through 53,195 "items reflecting the cultural, political, social, economic and day-to-day history of Vienna from 1500 to the present day". Alternatively, they can access visual stories in the form of digital *Albums*. These digital formats are among the most articulate and eclectic online materials offered by city museums, with thirty Albums on Vienna, the Viennese, and art from

29. Cf. Museum of London website, https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/museum-london accessed 2/11/2021 Museum of London.

30. The format is a part of the project *Going Viral*. https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/news-room/press-releases/museum-london-acquires-tweets accessed 3/13/2021 Museum of London acquires "viral" tweets for collecting COVID-19, 28 January 2021.



Camden collection in My London format at the Museum of London website https://collections.museumoflondon.org.uk/online/boroughs/accessed 01/04/2021

different periods, displayed in random order.[31] The Helsinki Museum website lets you browse the collection of photographs, art and objects. It also offers *Finna* as a special collaborative project to survey Finland's streets. The Marseille Museum offers a virtual visit of the city through a 3D interactive map and a chance to discover its history through a timeline.[32] *When Corona goes to the museum* is the concept around which Ljubljana Museum has created its new special pandemic format. The *Corona Project* is a call for the local community to describe how the pandemic has changed "our households, workplaces and leisure activities".[33]

Other developments are shown by the Luxembourg Museum website as a consequence of a constantly changing situation that requires short-term adaptation. As the exhibition *Fouillez les archives/Browse through the city archive* cannot be visited because of COVID-19 restrictions, a short video behind the scenes of the exhibition is available. The interactive format, *Discover the exhibition in 3D*, enables a visit to the real exhibition in a virtual environment. The Virtual Reality method is also available with the use of Oculus and intense interaction with the tool is encouraged, offering the chance to zoom in and out on objects and captions.[34]

Conclusions

If the history of the city is on display in the museum, the living city seems to be more and more the real subject of museum formats nowadays. Introducing the book *Museums Inside Out*, its editor asks "Where does the museum end and the outside world begin?"[35]

Formats capable of creating direct interactions between museum heritage and urban heritage in urban space (the city which hosts the museum) are provided by Apps. By downloading the Marseille museum website app, some *Historical Journeys of Marseille* are enabled to experience open-air urban heritage.[36]

31. Thirty individual short *Albums* in digital format are listed in random order (enabled by the chronology of their creation). However, some themes can be recognised: some *Albums* focus on objects (shields, watches, money, death masks, shadow plays, fans), others are monographic portraits of artists (painters, musicians, engravers, artistic directors, graphic artists, photographers), others socio-architectural (such as cafés, cards, 18th-century Viennese buildings and urban space), socio-political (barricades, production by female artists, avant-garde). Wien Museum website. https://www.wienmuseum.at/en/collections/history-and-city-life. accessed 3/3/2021.

32. Cf. https://www.musee-histoire-marseille-voie-historique.fr/fr accessed 2/3/2021 Musée de histoire de Marseille.

33. https://mgml.si/en/city-museum/exhibitions/518/corona-project/ accessed 2/3/2021 Lubjana Museum.

34. https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=zYcioJ8QBt6 accessed 3/2/2021 Lëtzebuerg City Museum.

35. Mark W. Rectanus, "Introduction: MOVING OUT" in *Museums Inside Out: Artist Collaborations and New Exhibition Ecologies*, Minneapolis; London, University of Minnesota Press, 2020, p. 1-26.

36. Thanks to augmented reality, the format allows users to visit the city "walking" in its history. Cf. https://www.musee-histoire-marseille-voie-historique.fr/visit/tools accessed 3/8/2021 Musée de Marseille.

However, beyond enacting a digital experience, digital transformation entails digital curatorial practices for "(re)negotiating identities, cultural revitalisation and economic development".[37] Among the different scales of heritage-making in recent years,[38] increasing awareness of urban heritage is related to its impact on local communities.

The digital world is an opportunity for democratisation and a challenge for designing new city museum developments. A critical approach to tools and formats as well as the integration of these formats in cultural and scientific standards are essential. A number of new formats have been rapidly produced under the pressure of current needs. Our analysis reveals uncertainty. Dating for digital products is always dubious, as is their curation. These oversights, together with ephemerality, are critical aspects of digital formats. There is also sometimes a lack of context (both physical and cultural). Some formats provide visual sequences (image galleries) to narrate the past, instead of providing historical interpretative narrative as a museum is expected to. The most interesting formats seems to be those created specifically for a digital environment. Once shaped, they are presented as containers of various exhibitions and activities. Being tools, they perform different functions to those of an exhibition in real life. User-friendly interfaces can enable more than a basic search in a database. The digital approach has to empower human vision, enhancing not only the use of a collection but the power of heritage itself. Networking museum digital formats could be an interesting perspective for questioning urban heritage.

In a publication on digital museum practice by the Frankfurt City Museum, the curator and senior advisor of digital museum practice, Marete Sanderhoff, has indicated the museum's "idea of Public Domain" as "the sum of human intellectual and creative efforts" to be used by everyone "how they please". Accordingly, the museum shares reproductions of works in the Public Domain free of restrictions. This clearly indicates that formats involve complex and relevant issues. In a digital society, curating is, more than ever before, a crucial aspect of cultural policies. Formats can position city museums as catalyzers of local and socio-cultural development or leave them at the mercy of change. The governance of formats capable of maintaining the museum's independent cultural and critical role is challenging. They need to be continuously explored and discussed.

37. Gregory Ashworth, "Interview" in Bryony Onciul, Michelle L. Stefano & Stephanie Hawke, *Engaging Heritage, Engaging Communities* (eds.), Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK; Rochester, NY, USA, Boydell & Brewer, 2017, p. 51-54.

38. Cf. Tuuli Lähdesmäki, Suzie Thomas & Yujie Zhu (eds.) *Politics of Scale...*

Itinerating, a different way of discovering the city

Manel Martín Pascual

Beyond local and national idiosyncracies, in the 21st-century, European cities are undergoing globalising processes and are trying to adapt to the challenges of the post-industrial technological revolution. The tensions generated are affecting diversity and social urban cohesion and the competition between metropolises in the global race to transform. This all makes it necessary to look for new reference parameters that can help us to learn to live with the new realities.

One of the important factors is the way we "view" cities. Citizens must learn about the historical evolution of the space where they live in a democratic and integrating way, without prejudices and without the exclusion of critical episodes. Cities must understand themselves and approach their past as a precondition to finding their place in the present and future global world.

Public authorities can do much in this regard, especially in the area of promoting culture. City history museums have a considerable responsibility, as they are charged by the public authorities with working for cohesion.[1] Therefore, when programming activities and when managing their heritage spaces, they must take into consideration today's functional and social urban complexity. City museums must reactivate the cultural assets that their cities' past provides them, they must interrelate and integrate the different scales of reflection and action, from the level of the city to the neighbourhoods and specific problems. At the same time, they must promote historical research and experiment with new ways of showing the city.[2] The historical reflection must be at the service of the citizens and of the social and cultural adhesion of the different groups that coexist in the urban space, whether the native population, new arrivals, or occasional visitors.[3] Museums must also explore formats that are transferrable in today's global world. Indeed, "city museums are growing up everywhere as museums of the citizens".[4]

1. Joan Roca i Albert, "Los riesgos de la nueva dimensión urbana", in Josep M. Montaner & Joan Subirats (coords.) *Repensar las políticas urbanas*, Coleción Estudios. Serie_Territorio 11. Barcelona, Diputació de Barcelona, (2012), p. 38-57.

2. Joan Roca i Albert, "Los riesgos de...".

3. Joan Roca i Albert, "Los riesgos de...".

4. Joan Roca i Albert, "Reinventar el Museu de Barcelona. Història urbana i democràcia cultural". *MUHBA Butlletí*, 33, 2017, p. 16-17.

The urban itinerary and the discovery of the city: to walk or to itinerate

The urban itinerary has become one of the main resources of organised urban leisure.[5] Institutions with responsibilities regarding cultural promotion and the companies and organisations that operate in the tourism industry offer a wide range of proposals: visiting emblematic monuments, travelling to the past by taking part in a dramatised visit, experiencing the excitement of a route through the scenes of novels, films or TV series, enjoying succulent gastronomic routes, discovering the magic and mystery of places and events with connotations of the marginality and delinquency of times past, now turned into romantic episodes, etc. The proliferation of urban tourism routes and the diversity of themes and formats is basically due to two reasons.

First, the trend in European mass tourism. In the late-20th century, the traditional view provided visitors with decontextualised contemplation in an academic and lecture-like form of the historical and monumental sites of urban centres. Today, a new, much more open and transversal idea of the itinerary is gaining ground. It is aimed at participative visitors seeking new experiences, attracted by alternative formats and sensitive to the sustainability, heritage and authenticity of the narrative provided.[6] Second, the need by public or private operators to make the touristic image of the city unique. In an increasingly global and competitive world, it is essential to provide content and experiences that cannot be found anywhere else and that define themselves as identifiers of the town in question.

This race for originality and economic sustainability has certain limitations. On one hand, if the aim is to respond to the supposed potential mass demand, we run the risk of designing routes with content that is not rooted in the urban cultural and historical substrate they claim to be showing.[7] On the other, failure to take into account the perspective of the users,[8] who are often clear about their priorities and are increasingly demanding of the service they

5. Andrea Manenti, "Relat urbà: Narrativa i representació d'itineraris historics", in *MUHBA Butlletí,* 28, 2013, p. 6.

6. López Fernández (2006), Martos-Pulido (2010) and Rojo Aguilar (2014). Indeed, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) stated in 1976 that the objective of cultural tourism was the knowledge of historical and artistic monuments and places. On the other hand, the Charter on Cultural Routes approved in Quebec (Canada) in 2008 by the General Assembly of ICOMOS established a much more transversal definition of cultural routes and emphasised the singular nature and authenticity of the historical, cultural and heritage values that make up the routes and the need to preserve their sustainability and conservation.

7. Javier Hernández Ramírez, "Los caminos del patrimonio. Rutas turísticas e itinerarios culturales". *Pasos. Revista de turismo y patrimonio cultural*. Vol. 9. No. 2, 2011, p. 225-236.

8. Carlos Rodríguez Carro, José-Pablo Abeal Vázquez, "El itinerario cultural urbano como producto turístico. El caso de Galicia". *International Journal of Scientific Managment Tourism*. Vol. 2, No. 2, 2016, p. 373-396.

receive.[9] Furthermore, many urban routes continue to use more or less traditional methodologies. In articulating their narrative, guides do not always provide tourists with the option to interact and so become mere intermediaries between the visitors and space being visited.[10] As a result, an insufficient relationship is established between the places on the route and the urban context that makes it possible to question or reflect on the interpretation of these places.[11] A paradigmatic example is the explanation sometimes given to thousands of tourists visiting Barcelona who visit the wonderful Casa Batlló, the Art Nouveau work by the world-famous architect, Antoni Gaudí. The undeniable artistic values the building holds are highlighted but little is often said about Mr. Batlló as the owner of a big textile factory in Barcelona, without whom it would not have been possible to finance the extraordinary work of Gaudí. Forgetting the world of the working classes, the social role of the middle classes and the factory production of Barcelona prevents visitors from gaining an understanding of the *modernista* architecture in front of them.

Trying not to fall into reductionist simplifications that turn itineraries into a simple stroll means seeking alternative approaches.[12] The principal fact is the change in the role the guides and the users of urban routes must play. We should question the form the itinerary should take, its potential for discovering the history and heritage of the city or for encouraging visitors to think.[13] We need to go from walking to itinerating. To make this possible, the following minimum conditions need to be taken into account.

First, the person taking the route, whether a native or a visitor, interprets the impressions they receive based on their life experiences and the preconceived ideas they have formed about the place they are visiting, and they will interrelate the new impressions and experiences with their own cultural baggage. This mechanism is intimate and personal, and should not be hampered by a decontextualised type of route full of prefabricated, supposedly stimulating, content. The itinerary methodology should be constructivist and based on the prior ideas of the user.[14]

9. Jesús Rojo Aguilar, "Un projecto de turismo cultural: el itinerario cultural "Los caminos de Ysabel" gestionado a través de una fundación". Facultad de Comercio, Universidad de Valladolid, Trabajo de final de Master, 2014.

10. Andrea Manenti, "Relat urbà: Narrativa...".

11. Joan Roca i Albert, "L'itinerari com a forma artística, la ciutat i la ciutadania" in *Tourismes. La derrota de la dissensió*. Barcelona, Fundació Antoni Tapies, 2004, p. 101-113.

12. ICOMOS (2008) clearly differentiates between cultural routes, with historical, authentic and proven contents and approaches, and cultural-touristic routes, which are products tailored to the tourism market. This distinction is also made by authors such as Hernández Ramírez (2011) & Arcila-López-Fernández (2015).

13. Andrea Manenti, "Relat urbà: Narrativa...".

14. Joan Roca i Albert, "L'itinerari com a...".

Second, the traveller can effectively incorporate the experiences on the route if they are presented in a way that allows them to be easily assimilated in the special moment that is the itinerary. To make this possible, it must be remembered that "What you see going through the city has an unsuspected force, and sticks much more in your head than any speech, documentary, literature or lesson".[15] Furthermore, the guide must be able to make use of the potential of the probably receptive attitude of the user who is ready to be surprised. The role of the guide must be to "accompany" the visitors and help them to "look significantly" at the urban locations they pass through. The route must offer enriching experiences that turn cultural goods into "open books in which to see history and scenarios of an experience for remembering".[16]

Third, the guide must have a solid knowledge of the historical and cultural significance of the spaces on the itinerary and that they can respond to and stimulate any observations the visitors may want to make. The guide must also keep the flame of empathic emotion regarding the values of the places visited alive at all times. This means relating the heritage spaces, the narrative and people in a complex manner, so that visitors think and are engaged emotionally at the same time.[17]

And fourth, the combination of discovery, reflection and emotion requires seeing the physical route as something more than just a path to walk. Although the natural line that connects the elements of the route is longitudinal and linear, the narrative must not leave out the transversal and collateral elements that appear and that may be necessary to supplement and contextualise the narrative. In this regard, the rhythm and fluidity of the itinerary are fundamental. The transitions from one stop to another can be used to point the visitor to what is being observed at that moment and its relationship to the main narrative. The route cannot be like a theme park with a few strong emotions and long queues.

The aim is to help the visitor to itinerate and to have the tools to understand the significant aspects of the city and to be able to interpret them in their uniqueness and context. The goal is to cease to trivialise and to turn the route into a complete experience. And the city provides all kinds of living and surprising messages that make this possible. We only have to know how to look and get others to look. The action of itinerating, thus turned almost into an artistic creation, is much more enriching than conventional cultural-touristic products.

15. Joan Roca i Albert, "L'itinerari com a...".

16. Marta Martos-Pulido & Juan Ignacio Pulido Fernández, "Una aproximación al análisis de la actividad cultural turística en la Ciudad". *Papers de turisme* 47-48, 2010, p. 39-57.

17. Andrea Manenti, "Relat urbà: Narrativa...".

The Darwin neighbourhood in Bordeaux. A view of the central avenue of the Darwin complex.
Photo: Musée d'Aquitaine. Mairie de Bordeaux

The Practice of Itinerating of Some European City Museums

Different museums of the City History Museums and Research Network of Europe have historic routes that can be used as models for how to itinerate. They offer innovative themes with unconventional methodologies, aim to provide more transversality between the past and the present, and keep reflection and emotion to the forefront. Due to a lack of space, we mention just the following:

The Museum of Lisbon offers two quite unique and unusual itineraries:[18] Destino Lisboa. Os lugares invisíveis da escravatura allows us to discover parts of the city that were sites of African slavery from the 16th to 18th-centuries. Lisboa Sai do Armário is a route that allows us to discover the places in Lisbon linked to the LGBTQ community.

The Musée d'Histoire de Lyon offers Les pentes de la Croix-Rousse: Quand le fil devient ville,[19] an interesting route through the Croix-Rousse neighbourhood, which was the traditional site of silk production. The route invites us to discover how this industry shaped the physionomy of the place.

18. http://www.museudelisboa.pt/fileadmin/museu_lisboa/sobre_nos/Folhetos/PercursosML.pdf.

19. http://www.museudelisboa.pt/fileadmin/museu_lisboa/sobre_nos/Folhetos/PercursosML.pdf.

View taken from the belfry of the Hôtel de Ville on the slopes of the Croix-Rousse. Photo: Jacques Gastineau

View of the historic core of Lisbon including the Plaça del Comerç and the Tagus estuary. Photo: Manel Martín 2017

The Stadtmuseum Berlin, as part of the exhibition Chaos and Departure,[20] organises the route 1920 — Experiment of a Social Metropolis,[21] in which it suggests reflecting on the persistence and currency of the urban-development project of the Great Berlin of the 1920s, then ahead of the rest of the world, which aimed to provide the working-class centres of Berlin with accommodation and social services.

The Musée Bordeaux offers two routes focusing on areas of the city committed to environmental sustainability and alternative economy. In Vert de Bordeaux,[22] we can find stores, associations and organisations that work toward responsible consumption. Darwin eco-système[23] takes visitors to the Darwin quarter, located in the former Niel military compound, abandoned and converted into a laboratory for citizen, solidarity, environmental and sustainable initiatives.

Barcelona, a city to itinerate

Tourist activity has become a characteristic of the Catalan capital in recent years. The Municipal Government believes that the phenomenon of mass tourism in Barcelona needs to be approached from a collective perspective that makes its sustainability compatible with the other elements of the complexity of Barcelona and its immediately surrounding conurbation. Urban cultural leisure tourism is one of the main attractions that the city offers the millions of visitors who tend to concentrate in certain locations considered to be unmissable sites — Ciutat Vella, Barri Gòtic and Rambles, Sagrada Família, Parc Güell, Passeig de Gràcia, Port Vell, etc. Given the massification suffered by these emblematic areas, debate has been opened on the need to decongest and diversify the range of cultural-tourism options in Barcelona.

This provides an opportunity for touristic and cultural promotion of the ten municipal districts of Barcelona, beyond the most commonly visited sites, with new realities linked particularly to the working-class city and the peripheral industry.[24] In light of this perspective, it is important for the future to ensure that the value of the tangible and intangible, central or peripheral heritage elements are transmitted appropriately to visitors and are not misrepresented or trivialised.

20. Chaos & Aufbruch. https://www.stadtmuseum.de/ausstellungen/chaos-und-aufbruch.

21. 1920-Experiment einer sozialen Metropole. https://www.stadtmuseum.de/1920-experiment-einer-sozialen-metropole.

22. https://www.visiter-bordeaux.com/fr/decouvrir-bordeaux/lenvert-la-consommation-responsable-portee-de-tous.html.

23. https://www.visiter-bordeaux.com/fr/decouvrir-bordeaux/darwin-eco-systeme-le-pari-dun-modele-alternatif.html.

24. This is an opportunity that can be used by other European cities that have undergone the same process of post-industrialisation as Barcelona. Joan Roca i Albert, "Mirar el món des de Barcelona", *MUHBA Butlletí*, 33, 2017, p. 2.

An itinerary underway as part of the course Urban Stories of MUHBA: From trackway to square. Memory of the Barcelona market (final work assignment of the course of Eliana del Pilar Veronica Carrillo Angeles). Photo: Andrea Manenti. July 2019

Thus, the crisis in the mass cultural tourism model, based on the major icons of Barcelona, which saturates the most visited places, and the emergence of new spaces characteristic of a Barcelona removed from the majority circuits, provides an excellent opportunity to begin to itinerate and explore a new way of seeing the city.

The Urban Narratives course

Researching new formats of urban discovery is one of the motivations behind the course Relats Urbans. Teoria i Pràctica de l'Itinerari Històric,[25] (Urban Narratives. Theory and Practice of Historical Routes), which the Barcelona History Museum (MUHBA) has been carrying out since 2014, in collaboration with the Barcelona Provincial Government's Theatre Institute. The practically unique and highly original proposal consists of facilitating acquiring the skills needed to design and manage historic routes. It includes dramatic stagecraft, urban history, cultural heritage and tourism, combining creativity, emotion and reflection. It is a contribution from MUHBA to the debate on new forms of tourist activities taking place in the City History Museums and Research Network of Europe.

The course is aimed at a wide range of professionals interested in the fields of urban history, reflections on heritage and dramatic techniques: historians, art

25. http://www.bcn.cat/museuhistoriaciutat/docs/RelatsUrbans2020-21.pdf.

An itinerary underway as part of the course Urban Stories of MUHBA: The Barcelona Olympic legacy (final work assignment of the course of Patrick Reyes. Photo: Chiara Vesnaver. August 2020

An itinerary underway, Water in the east of the city, near to the source of the irrigation channel. Photo: Jordi Esplugas. 2016

An itinerary underway, Water in the east of the city, near to the source of the irrigation channel.
Photo: Jordi Esplugas. 2016

historians, archaeologists, cultural managers, tour guides, heritage technicians, teachers and other professionals linked to the social sciences, humanities or drama. The skills acquired on the course qualify students for different professional pursuits such as providing visits that interpret heritage or school workshops, working as tour guides or as sociocultural animators.

In consonance with the objectives of Urban Narratives and the profile of the target audience, the contents are programmed in two modules. The first, La construcció de l'itinerari històric (constructing historical routes), introduces students to urban studies and the meaning of urban historical heritage and how to manage it in cultural and urbanistic terms. It is subdivided into three blocs, one dedicated to the historical narrative of preindustrial Barcelona, another to modern Barcelona, and a third, to the interpretation of heritage. The second module, El discurs històric representat (acting out historical discourse) develops an approach to the theory and practice of the itinerary format and is structured in two blocs, one on playwriting, stagecraft and acting, and another on composing itineraries. In this latter block, students participate as users in different itineraries or routes. Finally, they have to develop a project that creates an urban route to showcase the skills they have acquired.

The course has a large number of teachers who work academically and professionally on the frontline in historical research of Barcelona's past, research on and conservation of its heritage, design of historic routes, and the creation of performative stage techniques applied to urban routes. Students have a good opportunity for reflection and developing completely novel perspectives on the history, heritage and cultural tourism of Barcelona in the format of the historical route. This is a unique chance to construct a method for learning and teaching others to itinerate.

The Water in the East of the City route

The block on constructing routes of the Urban Narratives course includes Aigua de Llevant de la Ciutat (Water in the East of the City). This activity was designed for the exhibition La Revolució de l'Aigua (The Water Revolution), organised by the History Museum in 2011[26] and for the inauguration of Casa de l'Aigua in Trinitat Vella as a new MUHBA heritage space, the first one on the theme of water.[27] The historical knowledge accumulated for these two events seemed to be a good opportunity for presenting the citizens with the hitherto unknown historical, heritage and environmental wealth contained in Rec Comtal and the technical and architectural elements of the public water service of Barcelona City Council, which was operational up until the end of the 20th-century, all located in the Besòs River valley, to the east of the city.

The methodology used in the initial design approach to this route and its implementation may serve as an example to clarify the criteria for designing and executing a significant urban historical route, a practical in itinerating:

- The thirteen big water infrastructure elements found in the north-east end of Barcelona provide a chronology of two thousand years and considerable diversity in terms of their historical interpretation. Together, they make it possible to analyse a large part of the evolution of the water supply for the city and its surroundings. Most depended on surface or groundwater from the basin of the minor Besòs river, which has been the subject of intense water exploitation over time, not so much due to its abundant flow as to the lack of any alternative resources.
- The initial challenge of developing a route was how to integrate into a coherent and comprehensible discourse a significant selection of elements from this impressive heritage and historical collection. The elements mentioned could be grouped into three major blocks: those belonging to the private water-supply company that historically supplied the city, Aigües de Barcelona; the Rec Comtal irrigation channel; and those that have formed part, over time, of the public service provided by Barcelona City Council. Given the ease of access to the interior of the facilities and the possibility of finding historical continuity over a vast amount of time, it was decided to construct the route based on the second and third blocks. Moreover, the order of the visit to each site was organised chronologically and in the direction in which the water flows, from Montcada to Barcelona.

26. The activity was curated by the professor of the UPC School of Architecture, Manuel Guardia, and located in the Saló del Tinell of Palau Reial Major, in Barcelona, and involved the collaboration of different specialists in Barcelona's water supply. The catalogue is available from Manuel Guardia (ed.), *La revolució de l'aigua en Barcelona. De la ciutat preindustrial a la metròpoli moderna, 1867-1967*, Museu d'Història de Barcelona (MUHBA), Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2011.

27. Manel Martín Pascual (2011 and 2016).

• Once this decision had been taken, a route was designed that made it possible to show visitors the succession of heritage elements interlaced in a fluid narrative of continuity:
— how the Roman aqueduct of Barcino, most of which no longer exists, originated in the Besòs river;
— how the Rec Comtal irrigation channel followed approximately the same path as the aqueduct, although the channel was used for production purposes, such as water mills, irrigation, and industrial production;
— how, in the 18th-century, Barcelona City Council took drinking water from the channel for the city;
— how, in the 19th-century, the same city council and the parties involved in the Rec Comtal irrigation channel opened the Montcada well to feed the channel and a new municipal water pipe carrying drinking water for Barcelona;
— how, in the early 20th-century, Barcelona modernised the old water-supply system when it was found to be the cause of a typhus epidemic;
— and how this renovated infrastructure was in operation until the late 20th-century approximately at the same time as the Rec Comtal ceased to provide service.
• With the narrative and structure of the route resolved, it was time to take other aspects into consideration. First, the fact that the area to be visited was on the periphery of the city and public transport was not convenient. Second, the transitions between the different stops. Third, the length of the route: three kilometres and a minimum duration of three hours. Finally, the combination of timetables to access different buildings that belonged to Montcada Municipal Council, the Aigües de Montcada mine and house, and other facilities belonging to Barcelona City Council, Cases de les Aigües at Trinitat Vella and Trinitat Nova and the Alt de Montcada aqueduct.
• These objective difficulties were compensated for with a careful strategy of relationship with the users during the route.
— Clear, understandable and differentiated messages were transmitted on the historical and heritage values of each site visited, while highlighting the interrelation between the elements and the place occupied by each one within the whole.
— Every effort was made to smoothly link each element with the next in the transitions with complementary aspects of context.
— The narrative combines all kinds of information: technical, social, political, anecdotal, experience, ecological, etc.
— The idea, at all times, is to encourage the intervention of the visitors with references relevant to their daily life experiences.

Model of the enlargement of the Wannsee lido, 1929. From *The New Berlin: Issues Monthly for Problems in the Big City*, Martin Wagner (ed.). Collection of the Berlin City Museum Foundation. Unknown photographer

— Photographs are provided to illustrate things that are no longer there and other essential details, especially technological aspects. These resources, issued when the visitor arrives at each of the different sites visited, are handled and consulted by the users at their own pace and are collected from them afterwards. The aim of this is to stimulate additional questions and find another way of interacting with the participants.

The result of this approach is a route with complex content, and of a longer duration and distance, that is surprising due to the quality and good state of conservation of the architectural and technical elements visited and the variety of peri-urban landscapes it offers. Users, finding themselves in a place that is often unknown to them, have the opportunity to reflect on the difficulties historically involved with supplying water to the city of Barcelona, which lacks a major river or abundant underground water sources. They can also wonder about the uses today's society makes of a scarce resource such as water. However, they can also see how the periphery of Barcelona has always been closely interlinked with the better-known central areas of the city. Indeed, it allows the user to itinerate and form part "of a new way of viewing the city".

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The participatory museum in practice: Museum Rotterdam as a case study

Paul van de Laar

Nowadays museums are conscious of their social responsibilities towards society. Most city museums have made a social turn and their best practices evidence a growing tendency to reach out to communities. Urban curators working in superdiverse cities — characterised by a varied social, religious, ethnic, and cultural background — have acknowledged new professional attitudes. Storytelling, participation, intangible heritage, co-creation; they all belong to the new handbook of social curatorship. Material culture and tangible objects are, and will remain, key elements, but the fundamentals of authenticity and object-driven curatorship have become less prominent in the museum practices of modern city museums. Story telling is now one of the main drivers of museum objectives, together with public participation and co-creation. The case study of Museum Rotterdam is, in this respect, a case in point. Since 2005 it had developed into an innovative, community-driven museum with the motto: "collect to connect". This essay sketches these developments, which were intended to transform the city museum into an active agent of social change. This case study also shows that city museum experiments and innovative heritage programmes aimed at participation do not guarantee a successful museum model. At the end of 2020, Museum Rotterdam was forced to close its doors. The city administration decided to minimise the budget and forced a reorganisation because the visitor numbers were too low. Despite the innovative profile and the efforts of the staff to explore new, community-based heritage programmes, we were unable to convince our subsidy provider of the relevance of our city museum.

Museum Rotterdam: the re-profiling of the city museum

Museum Rotterdam was founded in 1905 as the Museum of Antiquities, in an era when Rotterdam developed into the largest European transit port. The museum founders were driven by a civilising ideal. The Rotterdam Museum of Antiquities started in the Schielandshuis, a 17th-century city palace, the perfect location for the expression of a bourgeois civilisation offensive. The building, the only pre-industrial building in the city centre that had survived the bombardment of May 1940, underwent intensive restoration in the 1970s and 1980s. The Museum of Antiquities, after the war renamed as the Historical Museum of Rotterdam, embraced the grandeur of the former palace. At that time, the museum had a strong nostalgic appeal, and its collections and expositions

represented the atmosphere of most city museums of a bourgeois kind. The museum was not really engaged with communities and the collections were not representative for the Rotterdammers, in particular the new generations having a migration background. In 2011, the museum dropped the "Historical" in its name and changed it Museum Rotterdam. This decision aligned with the new ideas on the modern role of the city museum, which had developed during outreach programmes that started in 2005.[1]

The Panorama Project was the first serious outreach project that focused on ten different areas in Rotterdam that took off after some preliminary projects in 2005 and developed into a larger scale programme in 2007.[2] It was set up by the communication and education department and not an initiative of the curatorial staff who at that time were still reluctant to get out on the streets. The educators were challenged with how to engage pupils, often with a migration background. Their parents did not have a strong affiliation with the city's history or its specific remembrance culture that is very much concentrated on the experiences of World War II and the Reconstruction period. Their stories did not play a central role in the museum and there was not much attention for their social and cultural backgrounds or their neighborhoods. These belong to the most ethnically and culturally varied areas in Rotterdam and are representative of Rotterdam's superdiverse nature. Through schools and interviews with key figures in the neighborhood, the museum started to map the recent past of these areas, collecting pictures and neighborhood stories and turning them into local panoramas that were exhibited in public places such as community centres and local shops. Especially, the elderly used this project to share their memories with other inhabitants and turned these places into interactive story-telling locations. Children from elementary schools were asked to present their favorite objects and write down why they wanted their personal belongings to be collected by the museum. The children were photographed, and their pictures assembled and collaged into neighborhood panoramas. The experiences were used for an overall exhibition in the Schielandshuis, the city palace they would normally not go to in their free time. All 300 children were very proud to show their relationship with the city of Rotterdam as they experienced their stories and objects being valued by museum professionals and visitors.

1. Paul van de Laar, "The contemporary city as backbone: Museum Rotterdam meets the challenge". *Journal of Museum Education* 38.1 (2013): 39-49. https://doi.org/10.1080/10598650.2013.1151; Ed Taverne, Paul Knevel & Sebastian Dembski, "Musea buiten de muren. Interview met Paul Spies, directeur Amsterdam Museum, en Paul van de Laar, directeur collecties en wetenschappelijk onderzoek Museum Rotterdam", *Stadsgeschiedenis* nr. 2, Vol. 6, (2012), p. 201-216.

2. Panorama Rotterdam: 300 kinderen, 10 wijken 1 stad (Museum Rotterdam, 2011).

Houses in a Rotterdam-South neighborhood that are to be demolished. This area has become a favorite place for "5314" pieces. The graffiti range from detailed pieces to short, messy tags. Photo: Hans Walgenbach

The children showed a great attachment to the city, in particular towards the contemporary city.[3]

Parallel to the Panorama Project, in 2007 Museum Rotterdam started a new collecting programme focusing on young adults in Rotterdam-South, the part of Rotterdam that was developed in the 1870s into a port area populated by dockworkers and migrant labor families. Originally, it was a white urban working-class neighborhood but, in the 1970s, Rotterdam-South developed into one of the most diverse places of the city. The heritage and participation project was named Roffa 5314, when a curator noticed that in this part of Rotterdam young adults associated themselves with "5314," the postal code for Rotterdam South. Roffa is urban slang, typical of a superdiverse neighborhood, and can be translated as "tough". The young adults associate themselves very strongly with their urban zone 5314. In their typical Rotterdam South lifestyle,

3. Willem Frijhoff, "Physical space, urban space, civic space: Rotterdam's inhabitants and their appropriation of the city's past", in Marnix Beyen & Brecht Deseure (eds.), Local Memories in a Nationalizing and Globalizing World (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 27-50.

through tattoos, clothing, and graffiti, they expressed a strong local identity, a cultural response to their fellow residents living in the northern city centre, the richer part of Rotterdam.[4]

Roffa 5314 organised events and performances (hip hop and rap open mic nights) for the young 5314 artists, supported by their own local Rotterdam-South fan groups, which were recorded on video. During these events, interviews were conducted and lifestyle elements, clothes, personal identity markers, and accessories were collected and cataloged by Museum Rotterdam staff. We published a free magazine, specially designed for the youth in Rotterdam-South. The internet played an important role in the Roffa project.[5]

A Facebook-like website was set up, where the Roffa youth posted their pictures and weblogs and created their own virtual Roffa 5314 world. The results of this programme were presented in a temporary exhibition on location and curated by members of 5314. This project attracted national attention and was considered a ground-breaking participation project from a modern urban heritage point of view.

The City as muse

The Panorama project and in particular Roffa laid the groundwork for a three-year intensive community-based heritage and participation programme, named the "City as Muse," which began in 2010.[6] In its first year, Museum Rotterdam's urban curator did extensive fieldwork amongst an intercultural women's group, some of them single mothers, living in one of the poorer parts of Rotterdam. She interviewed them regularly, made photographs, and used their personal stories to set up a heritage agenda based on participation by these women.

The women live in a Rotterdam neighborhood that used to be one of the landmarks of the post-war welfare society. However, this housing area proved not to be suitable as a living area for an intercultural society and was listed for redevelopment. Upon learning the plans for the neighborhood, the women did not sit down passively and await their uncertain future. They joined forces and started an informal group, which met every week and turned into a respected contact group for local officials and social housing agencies. These women breakfasted together every Wednesday and discussed the major social issues

4. Kenny de Vilder, "Two years on the streets", Social History Curators Group, June 2009.

5. Sjouk Hoitsma (ed.), *Roffa 5314. Stijl van zuid* (Rotterdam, 2010).

6. Irene van Renselaar, "City as Muse: Community participation and (re)presentation of contemporary urban culture by Museum Rotterdam", paper presented at ICMAH Annual Conference 2011 — IAMH 10th International Conference Museums and Difficult Heritage, 16-18 June 2011, Helsinki, Finland, *Stichting Doen, 20 jaar doen. 20 verhalen* (Amsterdam, 2011), p. 76-79.

Proud women "Van de Velden", the cover of the special magazine Every Woman, a glossy dedicated to this women's group. The women are styled as important representatives of the Rotterdam communities, resembling the members of the Rotterdam elite, whose pictures are collected by the museum. Photo: Mark Janssen. Collection Museum Rotterdam

of living in the neighborhood. Together they planned social activities, assisted other parents with the education of their children, and were widely involved in community programmes. To document these women's stories, the Museum Rotterdam team created a glossy magazine, *Every Woman*. Exhibition installers and artists were involved in turning the heritage project into a public performance. Some works of art were collected and have become part of the museum's contemporary heritage collections.

Loes Veenstra lived alone in one of the neighborhoods in Rotterdam-South, a place stigmatised for being a dock workers' area, a typical transient place dominated by migrants and communities which settled in this low-income neighborhood. Loes bought her house a long time ago with her husband, from whom she has long been separated. Her neighborhood had changed into a very diverse multicultural space. She lived on an old-age pension and her apartment house was stacked with about 600 sweaters she had been knitting for the last 30 years, but, unfortunately, none of the sweaters had ever been worn. Her knitting was a kind of daily therapy, her way of survival. The bright-coloured sweaters showed optimism and a frivolous lifestyle that was not matched by her personal story. We used her story to address the issue of socially deprived people in a typical Rotterdam neighborhood. The collection of sweaters was used to connect her literally with the other inhabitants of the neighborhood. We dressed them up and presented the invited neighbors to stage a street parade, accompanied by a local brass band, honoring Loes Veenstra in a flash mob. The artist Christine Meindertsma documented the sweaters as part of her design project. The YouTube version was presented at the International Film Festival Rotterdam in 2013.[7] The cooperation between Museum Rotterdam, the artists, and the community was rewarded with the Dutch Design Award 2013 in the category "Free Design". Loes died in 2016 and Museum Rotterdam dedicated a special exhibition to her as a tribute.

Museum Rotterdam's heritage model

These heritage initiatives opened new doors to the city. In 2013, the museum management had to leave the Schielandshuis after the city decided to defund the museum, the first major austerity operation since the reopening of the Schielandshuis in 1986. With a budget reduction of more than 30 per cent, we could no longer afford the running and operation of the expensive Schielandshuis. We used these opportunities to turn Museum Rotterdam into a "travelling museum" circulating around the city and re-branded as "Museum Rotterdam-on-location." This was the start of a real community museum network that combined heritage and participation programmes and turned them into accessible, public-profiled exhibitions. This city museum network used concepts of social and learning curatorship, which are based on urban historical anthropologists' skills of participating. The heritage and participation projects led to reformulation of our collecting strategy with a focus on contemporary issues. Museum professionals integrated with urban communities and based

7. Christien Meindertsma, *Het Verzameld Breiwerk van Loes Veenstra uit de 2e Carnissestraat* (Rotterdam 2012). https://www.dutchdesignawards.nl/gallery/het-verzameld-breiwerk-van-loes-veenstra-uit-de-2e-carnissestraat/.

The stories of the Bulgarian Rotterdam van drivers and their passengers are a new chapter in the story of this city's development through (labour) migration. Photo: Museum Rotterdam Collection

their research agenda on active participation. Collecting was thus not a passive undertaking but based on active participation and the Museum Rotterdam-on-location exhibition was a co-curated experiment.

In 2016, Museum Rotterdam had to stop its travelling ambitions. The city wanted us to move to a new location. In 2014 we had delivered our master plan for a new city museum, based on the concepts and ideas Museum Rotterdam-on-location had developed. The master plan, conceptualised by Ralph Appelbaum Associates, was primarily based on the concept of collecting at the service of connecting people. The key idea was to develop a new museum based on the experiences and expectations of the urban communities. Rotterdam is an urban environment built up from circa 15 different constituencies, or boroughs. So, we called this programme "15 stepping stones for the next generation". However, the city government, unfortunately, did not share our ambitions and was unwilling to invest in a new museum plan for the time being. They insisted that Museum Rotterdam stop travelling and move to the Timmerhuis, the new iconic building of star architect Rem Koolhaas, a multifunctional building with a large ground floor that could be used for different purposes. However, that building was unsuitable for museum purposes and we decided that the best opportunities would lie in creating an urban space in which community-driven heritage programmes could be developed.

One of the most influential new ideas was the programme Authentic Rotterdam Heritage. The basic idea is that objects should not be collected to store them in the repository, or for exhibition purposes, but should remain with the participants in the city. In this sense, the objects are used as connectors, linking communities, like cultural particles in a network of people.[8] The first example was a Volkswagen van used by Bulgarian migrant workers. This van got a prominent place in our opening exhibition in 2016, but was returned to the owners in the summer. The family needed the van for travelling to their home country. This fact triggered the idea of following the Bulgarians and recording their stories in a road-documentary, which followed them from their hometown to Rotterdam. In sum, the van as an object became a kind of story booth, a moving container of stories that could be tracked and traced and linked to Rotterdam's recent migrant history, but also linked to the older migration patterns. From those moments onwards, the programme took off, directed by Nicole van Dijk, who was passionate about developing this experiment into a full-fledged social community programme.[9]

This new way of collecting was set up to develop a sustainable and dynamic way of connecting the museum with urban communities. Once the van had joined our collection, more objects followed. Initially pragmatically: most of the new additions originated from a project in Rotterdam-West that we were involved in at the time. Gradually, the concept was refined and developed in an urban programme that put the communities at the centre of attention. They became more important than the collected items. In fact, these communities were reframed in authentic heritage. Together, they present the active collection of the city that reflects contemporary issues and experiences. Collections that are not stored in repositories, but active agents of social change. They are selected by the Authentic Rotterdam Heritage Council. The new programme, Authentic Rotterdam Heritage, became the pillar of the new heritage and gradually developed into a new, socially embedded heritage profile, based on the active participation of the network (see https://museumrotterdam.nl/echt-rotterdams-erfgoed/collectie-ere). Nationally and internationally, the programme gained a lot of attention and stimulated discussions on the meaning and significance of the role of city museums. In particular, it contributed to the discourse on the right to the city but was also profiled by CAMOC in developing a more inclusive museum definition when the programme was presented at the ICOM Kyoto conference in 2019.

8. *Echt Rotterdams Erfgoed, deel 1 55 doorzetters, aanpakkers en verbinders/Authentic Rotterdam Heritage, part 1 55 go-getters, doers and connectors*. Rotterdam, Museum Rotterdam, 2018.

9. Nicole van Dijk, "The active collection as an instrument for inclusion and social change", in ICOM_CAMOC_MUSEUMS_OF_CITIES_REVIEW_Migr.pdf (December 2019), p. 20-24.

Who is interested in contemporary heritage and community projects?

City museums need to find a way of becoming attached to the great narrative of the city. Their stories and contributions should be relevant for the present-day city. This is what Museum Rotterdam tried to do when it started the outreach programmes in 2005. Authentic Rotterdam Heritage is the most influential and path-breaking of all the initiatives the museum had developed. However, the prominence and the international attention it received did not generate the visiting numbers desired by the aldermen and the Rotterdam council. On 22 September 2020, the Municipal Executive announced that the museum would receive only half of the current subsidy, just to provide for the preservation and management of the municipal collection and the branch museum, the Education Centre on the Second World War, Museum Rotterdam '40-'45 NU. Consequently, on 1 December 2020, the Timmerhuis had to close and for the time being Rotterdam, the second city of the Netherlands, has no city museum. The city has appointed a so-called quartermaster who must develop a new museum plan that integrates existing urban initiatives and explores new accommodation facilities, including the option integrating the city museum into the reconstructed central library. Fortunately, Authentic Rotterdam Heritage — its official name — continues, and made a restart in a new foundation (The Neighborhood Collection) that works together with Museum Rotterdam to safeguard the continuity of the community work for the future (https://wijkcollectie.nl/). Nicole van Dijk has become director of the Stichting Wijkcollection and her personal connection with Museum Rotterdam safeguards the continuity of the network that has been established since 2016.

The Rotterdam case shows the difficulties city museums are dealing with. We tried to challenge the existing role of the city museum. For us, the greatest challenge was not being a museum in and of the city, but a museum for the city and its inhabitants. Not just being a place to display the historical past or a showcase of the city's treasures, but a museum that embraces the contemporary urban challenges. Based on our variegated urban curating programmes, we started to embrace the concept of a participatory museum that engages in becoming an active player in the creation of a better city, making connections between the past, present, and future of Rotterdam(mers). Our ideal museum was a place that could develop into an informal platform for planning the city's future. We experimented to develop a museum that could function as a rough guide to the city with all its complexities but engaged to make the city work better.

Museum Rotterdam should, in our ideal museum model, be able to host city planners, urban professionals dealing with city issues on social, cultural, political, and economic matters as a kind of city laboratory. The city museum embracing the city, addressing the questions which are relevant for running a better city. The curators then use their expertise to become city consultants,

curators of city ideas and concepts and being more than keepers of a city collection or exhibition institution. These conceptions, strategies, participatory efforts were important stepping stones for the city museum's aspirations. The curator as a heritage broker, a R&D-specialist; the museum should then use its social and cultural space, offering a learning environment where people gather to learn how to deal with the great challenges of the 21st-century.

However, in the end, we did something wrong. The Museum Rotterdam case teaches that it takes time to convince stakeholders that the city museum is the most important museum of the city and should be their priority. But if numbers are the main performance criteria for measuring the success of the city museum, then we still have a long way to go. In Rotterdam, the city museum was not on the radar and we were unsuccessful in showing that we were relevant because of the people we engaged and not because of the tickets we sold.

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