

ICOM Education

Special edition

Museums – Education – Cultural Action

The foundations of the Committee for
Education and Cultural Action
(CECA)

Description of the collection

This collection brings together the results of the research and professional experience of the members of the Committee for Education and Cultural Action (CECA) of the International Council of Museums (ICOM).

Special Edition

This special edition in three unilingual volumes contains the articles resulting from the research carried out on the two themes of "education" and "cultural action" on behalf of the CECA Committee by the "Marignan Group", whose aim was to reflect on the founding themes of the Committee. The articles on cultural action published in ICOM Education 28 in one language have been translated and included in each version of this issue 30, to which have been added at the beginning of the volume the unpublished articles on education as well as the articles published in issues 28 and 29 on the place of education and cultural action in ICOM.

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Museum education: what is the status of museum education and museum educators in the post-pandemic world?

Marie-Clarté O'Neill
CECA President

Contradictory status of the educational function in museums

The recent economic and health challenges brought about by the global pandemic has put to light the contradictory status of education and education professionals working in museums. Serving and facilitating access to the public is increasingly displayed as the ultimate mission of most museum activity and no institution would dare to display anything different in its policy documents. But at the same time, when the pandemic struck, education teams were the ones most particularly affected by lay offs, dismissals, and termination of contracts. In this piece, we explore this contradiction and try to understand the reasons for it:

- Is the interest in the public part of museums' work all about 'political correctness', something that is communicated for the sake of expediency but which cannot compete with the more historically specific functions of the museum such as the care of the collections or the exhibition?
- The museum feels that its educational role is essential, without knowing how to take its importance into account, what direction to take in a generous but vague orientation?
- Do educators themselves and their colleagues find it difficult to position themselves and advocate for their possible impact, despite the variety of their competencies, within the multiple functions, proposals, and propositions of the museum of the 21^{ème} century? Are they in charge of guiding visitors, leading programmes, designing the educational offer surrounding the exhibition, or should they be involved in all of the museum's activities especially those related to higher status and more visual outputs such as exhibitions?

A fragile recognition of education within the museum field

My long experience with museums, their teams, and the professionals who work in them, and my particular knowledge of international museum education circles, have made me realise how fragile the overall recognition of education is within the field. This fragility takes several forms:

- The people in charge of museums, their collections, and their exhibitions, do not receive valid training in the ways in which museum education teams and museum education professionals contribute to the organisation's success and impact, or in the ways of making their activities more educational, and this at any point in their initial or continuing training.

- This is partly the consequence of the fact that the museum education corpus is still little identified in a large part of the world, and that there is therefore a lack of the very trainers who could enrich this expertise.

Museum educators are geniuses of educational intuition but often lack knowledge of the main currents in the educational sciences

- Museum educators are geniuses of educational intuition, developed by their sensitivity to the public and by the experience of putting museum education into practice. However, they lack the same information that could be provided by knowledge of the main currents in the educational sciences, formal education but especially adult education and museum education.

The texts proposed in this collection have an ambition in this respect, which is to enrich the knowledge of the field around a certain number of themes linked to the psychological and intellectual functioning of adult visitors and around a better knowledge of the major currents of education which can inspire or concern museum education.

The collection of these texts, and the elements that they bring together, shed a singular light and provide structural clarification on what constitutes, or should constitute, the experiential skills of any good museum educator: the need to adapt to people, acknowledge the fact that a programme participant is not an empty jug to be filled, the benefit of repeated visits, the pleasure and contributions of sociability within galleries, the pleasure of objects, the pleasure of enjoying spaces, the search for both enjoyment and learning, the importance of listening to each other, etc.

Some of the mantras of museum education can thus be related to the great theories of education in general. What is the point of pointing this out more visibly? To justify what is most often a matter of intuition, to make the argument stronger and more sharable in the event of discussion or negotiation with one's hierarchy. Formalising and justifying the educational function within museums by raising it to the status of a recognised scientific discipline, bringing together the recognised theories of the educational sciences and the hitherto more experimental practices of museum education can therefore have two complementary benefits:

- Strengthen the professional insights of educators working in the field, on the front line, and enrich them with new perspectives to explore
- Position education within the museum, no longer as a necessary but unglamorous area of work, but as a scientific discipline in the same way as others, represented in the museum's teams, are: history of heritage, anthropology, conservation-restoration, cultural economy, etc.

It is therefore a question of developing the function and role of educators within museums, regardless of the culture to which they belong or the type of collections in which they operate. This is the ambition of this collection of texts, written by authors of different functions and origins, just like the members of CECA.

It seemed appropriate to us to add to this issue the texts of the same reflection group on the subject of cultural action published in n°28 and translated into the two other languages of ICOM, as well as the two more historical articles published in n°28 and 29 on the origins and development of the CECA and the place of education and cultural action.

EDUCATION

The place of education within ICOM before the creation of the CECA Committee (1946-1965)¹

Nicole Gesché-Koning

ICOM, education and the educational role of museums

Was the world when ICOM was founded in 1946, in the immediate post-war period, so different from the world of uncertainty that is ours in 2022? Reading the first ICOM publications (conference proceedings and *ICOM News*), one is struck by the similarity of the questions asked, the debates that followed and the recommendations they led to. The place of education in museums plays a key role and is mentioned in several articles in *ICOM News*. In fact, education was mentioned as a thematic concern as early as the first ICOM General Conference in Paris (June 28-July 3, 1948) and the restructuring of the first committees in 1946 devoted to categories of museums (*ICOM News*, vol. 1, n°1, October 1948, p. 1).

Among the other committees linked to concerns specific to all types of museums, there are those devoted to museum personnel and their training, status, and exchanges, to museum techniques, to museum legislation and administration, and to publicity. Those related to a particular issue are created very gradually, even more than twenty years after the creation of ICOM: documentation (CIDOC in 1950), conservation (ICOM-CC in 1967), training (ICTOP in 1968), security (ICMS in 1974), and museology (ICOFOM in 1977) (Baghli, Boylan & Herreman, 1998, pp. 95-98).

It is therefore with interest and pride that we note that education and educational work in museums occupy a prominent place. We thought it appropriate to mention them in this issue 29 devoted to the meaning of the word "education". Although the word is not specifically mentioned, it is interesting to analyze here the educational concerns of museums, even from the first ICOM general conference: one of the five sections was devoted to education and children's museums: their leaders had the opportunity to present their work in the plenary session on the first day of the conference to such important figures as André Leroi-Gourhan, René Huyghe, Germain Bazin, Giulio Carlo Argan or Cesare Brandi. Moreover, one of the oldest photos of this conference preserved in the ICOM archives (illustration 1) shows the people in charge of the education section.

In the issue of ICOM Education 28 devoted to the analysis of the term "cultural action," the history of the CECA committee was briefly discussed without, however, dwelling on the use and meanings given to the words "education" or "educational" (Gesché-Koning, 2018, pp. 23-32). Would it be possible to identify the guidelines of the cultural museum education profession through a systematic analysis of the early volumes of *ICOM News* and articles devoted to museum education?

Education, the first responsibility of the museum

In the ICOM Constitution, Art. II, Section 3 (ICOM, 1946), education is listed along with inquiry and research as the first responsibility of the museum: "*promoting and protecting the activity and the welfare of museums generally and their attached responsibilities of education, inquiry and research throughout the world*" (*ICOM News*, vol. 1, no. 1, October 1948, p. 1) (although a French translation was announced, it was never published).

¹ This article published in ICOM Education 29 (Gesché-Koning 2021, pp. 83-98) has been revised and expanded for this special edition.

Two ICOM international committees devoted to education

Since the creation of the first international committees in 1948, ICOM counted two committees dedicated to education, one devoted to children's museums and children's activities in museums (committee n°6), the other to educational work in museums (committee n°7). The latter gives little information on the meaning of the word "educational"; it speaks of fundamental education and adult education (*ibid.*, p. 2), an idea that is to be found in resolution n°6 of the interim conference of Mexico City (7-14 November 1947) mentioned in the same issue, and to which is added the idea of the museum as a *popular educational institution*, education being taken in its broadest sense (*ibid.*, p. 7). The staff in charge of education in museums are described for the first time as being "*those charged with the interpretation of the material*" (*ibid.*, p. 4). The word interpretation will be more frequently used thereafter in the Anglo-Saxon world, in addition to that of education. In the 1948 agreement between UNESCO and ICOM, ICOM pledges to support educational services and their programs, including activities related to formal and informal education for both children and adults. It also refers to training in education, without further details, and to include education in the future manuals of museology planned by ICOM (*ICOM News*, vol. 1, n° 1, October 1948, p. 2). G.-H. Rivière insists on "*the preeminent role of museums in the field of adult education*" and proposing the organization of exhibitions on "*museographical techniques applied to this aspect of pedagogy*" (*ibid.*, p. 7-8).

The second issue of *ICOM News* lists in exhaustive detail all the educational activities of a museum: classes and courses for adults, lectures and demonstrations, accompanied and guided tours, hands-on work for adults, copying of objects or documents by the public in the galleries, discussion groups, study clubs for adults, films and film screenings, musical programs, theatrical performances, work with children (whether in children's museums or in dedicated children's sections of museums in general), school services, to which are added outreach activities including the loan of objects and the organization of traveling exhibitions (*ICOM News*, vol. 1, no. 2, December 1948, p. 5).

Education at the first ICOM biennial conference (Paris, June 28-July 3, 1948)

Five working sections were planned, the first four (sections A to D) devoted to categories of museums (painting, national museums, ethnography, natural history), and the last one, section E, to children's museums and museum activities concerning children (*ICOM News*, vol. 1, n° 2, December 1948, p. 14). The working sessions took place in the morning in separate groups in different locations (Section E at the Musée Pédagogique) and in the afternoon in a plenary session at the Ecole du Louvre. In his opening address, President Chauncey Hamlin recalled the third resolution of the 1947 Interim Conference in Mexico City, namely the need for museums to:

include the present in their program, even looking towards the future, thus helping people to become better aware of themselves so to integrate themselves into the community of the United Nations [...]; and to wish that ICOM would achieve its essential goal: to help in the international understanding and cooperation without which a permanent peace cannot prevail (ibid., p. 32)

This idea is found in the 1977 International Museum Day statement (ICOM, 2020). It also appears adapted to the global context of the 21st century in the new proposed definition of the museum presented at the ICOM General Conference in Kyoto in September 2019. Curiously, the word "education" has disappeared from the proposal, an omission that has raised a global outcry from cultural mediators and led to a rethinking of this definition and the creation of a new definition approved during the ICOM General Conference in Prague in August 2022.

A plenary session devoted to the educational role of museums

This was the theme of the first collective work session (today, plenary session) of June 28, chaired by M.W. Milliken (USA). Ch. Russell of the American Museum of Natural History in New York presented a report entitled *Philosophy of Museum Education*. For him,

the contribution the collections of a museum bring to education essentially measures the effectiveness of the institution, whose aim is to bring the mass of the population to be interested in the material collected, studied, and arranged with the help and according to the connoisseurs' and scholars' goals and fields of interest covering domestic, professional, recreational and social subjects. Thus, the museum must contribute to education in its various stages, responding to the curiosities of the public and entertain them (ibid., p. 33).

Margaret Brayton, curator of the Children's Museum in Detroit (USA), then reported on the work of the Children's Museum Committee and its desire to see defined "*the museographic means of educating children, not only to enrich their knowledge but to develop a friendly understanding among them*" (ibid., p. 33). In her article on working with children in museums, she points to ICOM's recognition of the name "Children's Museum" as a "children's" section in museums, thus expanding the place of children to all museums rather than just a few specialized institutions (Brayton 1948:178). This was followed by a discussion on the definition and tasks of children's museums, whether they were to be children's activities in all museums or museums specifically devoted to children. It was then proposed by the Netherlands (Dr. Van der Stigchel) to call the latter "pedagogical museums". Among the questions discussed, which went beyond the simple children's museum, were the relations between museums and schools, as well as the methods of evaluating the work accomplished and the search for ways to adapt museums to children who were growing up in a changing world (ICOM, 1948, p. 41). Germaine Cart (who became Curator of the Louvre Museum in 1958), who oversaw the Educational Service of museums, insisted that lecturers be trained at the Ecole du Louvre to address young people - this was the case from the beginning of the 1948 school year (ibid., p. 43).

The didactic activity of museums is also analyzed by the Italian G. C. Argan who advocates that "*every big museum should have an official specialized in the activities of education and the relations with the outside world*" (ibid., p. 36). For A. Leroi-Gourhan, next to the essential function of a museum of conserving objects, the education of the public is as important; he considers the museum educator almost as an "*innovation in the museums*" (ibid., p. 39). Under the direction of G. W. Locher (Netherlands), a session is devoted to the coordination of the problems of scientific research and the museographical education of the masses (ibid., p. 53). Swedish museums are praised for their "*educational conception and the more complex role of the modern curator, no longer just a curator in the literal sense, a man of science, but an administrator, an educator, a facilitator*" (ibid., p. 52).

Section E devoted to education

Under the direction of Margaret M. Brayton, the work of this section concerned "*children's museums or, more generally, the educational role of museums*", thus bringing together the members of the two committees n° 6 and n° 7 (ICOM, 1948, p. 7). The important participation of the United States and of education directors in art and science museums, children's museums and school services is noteworthy. Alma S. Wittlin (1899-1992), to whom ICOM has dedicated memorial lectures since its General Conference in Vienna in 2007, is listed as a representative of the Department of Education in the United Kingdom (ibid., p. 27). The relationship between museums and schools was the subject of a whole session under the

direction of J.W.B. Van der Stigchel from the Netherlands, around the Pedagogical Museum in The Hague, designed to educate children and develop their powers of observation thanks to "specialized monitors", this learning of the gaze is still underlined by Hungary (Dr Lenkei) (*ibid.*, p. 61).



Figure 1 - Section E - ICOM Biennial Conference, Paris, July 1948 In the middle, Grace McCann Morley (with bag), to the right Margaret Brayton (in black) and Renée Marcousé, behind her probably Madeleine Mainstone. Source: ICOM archives, photo by Elisabeth Jani

Education in the other sections of the first biennial conference

Education goes beyond the framework of section E: it is thus a question of coordinating the "problems of scientific research and the museographic education of the masses"; an appeal is made to a "council of educators specialized in child psychology" while not confusing the mentality of the average visitor with that of a child! A remark from New Zealand (M. Duff) makes us smile today: "it is necessary to make the visitor understand that his civilization is not unique and that he will perhaps, with the abolition of distances, be brought into contact with other civilizations" (*ibid.*, p. 53).

The discussions that followed the working session in Section C on natural history museums addressed the importance of the composition of explanatory texts in museums, which should be thought of in terms of three categories of visitors: "visitors with no special training but who want to acquire some knowledge, students in groups who come to learn, and other groups" (*ibid.*, p. 71). One session was devoted to the organization of the Children's Museum Committee, the first of which, founded by Miss Anna Gallup, dates to 1899; the emphasis was on the international character of children's museums and the need to organize traveling exhibitions to spread the idea and goals of children's museums - to help promote understanding among peoples - with the support of educators (*ibid.*, pp. 74-75).

Finally, in addition to participating in the first collective session, all the participants in this first ICOM biennial conference were invited to the Pedagogical Museum where different delegations presented their didactic panels called "panels and demonstrative material" (*ibid.*, p. 64).

In conclusion, the work of this first biennial conference of ICOM will be remembered for the importance given to education in all sections, and for the fact that museums must both "educate the public and instruct the specialists" (*ibid.*, pp. 52-53). There are some differences of opinion between the advocates of children's museums and educational work within museums.

ICOM pays tribute to Alma S. Wittlin (1899-1992)

Alma S. Wittlin was already present at the Paris conference in 1948 and was one of the British representatives at the ICOM General Assembly in Paris in 1949. The contacts she was able to make there led her to the United States, where she distributed *The Museum: Its history and its tasks in education* (1949), published in the International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction series. Although a less than glowing review appears in *ICOM News* (vol. 2, no. 3, June 1949, p. 6), a great deal of attention is given to the functions of a public museum in the immediate post-war period. She insisted on the importance for museums to take their role as educational institutions more seriously; she had thus launched into a "profession of faith in favor of education" in the face of a certain "inertia of European museums and the conservatism of their directors" (Poulot, 2009, p. 96).

As a pioneer in visitor studies (Hein 1998:44-46) during her time at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Cambridge, she analyzed and evaluated the impact on different types of visitors to different displays of objects in the collections, studying their reactions and behavior through interviews and questionnaires (Kraeutler 2011:5). She also contributed to the third issue of the CECA publication, *Annals of Museums*, insisting on the importance of encyclopedic training for museum educators, their awareness of heritage preservation - a fact too rarely analyzed by museum educators -, and the development of visual communication from objects (Wittlin, 1971, pp. 19-20).

Education at the Second Biennial ICOM Conference in London (July 17-22, 1950)

During this second biennial conference, the educational mission of museums and their social action will be discussed: education of young people by museums, art museums and education of young people. Here is presented the "essentially didactic method" that was chosen by the Museu de Arte de São Paulo to analyze a painting (*ICOM News*, vol. 3, n°3, August 1950, p. 5) in order to give the public "a living reading" (*ibid.*, p. 14). Also discussed were museums and adult education, museums as art centers, and ways and means of developing public relations between museums and the communities they serve (*ibid.*, p. 7). The originality of the London conference compared to that of Paris was to show the urgency of developing transversal committees beyond scientific specializations (as was the only committee for educational work in museums), such as the management of mass education (*ibid.*, p. 2), slightly different in English where it was rather a question of "problems created by mass education" (*ibid.*, p. 12). In the session on popular education and the dissemination of culture, the following issues were discussed: youth education (in the English edition *children's education*), adult education, and youth and adult education (these two categories were analyzed together).

During the four sessions of the committee n°6 for children's museums and activities concerning children (section F) under the chairmanship of P. Floud (United Kingdom) in replacement of G. Cart (France), the following topics were discussed: children's museums, museums and education, museum loans to schools.

As for the Education Committee (No. 7), it held only one session (Section H) under the chairmanship of Ch. Russell (United States) in replacement of W. Milliken (United States): it dealt mainly with the relationship between museums and schools (*ibid.*, p. 12).

The holding of the biennial ICOM conference in London had strengthened the position of museum education in Britain. It should be noted, however, that the new museum education professionals in this country were people from the world of education. The topics of discussion revolved mainly around schools, children, questionnaires, loans to schools, temporary exhibitions, and teacher training. The museum educators were thus closer to the Ministry of Education and its affiliated organizations than to their colleagues within the museum.

Variety of educational activities in museums

In the minutes of the London conference there is important information on the variety of educational activities in museums and of future programs such as:

- the Museum Crusade: in view of the essential role that museums must play in the education of youth and adults, ICOM had made a recommendation to UNESCO to undertake the organization of a "Museum Crusade" designed to demonstrate the importance of this role of museums (*ibid.*, p. 4);
- Museums and school curricula: the visit of scientific and technical museums by young people should be included in school programs (in the English version *syllabi* rather than the current term *curriculum*) (*ibid.*, p. 16), taking into account the modalities specific to each country;
- Children's museums: here it is a question of organizing exhibitions for children, of the need to have a room for children's activities - as far as possible - set up in each museum, of the regular collaboration to be established between the scientific staff of the museums and members of the teaching profession, in order to make the latter aware of the multiple possibilities offered by the museums for education (opportunities for educational work) (*ibid.*, p. 16);
- Museums and education: proposal to organize a travelling exhibition to show through didactic panels the ways in which museums can be used for the education of young people (*ibid.*);
- mention of the UNESCO publication, *L'éducation des adultes. Tendances et réalisations actuelles* (*Adult education. Aims and achievements*) (1950) with an interesting elaboration by G.- H. Rivière, Secretary General of ICOM, on the museum and adult education (p. 143-152), an idea already defended beforehand in *ICOM News* (vol. 3, n°1, February 1950, p. 7), where he insisted on the importance of adult education, where he insisted on the "pre-eminent role of museums in the field of adult education and on the necessity of providing an international study course for the methods and techniques of adult education" (*ICOM News*, proposing that an exhibition of the methods and techniques of adult education be organized during the course (*ibid.*, p. 19) applied to this aspect of education (*ibid.*, p. 8).

Perceptions of the educational role of museums from 1950 to 1962

What is meant by "educational service" and how is it defined? For example, wouldn't sending a sampling of museum objects to schools, possibly via the museum bus to isolated rural areas in France (*ICOM News*, vol. 5, no. 1, February 1952, p. 7), constitute in itself an educational service? Shouldn't it be accompanied by a reflection on the best and simplest ways to bring these small rural people into contact with national or international culture, to awaken their reactions to this contact, and finally to control its influence on the rhythm of their intellectual and moral development and on their social behavior (*ibid.* p. 7)?

Is it not rather the purpose of the museum to present the objects in such a way that their origin and their relationship to other objects constitute a demonstration of the whole (*ICOM News*, vol. 5, no. 3, June 1952, p. 12)? Has not the museum become a true working tool for the educator (*ibid.*, p. 13)? This idea is also supported in the publication on the use of museums in the active school (Dreyfus-Sée, 1952).

Children's Museums and Educational Work in Museums: Differences of Opinion

An account of the Museum Crusade stresses the success of the event: "Great hopes may be placed on the contacts it has brought about between the museum and educational communities, worlds more closed to each other than one might think" (*ICOM News*, vol. 5, no. 4, August 1952, p. 2). The publication *Educational Philosophy and Practice in Art Museums in the United States* (Low, 1952) is mentioned while regretting that the book is limited to the United States (*ICOM News*, vol. 5; no. 4, August 1952, p. 15).

The book *Museums and Youth* announced at the Paris conference in 1948 having finally been published (Cart, Harrison & Russell, 1952), it was the subject of criticism and advice for the future of museum education within ICOM. Germaine Cart was responsible for the chapter on *Museums and Youth in Western Europe*, both for children's museums and for the educational services of museums in general and their various activities. Molly Harrison wrote the chapter on *Museums and Youth in Great Britain* and other British Commonwealth countries based on her personal experience. Finally, Charles Russell, director of educational services at the American Museum of Natural History, analyzed *Museums and Youth in America* by identifying three types of educational realities: children's museums, museum departments specifically for youth, and educational services in museums in general (*ICOM News*, vol. 5, no. 5-6, October-December 1952, p. 2).

For the first time, the term "youth" is discussed in the publication, while concluding that age limits vary from country to country and from organization to organization (*ibid.*, p. 4). Similarly, curators are invited to be open to the needs of teaching, the audiences to be reached and the qualities required to do so (*ibid.*, p. 20). In his foreword, G.-H. Rivière is aware of the "open debate between the museums and the educators of the world. The data appear to be full of contradictions, such as the proliferation of children's museums in the United States, compared to their virtual absence in the old world" (Cart, Harrison & Russell, 1952., p. vii).

And he hoped that the two ICOM committees for education and youth would succeed in addressing the problem on an international level so that their "united activities would help to increase the attendance of youth in museums" so that they would "find ever greater benefit" (*ibid.*, p. viii). These wishes of the famous museologist will unfortunately not be heard and ICOM will regret that it was necessary to let the opinions of specialists from two continents, where conditions and conceptions are different and sometimes opposed, confront each other in an initial clarification [...] it is now up to the ICOM committees for education and for youth to place the problem on the international level (*ibid.*, p. 1-2).

It is now up to the ICOM committees for education and youth to place the problem on an international level (*ibid.*, p. 1-2).

The two ICOM committees related to education merge

The role of museums in education had been the subject of a special UNESCO document on education in conjunction with ICOM (UNESCO, 1952). A detailed report and a description of the different contributions appear in *ICOM News* (vol. 6, n°1, February 1953, p. 6): The Role of the Museum in School Education (*ibid.*, p. 20), Museums and Schools, Museums and Schools in New York, Museums and Recreation. There is still mention of two committees related to museum education, namely committees 6 and 7 created in 1948. The situation will change during the first triennial conference of Genoa, Milan and Bergamo (July 6-12, 1953) (*ICOM News*, vol. 6, n°5-6, October-December 1953, p. 4): the Education section, chaired by P. Floud, will see the presentation of two reports in which the supporters of children's museums and educational services in museums will confront each other: Museum of Art and Youth, The Problems of Pedagogical Museums

1953 Creation of the ICOM International Committee for Education

The two international committees of ICOM, Children's Museums and Educational Work in Museums, decided in 1953 at the first triennial conference in Genoa, Milan and Bergamo, to merge to become the "ICOM International Committee for the Education of Children and Adults" (*ibid.*, p. 5). (*ibid.*, p. 34), a merger that was again formalized later in the conference report (*ibid.*, p. 10). In the end, only the term "Committee for Education" was retained. The reason for the merger of the two committees seemed to have already been announced in Margaret Brayton's 1948 communication (cf. above), which welcomed ICOM's recognition of the place to be given to children in all museums and not only in children's museums. It would seem, in fact, that too much attention had been paid to children's museums during the first meetings, to the detriment of educational work in all museums, which had somewhat offended more traditional curators. This is what emerges from the analysis made by V. Woollard in 1998 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Group of Education in Museums (GEM), whose origins, according to the author, can be traced to the creation of a British sub-committee of the Children in Museums section of ICOM; She explains the role played by Peter Floud (Victoria & Albert Museum), chairman of the ICOM Education Committee, in bringing on board people interested in education in the broadest sense, both at his museum and at ICOM; another branch included curators from the Museums Association. By the end of Floud's tenure on the ICOM International Committee, the two branches would have formed a Group for Children's Activities in Museums, an amalgam that strengthened both groups of individuals interested in museum education, but also weakened the position of the parent organizations, the Museums Association and ICOM (Woollard 1998:1-2).

The dissolution of the ICOM Education Committee is also explained as the result of "irreconcilable ideological differences between traditionalist curators and tour guides on the one hand, and professional children's museum educators and educational services insisting on the notion of child-centered museum education on the other" (Moffat & Woollard, 2004, p. vii).

The ICOM Education Committee (1953 - 1962)

American-style formal education and a focus on children and schools have thus distracted many educational services from the adult world, which have become neglected. This is true for countries other than Britain. On the other hand, the commitment to schools was strengthened in this country, especially under the impetus of two British heritage education inspectors, Mary Bosdet and Hazel Moffat, as well as Renée Marcousé, Madeleine Mainstone and Alison Heath. The notion of education went beyond the purely academic horizon by opening up to themes such as heritage in the broad sense, the educational use of museums and galleries for children, television and other for adults, television and other audio-visual techniques, perception (visual education) in museum education, training offers for teachers in connection with museums. I was also able to show the important role that Renée Marcousé later played in the CECA as editor of the six issues of the committee's journal *Annales des musées / Museums Annual* (Gesché-Koning, 2006, p. 6).

The years following the creation of the Education Committee in 1953 left few traces, except for a seminar chaired by Grace Morley in Athens in 1954 (Gesché-Koning, 2018, p. 3-4). The few publications that did emanate were mostly from activities commissioned and/or organized by UNESCO in partnership with ICOM (Gesché-Koning, 2006, p.10 & p. 21). In the last issue of ICOM Education devoted to cultural action, I mentioned the problems encountered by the committee to better position itself on the international scene; in fact, the Education Committee created in 1953 was dissolved in 1962 at the VIth General Conference of ICOM in The Hague for lack of a real strategic plan and vision for the future. Hugues de Varine Bohan played a

leading role at the time to revive museum education on a scientific basis by organizing in 1964 (November 23-27) in Paris an international colloquium on the educational and cultural role of museums, which laid the foundations for the future Committee for Education and Cultural Action - CECA (Gesché-Koning, 2018, p. 4; *ICOM News*, vol. 18, 1, February 1965, pp. 19-21). The main topics discussed were:

1. *The educational and cultural vocation of the museum:*
 - *Museums must provide teaching;*
 - *Museums must help to develop the identity of the individual and integrate the individual into human society;*
 - *Museums must also be used for leisure;*
2. *Foundational conditions for the exercise of the museum's influence on its public*
The museum should reach out to the public as a whole;
3. *The museum's methods of action among which point e) describes all the activities of various kinds (lectures, films, concerts) organized within the museum to attract certain categories of visitors and complete the museum's missions;*
4. *Personnel in charge of educational and cultural work in museums: this topic should be known by all museum educators as it really speaks for the value and consideration museum educators deserve;*
5. *Support for the educational and cultural work of museums;*
6. *Knowing the public – Evaluation;*
7. *National and international action.*

Eventually during the 7th ICOM General Conference held in New York 22-24 September, 1965, the International Committee for Education and Cultural Action (Committee No. 10) held its first meetings under the chairmanship of Mr T.M. Folds, Dean of Education, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Mrs I. Antonova (Russia) was elected vice chairperson and Mrs R. Marcousé (UK) secretary (*ICOM News*, Vol. 18, N° 5-6, October-December 1965, p. 46).

1965: Creation of the Committee for Education and Cultural Action - CECA

The numerous discussions during the 1964 Paris colloquium eventually led to the creation of the current Committee for Education and Cultural Action (CECA) at the 7th ICOM General Conference in New York (September 22-24, 1965).

The importance given to the educational role of museums in the biennial and triennial conferences of ICOM will be remembered from the years preceding its creation, whose main concerns of ICOM members were in this order: education through museums, exhibitions and the international circulation of cultural property, and its conservation and restoration (Baghli, Boylan & Herreman, 1998, p.15).

The compilation of all the committee's publications in a special edition of ICOM Education, thanks to a contribution granted on the occasion of ICOM's 60th anniversary, is proof of the dynamism of museum education leaders and their many interests (Gesché-Koning, 2006, *passim*), but also of the support of ICOM since its creation.

The future of CECA

In 55 years, the CECA committee has evolved, and many publications are now online, from conference proceedings to all issues of ICOM Education, all of which reflect the evolution of the committee and its concerns. Annual conferences (except for 1999) have been held since

1968. The educational role of museums was chosen as the theme of the 9th General Conference of ICOM in Grenoble in 1971. Working groups were formed between 1970 and 1988 on the training of educators, communication, evaluation, work with schools and suitcase museums. Led by members convinced of the educational mission of museums, these working groups ceased to exist after the Nafplio and Athens conferences (1988), due to the lack of leaders who could attend all the conferences. Therefore, the establishment in 2020 of special interest groups that communicate via the Internet can only strengthen the image of the committee and the discussions among its members, only 1/10th of whom usually have the possibility and the means to travel to the annual conferences.

Research sessions on visitor behavior began in 1997 thanks to Colette Dufresne-Tassé and the creation of the eponymous Research Award in 2015. Educational activities have been professionalized through the *Best Practice* tool and the Best Practice Award. Today, the CECA has a redesigned and efficient website. How far away and yet how rich in memories are the days of the pioneers who typed their reports on peeling paper and had no other way of contacting their members than by mail!

Has museum education evolved since the creation of the first ICOM education committees? From consulting the archives to following the work of the CECA committee for more than forty years, I would say that its place within museums has only grown stronger. It has a bright future, as demonstrated by the dynamism of its members, the CECA board and the following articles.

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Summary

Since its creation ICOM has considered education as one of the key missions of museums. No wonder that among the first international committees of ICOM created in 1948, two are related to museum education: Children's Museums (committee n°. 6) and educational work in museums (committee n°. 7). Why two committees? Who were their founders and what was their motivation? What were their main activities and concerns? What meaning was given to the word "education" both in English and French (at that time, Spanish was not yet acknowledged as one of the official languages to be used in ICOM).

Why did these first committees merge in 1953 to become one Committee for Education?

Was there a clear definition for the word "education"? The analysis of ICOM's first publications allows a better understanding of what was at stake in museum education after the Second World War. The problems discussed did not differ from the major issues we are confronted with nowadays. Astonishingly, many ideas considered today as innovative have already been tackled by the first museum educators as far back as the end of the 19th century. To be aware of the similarities seems crucial to avoid seeing the present CECA committee as reinventing the wheel.

Why have the ten following years of the Committee for Education left so few traces? The reasons behind the merging of the two first committees will be analyzed as the decisions within ICOM. The many discussions and reflections which preceded the creation of the Committee for Education and Cultural Action (CECA) seem to me crucial to understand how the committee was created and how the words "education" and "education department" were perceived. What were the training of museum educators and their role within a museum? These questions have barely been discussed before the creation of the CECA committee, the same applies to the main themes this issue of *ICOM Education* is set to analyze.

This paper is limited to the first twenty years of ICOM and the place education has played within the institution and its first biennial and triennial conferences. The main sources are the archives of ICOM and those of CECA I have accumulated over the course of the over forty years I have served the committee as assistant of the secretary (1978-1980), editor of *ICOM Education* (1978-1980 & 1987-2007), secretary (1992-1995), chairperson (1995-1998) and co-opted member of the board (1998-2015 and 2022-).

Key words: museum education, teaching, children, youth, adults, interpretation

Presentation of the texts dedicated to the education of adults in museums

Colette Dufresne-Tassé

Great educators' theoretical approach regarding adults' education

The following texts are devoted to adult education in a museum context. This series of four articles opens with a text by Anne-Marie Émond. This text evokes the theoretical contribution of great adult educators, such as Allen, Hiemstra, Knowles or Knox, to the understanding of the learning that takes place during a meaningful experience in a museum. She adds, with numerous examples, the results of her research on this experience: what the adult feels, the production of meaning that expresses it and the consequences that follow.

Perspective of meaning-making and meaning-development

From a perspective of meaning-making, or rather, meaning-development, Rosa María Hervás Avilès takes a close look at the stages of the learning process and the strategies that promote a successful outcome or museum visit/interaction. She systematically addresses and details how an autonomous adult proceeds when engaging in knowledge acquisition or skill development. Her article is the first in a series that she will devote to various aspects of learning in a museum setting, drawing on the research of contemporary pedagogues and psychologists who have examined it in various contexts of an adult's life.

Adults' relation with exhibitions

Colette Dufresne-Tassé is interested in the relationship between adults and exhibitions. She studies the works published in English on the subject since the beginning of the 21st century and observes two trends, two positions. One makes specific learning the central goal and primary benefit of an exhibition visit, while the other favours optimal meaning-making for each visitor. Each of these two goals gives rise to different conceptions of how a production team should support the efforts of a visitor to appropriate the content of an exhibition. When learning is central, this support is translated into an exhibition structure that can be considered closed, as it guides the visitor step by step towards a specific acquisition or acquisitions. On the other hand, when the production of meaning becomes essential, the structure is said to be open, because it facilitates this production so that the visitor makes his or her contribution and thus becomes the co-author of the exhibition.

Synthesis of recent publications on the visitors' affective functioning

Like the previous ones, the last article in this publication summarises recent publications. This time, they focus on the affective functioning of the visitor. Margarita Laraignée chooses this functioning rather than emotion as the theme of her text. This choice allows her to consider emotion and its multiple forms as one of the important components of affective functioning, in the same way as feeling, for example, and to highlight the complexity of this functioning. A second advantage is that it helps to decipher the relationship between affective functioning and cognitive functioning. If the affective can appear alone, it also acts, most of the time, in tandem with the cognitive functioning, which can be joined by imaginary functioning. Finally, Laraignée's position helps to distinguish various ways in which emotions and feelings, as types of affective functioning, can promote learning. As an emotion, surprise for example, as an affective functioning, can trigger learning, whereas pride, as a feeling and involving both affective and cognitive functioning, could support learning to its completion.

Adult learning: a stubborn foundation of ever-changing dances

Thus, throughout these articles, adults' the learning recurs like a solid base of ever-changing dances.

Sometimes it takes the form of knowledge acquisition, sometimes it is a skill.

Either of these forms can be achieved during participation in a programme or during a visit to an exhibition.

Affective functioning alone as well as cognitive functioning may be involved.

Finally, it depends on the production of meaning, but this can also exist without it and give rise to more complex phenomena.

Adult learning theories in the development of museum educational programs: Understanding adults as learners¹

Anne-Marie Émond

Introduction

A person familiar with museums might consider them as places where adults can live exceptional experiences. Specifically, educational museum programs have the potential to provide unique opportunities for exploration and insight for adult visitors, as the content of these places reflects and sometimes offers a restructured picture of the world in which they live. In doing so, there is the hope of transforming the institution, as Gurian (2007) proposes, from a place for an “occasional day-out [activity to a] drop-in service” (p. 22) where we can feel that we have a voice and actively contribute to better living together and understanding ourselves as actors in society.

In this perspective Talboys (2016) reiterates as others did before him in the likes of “Anderson (1999), Hein and Alexander (1998) and Hooper-Greenhill et al. (2007) [...] that most museums still have a lot to do before they fulfil their education potential” (p. 1). To do so, it would be essential to study different theoretical frameworks from adult education research to inform museum professionals on the creation of various educational programs, in their approaches and outcomes to provide meaningful museum experiences for adults.

This is all the more important, as many museum education researchers deplore the lack of theory informed adult learning research to guide practice (Anderson, Lucas & Ginns, 2003; Dudzinska-Przesmitzki & Grenier, 2008; McCray, 2016; Monk, 2013). For Taylor and Neill (2008), the study of adult education has much to offer the museum field if one is to understand how theory can contribute to fostering successful programs rather than leave it to chance (Sachatello-Sawyer, Fellenz, Burton, Gittings-Carlson, Lewis-Mahony & Woolbaugh, 2002). Grenier in 2007, believed then, that adult learning theory had “the potential to transform museum experiences into organized learning opportunities that occur in relation to socio-cultural surroundings and stimulate visitors’ curiosity and active and reflexive learning” (p. 2). In this article, we discuss adult learning theories to enhance our understanding of adults as learners, as well as to provide means to develop educational programs around museum collections, so that programs could be tailored to adult participants.

¹ This research has been funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).

Nonformal education

Thus, the study of adult education has much to offer museum educational programs in the context known as nonformal education, that is, education that takes place outside formal educational settings (Taylor & Neill, 2008). Furthermore, nonformal education is defined as “*any organized, intentional and explicit effort to promote learning to enhance the quality of life through non-school settings*” (Heimlich, 1993, as cited in Taylor & Neill, 2008, p. 24). Taylor and Neill (2008) categorize nonformal education in three characteristics:

flexibility (program responsiveness to local needs), participation (shared decision-making between educator and learners), and contextualization (degree of standardization). Nonformal education typically is seen as somewhat participatory, flexible, less standardized, and more responsible to local interest. (p. 24)

Dudzinska-Przesmitzki and Grenier (2008) in their article presented the characteristics of both nonformal learning opportunities and informal learning opportunities. Nonformal learning opportunities refer to programs led by educational staff or docents and included are, for example, lecture series which are “*guided by museum-structure objectives and activities*” (p. 10). As for informal learning opportunities, it “*include[s] patron museum activity where learning occurs but doesn’t stem from any formally organized learning programs or events*” (p. 10). This distinction is important to make in the context of our article, as we focus exclusively on educational museum programs so, on nonformal learning opportunities.

How to understand the term education

In the context of this article, it is important to define what we mean by the term education in a museum context. This article being written in English and originating from Canada, it is even more crucial to clarify how the term is understood, as around the world different definitions do exist regarding museum education. A few years ago, in 2013 Clover and Bell from the University of Victoria, in their article *Contemporary adult education philosophies and practices in art galleries and museums in Canada and the UK* spoke of a “*major shift in the gallery and museum sector from ‘education’ to ‘learning’ [...] by far the most common label used for adult programming [in Canada] [...]*” (p. 33). This shift originated from understanding the term ‘education’ as representing a top-down approach associating it to formal education. As for ‘learning’, it represents a bottom-up approach where the person is self-motivated, empowered in making choices. Furthermore, Clover and Bell (2013) cite Roberts to further explain the shift in terminology, when in 1997 she wrote, “*education has become too restrictive and misleading for the museum setting...There has been a conscious shift toward “learning” (emphasizing the learner), “experience” (emphasizing the open-endedness of the outcome) and “meaning-making” (emphasizing the act of interpretation)*” (p. 31). These different authors allow us to understand that the term ‘education’ is perceived in a very negative way, as representing something restrictive and controlling, limiting a person’s choices.

Let’s not forget that the term ‘learning’ can be perceived as negatively as the term ‘education,’ as it often refers in the museum context to a mere acquisition of knowledge of facts which appears to be very different from what Clover and Bell proposed in their

article. Understanding learning as the acquisition of facts is very restrictive in the context of museum education. In developing museum educational programs for adults, we believe it is important to reflect on the use of the terminology 'education' so that museum professionals can consider adult learning theories to promote adult education. We therefore propose our own way of conceiving the term 'education' in the context of museums.

First, we refer to the *Excellence and equity report* (AAM, 1992) where it is said that “education—in its broadest sense includes explorations, study, observation, critical thinking, contemplation, and dialogue” (p. 10). Thus, we would like to understand the term 'education' in the sense of educating which from the Latin “ex ducere”, means to come out of oneself, to develop, to blossom. The purpose of education is the enrichment of the person, one that functions in society. With this definition, the museum is a place that offers, by its specificities, a multiple of ways where a person can grow. With this definition, we go beyond the mere acquisition of knowledge of facts which might not be the most useful way of thinking of learning experiences in museums. Museums are unique places where one has the possibility to make meaningful discoveries on self and society.

How to understand the term learning

When tackling the term 'learning' we understand it as a means to education, education being the result. The definitions one chooses to think about 'education' and 'learning' will have a major impact on the application of educational theories in the development of adult museum programs. This is to say that in defining learning in a museum context, and this in the wake of Falk and Dierking's work (1997), we need to think about learning in terms that goes beyond the acquisition of facts. Just as put forth by Hohenstein and Moussouri (2018), and previously proposed by Bloom (1956), “*learning* [should be understood] as *something that is cognitive, affective and psychomotor*” (p. 3). In sum, Hohenstein and Moussouri (2018) propose that:

[...] learning is also emotional, attitudinal, and aspirational, but bodily, too [...] Thinking about learning as only a cognitive [consequence] [...] will result in missing issues to do with conceptual development as opposed to 'information' as important elements of learning [...] Learning can be defined as a relatively permanent change in thought or behaviour, which might include cognition, opinions, skills, or mindset [...] (pp. 3-4)

In 2010, the UK policy for museums, libraries, and archives considered learning as a:

process of active engagement with experience. It is what people do when they want to make sense of the world. It may involve the development or deepening of skills, knowledge, understanding, awareness, values, ideas and feelings, or an increase in the capacity to reflect. Effective learning leads to change, development and the desire to learn more (as cited in Reeve & Woollard, 2013, p. 552).

This is to understand that museums are distinctive learning settings, so that learning in a museum might be thought as an interactive experience, that is, when considering Falk and Dierking's *Contextual Model of Learning*. This model acknowledges that learning is understood as the interaction between the *Personal Context*, the *Sociocultural Context* and the *Physical Context* (Dudzinska-Prezesmitzki & Grenier, 2008).

More precisely, in this article we focus our attention on adult learning. This is why it is important to consider “*that effective learning is linked to the adult’s self-concept of him/herself as a learner; and that adults tend towards self-directedness in their learning*” (Anderson, 1995, p. 22) an aspect that we need to elaborate further on in this article. Also, Anderson views the museum as a context that is “*suited to the development of divergent thinking and creative intelligence [...]*” (p. 23). Museums are viewed by Anderson as exceptional environments which have the potential to offer a multitude of rich and meaningful experiences.

In considering the variety of museums such as science centres or fine arts museums, we need to think of learning beyond the mere acquisition of facts. We might instead focus on using the museum’s offer to develop adults’ skills such as information handling skills, critical skills, creative skills, decision-making skills. Also, considering learning as something that is cognitive, affective and psychomotor, we should also think of learning as developing one’s imagination (Dufresne-Tassé, Marin, Sauv  , & Banna, 2006), in the context of museums and within the particularities of their collections. When there is learning in the museum context, there is the production of meaning that is considered the result of the convergent intervention of three components of human functioning: intelligence (cognitive functioning), the ability to be moved (emotional functioning) and the imagination (imaginary functioning) (Dufresne-Tass  , O’Neill, Sauv  , & Marin-Robitaille, 2015). In general, for the museum context, the conception of learning refers to playfulness, wonder and discovery a definition of learning far from adult educators’ notion proposed by adult educators who see learning in a formal education context as a means to solve an immediate problem, and this, from a practical point of view (Dufresne-Tass  , 1995). In the context of the museum, the concept of learning goals is much broader and includes personal growth of adults, learning as a means of understanding education as “*ex ducere*”. So, we need to modify the understanding of the term ‘learning’ seen as a product and increase the importance of the making of meaning as a process which will provide access to a set of useful information for understanding on how adults benefit from participating in a museum program and in doing so we are in line with what was proposed by Clover and Bell (2013) but without evacuating the term ‘education’ from the equation.

In this article, we aim to view adult learning theories in the perspective of the uniqueness of the museum context and what it has to offer to an adult who decides to participate to an educational program.

Adult learning theories considered for developing museum educational programs

In an andragogical approach, that is, the science and practice of adult education that aims at the development of adults, it is essential to consider their characteristics as learners. McCray (2016) in her article titled *Gallery educators as adult learners: the active application of adult learning theory* cites the work of adult education professors, Merriam, Caffarella, and Baumgartner (2007) who presented a synthesis of Knowles’s theory of andragogy that originally comprised four principles, and to which two others were later added on. These principles outline the characteristics of adults as learners and are

accompanied by notes regarding their usefulness in developing museum education programs for adults:

1. *As a person matures, his or her self-concept moves from that of a dependent personality toward one of a self-directed human being.* [Note: In the context of museum programs, it is important to remember that adults make their own decision about whether to participate in a particular activity. This decision will be influenced by their understanding of the museum's offerings as advertised by the institution, so the message that is delivered is particularly important. If adults' understanding of the museum's offerings suggests that a program has the potential to meet their personal needs, they will be willing to participate. Adults have a clear idea of their interests and what is worth investing their personal time in, such as participating in a museum program. It is important to understand that the decision to participate or not in a museum education program is made long before an adult decides to visit the museum itself, so it is essential to plan the marketing of such an activity with the program designers.]

2. *An adult accumulates a growing reservoir of experience, which is a rich resource for learning.* [Note: When designing a museum program, museum professionals need to anticipate who the participants will be, as the activities are meant to give adults the opportunity to refer to their own experiences to create new ones. Therefore, understanding to whom the program is specifically for, becomes an essential part of designing the activity. This means that when designing a museum program, the adult population should not be viewed as a homogeneous group, but as a very complex segment of the population where, for example, the needs and experiences of adults who are still in the workforce might be different from those who are not.]

3. *The readiness of an adult to learn is closely related to the developmental tasks of his or her social role.* [Note: In deciding to participate in a museum program, adults consider the impact it might have on their own development and role in society. Whether participation in a museum program offers adults the opportunity to broaden their vision and understanding of their impact on society is one of the questions that museum professionals need to ask themselves when designing their program and the activities that will be offered.]

4. *There is a change in time perspective as people mature—from future application of knowledge to immediacy of application. Thus, an adult is more problem centered than subject centered in learning.* [Knowles, 1980, 44-45] [Note: When developing programs, museum professionals will consider creating activities that have an immediate benefit for adult participants. It is important to understand that the primary goal of adult participation in a museum program is not in the long term, but in the immediate future. Activities should be designed to provide adults with an opportunity for real benefit that they can clearly identify. This usually leads to a repeat experience in the short term, i.e., participation in a future program offered by the museum. It becomes a meaningful museum experience for them that improves their quality of life. Thus, adults feel that they can reinvest their knowledge in a new museum experience, hence their desire to return to the museum.]

5. *The most potent motivations are internal rather than external (Knowles & Associates, 1984, 12).* [Note: A museum professional will consider the motivations behind adults' decisions to participate in a museum program. For example, museum

professionals will design different activities based on the audience for which they are intended. For instance, if they know that their programs are aimed at adults aged 75 and older who are retired and want to discover new things and use the program opportunity to share their experiences with others their age, they will develop very specific activities to achieve this goal. The choices made by museum professionals will be different if the program is aimed at a group that meets for the specific pleasure of studying, referred to as study groups, where the intention of adults participating is to deepen their knowledge of a museum collection. We need to understand the importance of targeting whom we want to offer the museum program to.]

6. *Adults need to know why they need to learn something (Knowles, 1984).* [Note: When developing a program for adults, museum professionals should take care to organize the activities into a coherent whole that adults will see as relevant. The objectives of the program must be well defined and considered at all stages of its development. In this way, the activities will allow adult participants to engage in a process of discovery and understand the purpose of what is being offered, through the perceived match between the museum's offerings and their expectations. This often involves participants making meaningful discoveries about themselves and society and perceiving the museum as a place for lifelong learning where adults are empowered to engage in ongoing self-development.] (McCray, 2016, p. 11)

Studying these principles, we can acknowledge that andragogy relates to an adult's own life experience and is not centred around a curriculum framework as it is earlier on in the individual's life, that is, during their school years. As Knowles explains, "[...] *the adult learning orientation tends to be life-centered, whereas the youth orientation (by conditioning, not by nature) tends to be subject-centered*" (p. 57). This amounts to summarizing Knowles' six principles as presenting the characteristics of adults as learners as:

- self-concept (knowing themselves, that is, choosing a program that resonates to oneself);
- experience (benefiting from past experience to discover new things);
- readiness to learn (a museum program is an activity where adults believe it offers opportunities to acquire new knowledge, and this when meaningful experiences occur in their understanding of themselves in society);
- orientation to learning (for adults participating to a museum program, the activity is seen as one that is necessary to maintaining lifelong education, for their quality of life);
- motivation to learn (museum professionals, in developing diverse programs for adults know that adults who sign up to a program are aware of the reason they are doing so. Adults believe they will benefit from participating) and
- goals of learning (by participating in a museum program, the objectives of the adults are generally well defined, which is why it is important to clearly circumscribe the program within the museum's overall offer).

We must specify here that when we speak of the adult's objectives, this does not mean that they are related to the resolution of specific problems, as would be the case in a formal education context and as is conceived by adult educators, as we have already specified (Dufresne-Tassé, 1995). The idea of problem solving must be understood as a personal objective that must be taken into account in order to achieve quality of life,

hence the importance of taking advantage of the museum context in the development of educational programs.

Also, as mentioned earlier, adults tend towards self-directedness in their learning this is why the learning theory called *self-directed learning* (SDL) is important to consider in the context of this article. The three main objectives of SDL are presented here along with remarks about their relevance to the design of museum programs:

1. *to enhance the ability of adult learners to be self-directed in their learning* [Note: In designing museum programs for adults, professionals strive to create situations where adults are invited to make choices that will directly impact the program activity. In other words, giving adult participants the opportunity to ask questions is one thing, but considering them as co-creators of the activity means that they may, for example, be asked to choose which object from the collection to include in the activity, and do so while the activity is being experienced in the museum. This means that museum professionals initially have a conceptual map of the activity to be carried out during the program but understand that in order to achieve the goals of the program for adults, it must be designed as a work in progress, tailored to the adults actively participating in the program.]

2. *to foster transformational learning as central to self-directed learning*, [Note: Museum educators may have already witnessed such a transformational learning experience when adults, at the end of an educational activity, tell them that the program has changed their lives, that they will remember what was learned, and that they will apply this new knowledge the next time they come to the museum. It's an eye-opener for adults who talk about, for example, having a new perspective on a certain subject, on a particular object, on themselves or some other aspect of their museum experience, a perspective they had never considered before. This experience in itself becomes a valid reason for an adult to decide to participate again in an educational program, and to do so with a desire to grow as a human being in a context where the possibility is real. To foster transformational learning during a museum program, the educator will provide an environment where it is possible to work with the various dissonant reactions that adults may experience during the activity. It is necessary to create a context in which adults can express themselves and listen to other points of view in an attempt to overcome the discrepancy or discrepancies they are experiencing and from that perhaps transformational learning will emerge.] *and*

3. *to promote emancipatory learning and social action as an integral part of self-directed learning*. [Note: In order for this aspect to be addressed in self-directed learning, it is necessary to create educational programs that relate to the socio-cultural environment of the museum itself. Museum professionals encourage the design of programs that meet local needs and are likely to foster meaningful discoveries about self and society. Participation in museum educational programs is seen as an opportunity for adults to form opinions about topics of the past, present, or future. It is about making sense of the world and thinking about the contribution one can make in the near future as a global citizen. This means that museum educational programs are not disconnected from the community in which the museum is located. The museum's offerings, through its programs, must be seen as an entity oriented toward economic, social, and environmental sustainability for the common good.] (Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner as cited in McCray, 2016, pp. 12-13)

The principles of andragogy imply that we consider adults to be autonomous in their learning endeavours. This may be the case when a person is involved in a process in which an initiative is taken to diagnose personal learning needs and decides to participate to a museum program. In doing so, goals and resources (such as the museum) for learning are identified by the adult.

Another aspect that is important to consider is the adult's past experiences. To make sense of a learning situation, the adult must feel that it is possible to connect new ideas to past experiences and in doing so to make connections, to build new ideas (Knowles, 1981). This implies that, when possible, the museum educator will build the experience with the adult's interests in mind. If adults participating to museum programs perceive that it has an impact on their personal growth (education) as an active individual in society, the stronger the need of repeating the experience will be. In this perspective, we might say that adults could be considered as individuals that gear towards learning as a way to enhance their life experience, in better coping in the future with situations that could be encountered in their daily life. In the context of museum programs, this would mean developing an adult's capacity in autonomous thinking, developing a critical sense and developing a creative spirit (Dufresne-Tassé, 1995).

As reported by Knowles (1981), Houle's (1964) study of self-directed learners identified three categories of adult learners that are listed here from most to least important: goal oriented learners (adults who undertake to learn only if they also have a goal to achieve), activities oriented learners (adults who learn when accompanied by others) and learning oriented learners (adults who want to learn for learning's sake). Knowles considers the most important category of learners to be goal oriented learners, that is, "[...] *if adults see why it is worthwhile to understand, to gain a perspective, and if they see that their lives will be enriched, they will have a goal to participate in that learning*" (Knowles, 1981, p. 52), thus the importance of developing programs that will use the specificity of the museum, with the collections in mind to offer the adult population a unique environment for discovering the self and addressing diverse life situations through the museum experiences.

Allen (1981) adds to what has been discussed above five basic concepts for adult education that justify the need to consider them in the design of museum programs. We have adapted them here for these situations. These concepts are as follows:

- 1) **Adults are self-directing.** This means that adults are interested in choosing their own learning activities. That would imply that the adult would recognize the benefits of participating in a museum program and would choose this endeavor.
- 2) **Adults are interested in immediacy.** This implies that adults are interested in museum experiences that are enjoyable and create a sense of competency.
- 3) **Adult learning is voluntary.** Adults are not required to participate in a museum program, so it is important to identify the needs of the community.
- 4) **Adults have different set of experiences.** Adults possess a multitude of experiences from which they can draw upon to create new meaning in a given situation such as a museum program.
- 5) **Adults have a readiness to learn.** This concept relates to the idea that learning is most effective when it relates to an adult's interests. When choosing which museum program to attend, adults consider their needs.

On the basis of the above, we can summarize the characteristics of the adult learner as representing a person in constant growth, where previous experiences are put forth in the achievement of specific personal goals in a given situation.

The importance of recognizing adult learning theories for the development of museum educational programs can be easily understood because andragogy concerns the self-directed learning of adults who do not have to visit a museum but choose to do so. If adults participate in a museum program, it is because the program is likely to help them in their personal development, building on their experiences, and addressing a concern or goal that is relevant to their immediate needs.

Using the principles developed by Knowles, Hiemstra (1981) summarizes their application for educators in their planning and conduct of museum programs developed to meet the adult needs:

- 1) Educators must consider the experiences of adults participating in the museum program. They have to help the participants exploit their own experiences. Also, educators must try to bridge the new learning experience with the adult's past experience. This is necessary to make the museum learning experience meaningful and long-lasting through the specificities of the museum collections.
- 2) Educators need to accompany the adults in gaining a sense of progress in the achievements of their goals as we have seen that this is the primary reason for participating to a learning situation. They have to perceive that the goals of the program meet with their own learning goals.
- 3) For adults, most of whom are identified as goal oriented learners, educators need to make them feel that what they are learning is important to them, that there is an immediate application of learning for the purpose of self-actualization, and self-fulfillment, in order to better participate in society, i.e. educate themselves.
- 4) Adults are willing to learn when it concerns them. They must be active participants in a learning situation for it to be meaningful. To be active participants, adults must share responsibility for the learning process where the educator is more of "*a facilitator of the learning process rather than a dispenser of knowledge*" (Hiemstra, 1981, p. 63). The adult is a partner who wants to use personal experiences in the activity, not waiting to receive information, but sharing it. It is about considering and maximizing the inclusion of all participants.
- 5) The context of the museum must also be considered an important factor in the adult learning process. This implies that when planning and implementing a museum program, the physical environment and the entire museum staff should be involved in creating a comfortable learning space where different ideas can be shared in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Thus, all staff working in a museum must be made aware of the importance of their role and all are involved in the success of the museum enterprise, in order to maximize the reception of participants so that they can feel at ease from the moment they enter, within an inclusive environment where they are not there to have content imposed on them, but rather to participate fully in the multifactorial exchanges.

Within these five elements to be considered in the planning and execution of museum programs, special attention is to be given to the environment and the educator as a facilitator. Hiemstra (1981) suggests that museum educators also take into account adult learners different cognitive learning styles.

He is referring to *Field-dependent learners* and *Field-independent learners*. The first, needs more guidance, a more structured learning activity as the other is more at ease where it is possible “*to build their own structure into a learning experience*” (Hiemstra, 1981, p. 65). As a facilitator, the museum educator needs to consider planning activities for both types of learners. The term ‘facilitator’ thus illustrates the full extent of the educator’s role “*managing the activities of the group in a way which will ensure, as far as possible, that learning takes place in a congenial atmosphere*” (Jones, 1995, p. 67).

A museum program that can benefit adult learners must consider the key characteristics of the andragogical process, which is to be non-prescriptive while:

- Including ongoing negotiation;
- Fostering shared individual and collective responsibility for learning;
- Valuing an inclusive approach as part of the learning process;
- Establishing mutual respect (Jones, 1995)

In delivering an adult museum education program, the educator-facilitator must understand that:

One of the definitions of adult education is that it develops the process of inquiry in a mutual, self-directing way. First, interest must be generated in the visitors; second, visitor needs, and experiences must be assessed; third, a program is planned based on interests and needs compiled; fourth, the visitors should proceed in the program by self-discovery. (Allen, 1981, p. 74)

As Allen (1981) reported adult learners “*like a variety of experiences*” (p. 116) and don’t like “*to be lectured to all the time*” (p. 116), they want their voices to be heard. They do not participate in an activity to be in a passive posture waiting to be fed information by another person like an educator.

Basic components in setting up a program based on the andragogical principles

For Knox (1981a), in an educational activity an adult will look for “*a more comprehensive sense of oneself as a human being*” (p. 80) but also of the community one lives in. It is more important than ever as in the last decade, museums have actively promoted their social value as a community asset. Considering that the population is aging, and wants to remain active as long as possible, it is clear that innovative programs must be put in place to meet the needs of adult learners. Well-designed and relevant museum programs for adults can help build a sense of community.

In this perspective, Knox (1981b) proposes five components of planning and implementing educational programs for adults:

First component: needs assessment.

This component considers general understanding of adults as learners and as museum visitors to better inform the museum educators on the adults’ goals for participating in the museum program. What the adult learner already knows and the feeling about the topic;

Second component: context in which the educational activities will occur.

This means looking at the general setting where the activity will take place such as the exhibits, objects, information and general resources available. Also, there is a need to consider the educator-facilitator that will conduct the program;

Third component: the objectives of the program.

Importance of knowing the educational objectives the program is trying to achieve. Here, it is to take into account the characteristics of the adult learner. To know to whom the program is tailored to;

Fourth component: the learning activities.

With this component, it is important that the adult learner be an active participant in the process. The goal is for adult learners to be actively engaged in their learning during the activity, but also to generate a need for future involvement in other museum programs;

Fifth component: Evaluation.

This asks for all those involved finding a way to judge the effectiveness of the museum offer. An in-depth evaluation is needed beyond the 'happiness ratings' to build on the experience and improve programming. It is important to consider ways to evaluate a program in a continuous basis as adult learners are to be considered active participants in their learning process and can diagnose their own needs.

The five components elaborated in setting up programs for adults also emanate from the notion of the adult learner 'experience'. This is to say that "*John Dewey's learning through experience theory involves the equal integration of the cognitive [knowledge], the affective [attitudes], and the psychomotor [skills] domains*" (Sternberg, 1989, p. 156), just as previously cited with Bloom (1956), Hohenstein and Moussouri (2018) and the imaginative function of adults as proposed by Dufresne-Tassé et al. (2006). Jerome Bruner's theory is also one that could be taken into account in the development of meaningful museum programs. This theory "*based on the discovery method builds on Dewey's philosophy of experiential learning [...] where one learns through insights, by rearranging or changing previous ideas, perceptions and experiences which lead to new thought patterns*" (Sternberg, 1989, p. 156). This exhorts us to further explore the production of meaning as a process during an experience undertaken by an adult participating in a museum program as well as presenting an overview of possible outcomes that an adult could benefit from following such an educational program.

Meaningful museum programs: examples of learning processes and outcomes

As part of an ongoing research on the psychological functioning of adults in an art museum context, four stages have been identified that could be considered in our understanding of the processes and outcomes during an adult's quest for production of meaning while participating in a program. Here we present the four stages that were developed from Pelowski and Akiba's (2011) psychological model of aesthetic experience to describe the experience of an adult participating in an activity in a museum program dedicated to engaging adults in their encounters with works of art: Stage 1: Expectations, interests, and motivations; Stage 2: Correspondence between museum offerings and personal interests; Stage 3: Experiential re-evaluation; and Stage 4: Capacity to re-examine preconceptions. To these stages, six *Outcomes* are identified. These stages and outcomes are presented as examples of what an adult can experience while participating in a museum program.

Stage 1: Expectations, interests, and motivations

Adult participants, to a museum program, have expectations and interests that influence their decision to get involved in such an experience. They also know, even before arriving to the museum, what they like or not. That is to say that even before arriving at the museum to participate in a program, adults possess their personal pre-classification concerning objects or the collections to be explored, having a set of postulates that guide their behavior and expectations in the museum context. We are referring to an individual's self-image, one's mental picture. Moreover, adults' self-image is generally resistant to change, and individuals will be confronted to the museum collection that might or not correspond to their taste and could constitute a threat to an existing self-image if a discrepancy should arise while viewing the objects being explored during a museum program.

Outcome 1 is about the motivation to discover the self and to feel connected with our surroundings. Recognizing oneself in the experience develops one's self-esteem. For a learning experience to happen, there is a need for one to be motivated. Motivation is influenced by several factors related to the cognitive, emotional and psychological aspects (Leder et al., 2004). Ryan and Deci (2000) say that *"to be motivated means to be moved to do something. A person who feels no impetus or inspiration to act is thus characterized as unmotivated, whereas someone who is energized or activated toward an end is considered motivated"* (p. 54). In our museum programs context, participants' motivation could be qualified as having the hope to fill the purpose of one's own satisfaction, the situation presents aspects of interest to them. Let's not forget that adults are self-directed in their learning choices. They choose to participate in this nonformal learning experience that is the museum program. There is a basic distinction to establish in discussing motivation, *"between intrinsic motivation, which refers to doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable, and extrinsic motivation, which refers to doing something because it leads to a separable outcome"* (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 55). We can think that people's motivation to participate to a museum program would be intrinsic, but during the experience they might be less motivated if what they experience does not respond to their expectations. In such a situation, there is a need to cope with moments of dissonances. One indication of a change in the interest level of an adult participant during an activity in the exhibit space is when an individual leaves the group and begins to flit about, not focusing on the activity at hand, but looking for something else. In these circumstances, an educator-facilitator will adjust the interventions to include this adult back into the conversation and try to understand the particular needs of the adult within the group.

Stage 2: Correspondence between museum offerings and personal interests

Upon contact with an object in a museum context, an initial identification or classification is made by an individual, based on one's pre-expectations and self-image. At this stage of the production of meaning, the adult identifies what is being perceived as being worthwhile or not, to further explore. This arises because the object may or may not match prior expectations and, depending on the match, the self-image may be affected. If there is a match, the adult will like the object and feel confident about the encounter (Émond, 2002, 2017; Weltzl-Fairchild & Émond, 2000). During the consonant response, the adult participant simply feels a connection with the object. It is also possible that at this point, the correspondence with the object and the museum environment is so

strongly felt by the adult that a flow experience occurs (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). The individual is then totally immersed in the activity, in total harmony with the museum environment. This is **Outcome 2**, where the adult feels almost in symbiosis with the object and the museum environment. This can be experienced as a complete surprise for a participant who realizes that the museum object and environment match one's self-image which encourages the adult to continue its exploration and to be open to further discoveries. The person is then motivated to continue the museum program experience because it is perceived as rewarding and important. When the adult learns to feel confident with the actions to be undertaken during the museum program experience, this individual will seek to repeat similar opportunities.

On the other hand, when the museum object does not match the adult's prior expectations or self-image, there is a dissonance between the object and the museum context or program components. If the dissonance is too great and the adult feels that there is no way to resolve it, the only solution is to physically remove oneself from the situation as continuing would pose a threat to the self-image. It is important for the educator-facilitator to be aware of the divergence and adapt the mediation to support the adult to continue the exploration.

If the individual is convinced that the perceived divergence can be resolved without damaging the self-image, the exploration of the object will be pursued through the museum program activity. In order to do this, seeking information about the object, that is, through what is provided by the museum professional, becomes essential in order to overcome the dissonance. If the individual finds the relevant information, the experience continues. However, if the museum program participant does not find the necessary information, the state of dissonance remains (Émond, 2016).

If the adult does feel confident that the dissonance can be resolved and thinks that perhaps it is possible to look at the object in a different way, the adult pursues the experience. In this circumstance, the museum is perceived as a place where the collection exists for a purpose. Then, without worry about causing damage to the self-image, the adult will continue to explore the object presented in a museum program context and this in collaboration with the educator-facilitator. This would summarize **Outcome 3**.

In museum programs, the educator-facilitator will intervene on the content of the exhibit but also on the individual's skills so that connections with objects on display, be possible. To help attain one of the learning outcomes (Outcome 3), the educator-facilitator is not limited to giving specific information to the participant, it is to give the opportunity for the adult to develop different skills that could be applied to the museum situation but also to the adult's daily life. During the museum program experience, the adult is asked to organize information presented in the museum by the educator-facilitator. This is true throughout the experience but most especially during Stage 2 when, as we have just presented, the adult might be in dissonance concerning the information available. Working with the information provided by the institution, the adult is encouraged to observe, compare, and to organize the information needed to synthesize it in order to fully participate in the museum program.

It is important to remember that information provided in the museum context can take many forms (written, verbal, audio, olfactory, tactile, and visual), allowing the educator-facilitator to leverage a variety of tools, including technological tools such as digital tablets, to communicate with adults in a museum education program. To this end, a

variety of tools will be designed during the development of the program so that the educator-facilitator can respond quickly to different situations that may be encountered during the activities. It also means understanding that some of the tools envisioned in the design of the activity may not be used by a particular group because they do not address their needs. So, throughout a museum program, the educator-facilitator helps to compensate for the adult's difficulties in organizing information and, in doing so, provides the individual with various strategies that could be repeated in future museum experiences or circumstances in the adult's everyday life.

Stage 3: Experiential re-evaluation

In a setting where the adult has no means to readily resolve the dissonance, one might enter in a period of active experiential re-evaluation (Pelowski & Akiba, 2011). If the adult decides to continue with an experiential re-evaluation, *"this event is often accompanied or preceded by acute self-focused attention"*, (Steele et al., 1993, as cited in Pelowski & Akiba, 2011, p. 89), which seems to have an impact on dissonant situations (Pelowski & Akiba, 2011). The individual, then gives up total control and revises their expectations to acknowledge the presence of the dissonance or conflict and switches to a metacognitive approach. Metacognition

encompasses three main facets: metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive experiences, and metacognitive skills [...]. Metacognitive knowledge refers to a person's conceptions of cognitive processes, such as thoughts about mental images, beliefs and insights. "I'm a visual learner" exemplifies this well. Metacognitive experiences comprise a person's awareness of thoughts or feelings, such as frustration or excitement, during a cognitive task. An illustration of this would be, "I am so bored reading this article on [...] [museum programs]." Metacognitive skills involve strategies aimed at monitoring cognition, such as orientation, planning, and evaluation. Take, for example "When I'm not sure if I understand something, I try to ask a question". (Gutwill & Dancstep, 2017, p. 73)

For **Outcome 4**, the museum participant acquires metacognitive strategies in which one discovers how to relate to the objects and topics presented in the museum. As a result, the adult becomes aware of its own personal functioning, its own meaning-making process when participating in a program that has personal significance.

Stage 4: Capacity to re-examine preconceptions

When the adult can understand the divergent or dissonant elements of the museum experience and integrates them as new self-knowledge, it will influence future interactions with other similar objects. The role of cognitive dissonance is significant in the production of meaning, as presented by Radford (2004), it contains *"[the] notion of tension and reconciliation, and of the creative act as speaking to something "within us" and revealing to us something about ourselves [...]"* (p. 56). The adult who overcomes the challenges offered in a museum program seems to put a creative outlet into action (Sternberg, 1989). In these circumstances, the individual appears to tolerate ambiguity and is willing to go beyond a comfort zone. In addition, being in a creative process allows the adult to explore one's identity and build new knowledge in the process of discovering oneself.

In **Outcome 5**, an adult's interactions with objects in the museum context can become a vehicle for constructing and understanding the self (Brinck, 2007). This implies, from a

museum program perspective, that a participant creates meaning from exploring objects through repeated experiences. The investigation of objects becomes a work in progress where each encounter is instrumental in self-discovery. As Carr (1985) states: *“In the cultural institution self-directed learners become models for themselves. Learning to use the cultural institution in pursuit of one inquiry offers an enduring literacy or process that is useful in other, future tasks”* (p. 57).

Similarly, when the adult can understand the divergent or dissonant elements of the learning experience and integrates them as new self-knowledge, it will influence its future museum exploration. Kokkos (2010) refers to Mezirow (2000) by saying that:

[...] transformative learning occurs when there is a transformation in our set of specific beliefs, feelings and attitudes (points of view) or in our broader orienting predisposition (habit of mind). [...] The entry point to a transformative process is the disorienting dilemma—a kind of learning disability felt by a person [...]. (pp. 173-174)

Meaning-making at this stage requires the adult to enjoy being in a state of ambiguity. Mezirow's (2000) transformative learning theory considers that a learning experience can challenge and transform an adult's perspectives and focuses on meaning-making as a process. We can consider a transformative museum experience to be **Outcome 6**.

Our preliminary findings indicate that to help adults to have a transformative museum experience, educator-facilitators are called upon to develop educational programs accompanied by mediation that would help adults challenge their preconceived notions about objects, collections, and the museum offerings in general.

Conclusion

We recognize that it is very difficult to describe the exact experiences that a museum program can elicit in adult participants, as there seem to be as many different avenues as there are individuals. However, let us not forget that there are elements to the museum experience that are commonly shared and can be understood, as we have seen in this article, through the lens of adult learning theories in education.

Not all museum experiences are transformative by any means, as this is one of many possible outcomes an adult may encounter. From our perspective in this article, the adult who participates in a museum program strives to produce meaning in the course of that experience. This process of meaning-making should be viewed as an ongoing journey, in which interests, preconceptions, motivations, dissonances, consonances, metacognition, creativity, ambiguity, and self-discovery are all components of the dynamic experience that continually informs the adult learner.

Thus, participation in a museum program is multifactorial and requires a multitude of approaches elaborated through the lens of learning theory in adult education. The educator-facilitator, in the development of mediation strategies, will then aim for adults to experience the pleasure of self-discovery while participating in an educational museum program.

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Summary

In this article, we focus on non-formal education, that is, education that takes place outside formal educational settings under the guidance of an educator-facilitator and guided by objectives specific to the museum context. We present a sampling of different theoretical frameworks from adult education research to inform the creation of various educational programs in their approaches and outcomes, to provide meaningful museum experiences for adults.

Adult learning theories in education are examined in terms of the uniqueness of the museum context. We can summarize the characteristics of the adult learner as a person in continuous development, where prior experiences are valued in achieving specific personal goals in a given situation.

If adults are participating in an educational museum program, it is likely that the program will promote their personal growth, based on their experiences, and address a concern that is consistent with their immediate needs.

The stages and outcomes are presented as examples of what an adult might experience while participating in a museum program. These are to be viewed as a journey that the visitor undertakes in which elements such as interests, preconceptions, motivations, dissonances, consonances, metacognition, creativity, ambiguity, and self-discovery are all components of the process that continually informs the adult as a learner in the context of a museum program.

Keywords: museum programs, adult learning theories in education, educator-facilitator, museum education

Learning to think. Intellectual function, processes, and strategies in museums.

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Introduction

Learning involves a permanent change in people's behaviour, the result of the ability or experience that is achieved or acquired through the continuous performance of an activity. What do we do when we are learning? Our learning processes form the backbone of a structure that includes many variables that influence how we learn and what we learn. What is the intellectual functioning of museum visitors, what resources and variables can they use during their museum experience?

To answer these questions, we are interested in studying the learning processes and strategies that facilitate the mental organisation of people and their application in everyday life and their behaviour in the museum. It is about how knowledge and thinking skills are used. It is about learning how the museum visit can become an experience that helps and challenges visitors to think and contributes to their personal development.

This article first describes some key concepts that explain the intellectual functioning of people (mental operations, functions, behaviours, intellectual capacity, abilities, etc).

The following are the main processes and some of the learning strategies we use in the acquisition of knowledge during educational experiences in museums.

1. Cognitive functioning

The intellectual functioning of museum visitors can be studied on three levels: the resources that are physically available to them; the functions that derive from these resources; and the behavioural implications (Castelló, 2001). These three levels of analysis are interrelated.

We all have physical cognitive resources that vary from person to person. They constitute the set of organs, their processes, and their possibilities of physical functioning. They are identified with the properties of the central nervous system, especially those of certain areas of the brain.

The cognitive resources available depend on the biological characteristics of the individual and how they are configured. They include biological inheritance, maturation processes, and some interactions with the environment (Plomin, Owen & McGuffin, 1994). Although we all have one brain, all brains are not the same and therefore their resources are not the same. There is individual potential, and no one can function cognitively beyond their physical limits of functioning.

1.1. Mental operations and cognitive functions

Mental operations are those internalised, organised, and coordinated actions with which we process the information we receive. Each person can carry out a total set of *mental operations*, they are their basic resources and have different levels of complexity (identification, comparison, analysis, synthesis, classification, coding, decoding, protection of virtual relations,

differentiation, mental representation, mental transformation, divergent reasoning, hypothetical reasoning, transitive reasoning, analogical reasoning, progressive reasoning...) (Castelló, 2000). The mental operations required for an activity can range from simple recognition or identification of objects to mental operations such as classification, seriation, comparison... (Prieto, 1989; Dufresne-Tassé, 2015, 2016).

The possible combinations of mental operations give rise to the *cognitive functions* that each individual can construct. They become the resources he or she can use to respond to the demands of the environment, for example when visiting an exhibition and trying to interpret the objects in it. They are the basic prerequisites of intelligence and explain how each person can use his or her previous experience in adapting to new situations (Feurestein, 1979). The most striking feature of these functions is that, in most cases, there is no single formula for constructing them: different combinations of resources can lead to the same or similar functions.

Cognitive functions enable us to carry out any task. They enable visitors to play an active role in the processes of receiving, selecting, transforming, storing, processing, and retrieving information. For example, when visitors perceive the information in the exhibition accurately and clearly; plan the visit systematically; verbally express and identify the objects and their memories; orient themselves in space during the tour; temporally sequence various facts, or relate two or more sources of information, they are using their intellectual resources by building the functions they need for all of this.

1.2. Cognitive functions, environment, and culture

Having cognitive resources does not by default mean that we use them. The environment and culture determine which resources are significant and which operations are useful in the environment in which a person lives (Collins, 1989). For Stenberg (1985) the physical resource potential of a person is used only as a function of the *requirements of the environment*. The resources allow the function to be built, but they are not sufficient to guarantee its construction. The same is true of the pressures of the environment: they are necessary, but alone are incapable of generating function in people who are lacking resource.

For Castelló (2000), the environmental conditions that favour the construction of cognitive functions are:

1. Having opportunities to apply the functions, practice and try different ways to do one same thing, automate the processes. The more experiences we have in a museum, the more opportunities we will have to build the functions related to a visit that favours their knowledge, their personal development, and their autonomy.
2. The individual or social valuation of a behaviour favours the construction of certain functions. For example, the social value placed on visiting exhibitions encourages the public to visit museums and facilitates the likelihood of the construction of the functions associated with the visit.
3. Functions must be culturally meaningful, i.e., they must have meaning in context. In practice, this argument implies the above, since a function that is meaningful for a given cultural setting will tend to have opportunities and pressures for its construction.

There is no single formula for constructing cognitive functions and it is possible to perform the same or a similar function by combining different resources. For example, how each person prepares a visit to the museum puts into operation different forms of representation of the organisation of information, different plans... even though they are performing the same function.

1.3. Cognitive Functions and Behaviours

Visitors manifest the cognitive functions they can construct through their behaviours. However, the occurrence of a behaviour depends in part on variables such as motivation... Thus, for

example, the active participation of visitors in museum activities does not only show that these visitors have something to express. Aspects such as interest in the proposed topic, empathy with the museum educator, and the affinity they feel with the group with which they share the activity are equally or even more important conditioning factors for a visitor to behave actively during a visit to the museum.

On the other hand, the behavioral manifestation of complex mental processes requires mastery of certain symbolic systems, such as language. To demonstrate that reasoning has taken place when a visitor looks at an object and tries to make sense of it, he or she must be able to express it. Visitors with good verbal skills can express what they think and remember from the museum visit or what they have experienced during the visit.

In summary, we can say that when a person engages in a behavior it shows that he or she is capable of constructing certain cognitive functions, but the absence of that same behavior does not indicate that he or she is not capable of constructing them.

The behaviour of museum visitors and their discourse when looking at an object and trying to make meaning highlights the cognitive functioning of each visitor through functions to grasp the meaning of what is seen or react quickly to it; to check the accuracy of the meaning produced; to enrich, clarify or criticise the meaning produced; to grasp, understand the overall meaning of various elements (Dufresne-Tassé, 2015; Dufresne-Tassé, O'Neill, Sauvé & Marin, 2015).

1.4. Capacity and ability to learn

Capacity, motivation, and time spent are the three elements that explain the different ways in which people acquire knowledge or learn. While motivation and time spent are circumstantial variables and change according to the activity and the moment, the capacity is usually considered stable and independent of circumstances external to the individual (Genovard and Gotzens, 1990). It is an individual structural characteristic that is difficult to modify.

What does the capacity to learn consist of? For Castelló (2000), capacity synthesises the set of basic brain resources that a person can make use of, in the appropriate environmental conditions, to construct functions and behaviours involved in learning. Capacity summarises the different and combined processes and functions that each person uses in the realisation of a similar end product. For example, the capacity to read a text captures a wide variety of processes and functions that combine in each individual to produce a similar end product.

As we have seen above, abilities are not easily identifiable through behaviour. However, abilities identify the set of functions and behaviours consolidated by a person (operations, functions, and behaviours) that are easily observable as they refer to what a person can do correctly and with ease. There are different classifications of thinking abilities categorised according to the following principles: abilities needed to clarify and understand information (their purpose is accuracy in gathering information: analysing ideas; analysing arguments); creative thinking (to generate original ideas: generating possible alternatives, combining ideas); critical thinking (to develop critical judgement: evaluating basic information; evaluating inferences by evidence; evaluating inferences by deduction) (Swartz and Park, 1994). This ability concept allows us to identify and relate the objectives of the exhibition and the skills we want to develop during the visit.

2. Learning processes and strategies from a constructivist perspective

The constructivist perspective on learning is based on the importance of education as an ability to take advantage of our intelligence. We learn when we connect our existing knowledge with new content in a cross-cutting and contextual way. To learn is to make new connections. We learn something about what we already know, activating the connections we already have and reshaping and expanding our patterns. For this reason, organising information by relating and

imposing an order between its different elements favours the acquisition of knowledge and facilitates learning.

We learn by experience, by exercising what we do well. The brain does not retain what it learns for its own sake, it retains what it can use. This theory views learning as an active process, through which people produce ideas that give meaning to the world in which they live and meaning to their personal experience (Hein, 1998).

2.1. Learning processes

Processes are the real core of constructivist learning. Learning depends on what the person does, on the processes he or she sets in motion. They include all events, everything that happens, and that is linked to each person's learning.

Each of the processes is an essential part of learning and can be done in many different ways. Each of the processes must also be performed by the learner. Processes involve manipulation of information

There is no consensus on what learning processes are and what they are called. Different authors (Gagné, 1974; Cook and Mayer, 1983; Thomas and Rohwer, 1986; Shuell, 1988) have defined learning processes that substantially coincide in the following classification made by Beltrán (1993):

1. Awareness-raising

The sensitisation process integrates among other affective-motivational processes *motivation and emotion* that are related to the activation and persistence of the learning behaviour.

2. Attention

Attention is a selective discrimination mechanism that filters perceived information of interest to us. We only store what catches our attention because it is meaningful to each of us. Its interest and significance will be given by our previous experiences and the knowledge organised and recorded in our mind.

Attention can be **global** or **comprehensive** when we are interested in comprehensively perceiving the organised structure of the informative data of a place or a text. It is directed at the totality of the stimuli, taking in all the available information as a whole, opening up a general perspective without previous limitations, taking in as much data as possible. This strategy favours synthesis.

Attention can also be **selective** when we focus on only part of the information and perceive an object from different points of view, ignoring the rest. This is a way of alleviating the information overload to which we are exposed. The human capacity to process information is limited. The versatility of attention to ignore the stimuli that continually bombard us allows us to intentionally direct, alternate, and control our focus of attention. This selective attention is determined by interest, expectations, and knowledge that allows us to focus on the relevant material. Selective attention is concerned with the exploration of details and the analytical perception of objects.

Finally, **permanent and sustained** attention is that which is maintained during an activity that progresses gradually. To favour this type of attention, the demands of the activity must be sequentially regulated in relation to its complexity. Likewise, it is necessary to maintain motivation and attentional interest in the face of possible external distracting factors and internal factors such as fatigue, lack of interest or weakness can compromise this process of sustained attention.

Attention as a process allows us to choose a particular piece of information while ignoring others. It is a selective control that allows us to perceive sensorially a part of the reality that affects us while ignoring the others. Attention allows us to choose some of the many informative stimuli that surround us.

Its functions include a) ensuring that we are aware of only a small part of the information potentially available in long-term memory for a short time; b) selecting elements of the stimulus and memory relevant to the experience; c) shifting focus and context when sudden stimuli are received. Attention allows us to interrupt information processing to adapt to the environment by responding to unexpected stimuli (Beltran, 1993).

Attention is responsible for processing the information that comes to us from outside. This information is deposited in the sensory register where it remains for a few seconds. The processing channel in each person's memory is limited, so we filter what we are interested in processing, i.e., how much information will reach the memory and what kind of information will arrive. Thus, the mind selects and decides, according to the physical characteristics of the object and attitudinal criteria of each person, what to do with the information: a) reject it, b) store it in short-term memory, c) transform it to adapt it to previous information, d) learn it by integrating, assimilating, differentiating, or associating it in long-term memory. The result is the modification of thought (Letteri, 1985).

In conclusion, we can say that attention is limited, and it is not possible to take in all of reality at once. Effectiveness in a task requires selective and exclusive attention, ignoring the uncomfortable stimuli present and information that is temporarily dispensable. Attention does not always occur spontaneously; it requires effort.

3. Acquisition

It is time to meaningfully understand the information. To do this, it must be encoded by relating new information to existing information in the mental structure. For Jenkins (1974) and Anderson (1984), information is organised and represented in schemas that include everything an individual knows about a subject. This information is organised, and each person can activate and transform it through cognitive and metacognitive processes by making inferences and evaluating his or her learning. Acquisition includes processes of *comprehension* (selection and organisation), *retention* or availability of information in memory (repetition and elaboration), and *transformation* of knowledge during long-term processes through meaningful tasks related to the interests of the person who performs and controls them (Marzano, 1991).

4. Personalisation

During this process, the person assumes responsibility for learning by ensuring the validity and relevance of the knowledge acquired, seeking new possibilities beyond the established. For Marzano (1991) this is dispositional thinking as it concerns thinking that activates favourable dispositions to control, secure, and creatively extend acquired knowledge. It includes *critical thinking* (reflective analysis of information). For Willingham (2007) critical thinking involves seeing both sides of an issue, being open to new evidence that does not confirm one's ideas, reasoning dispassionately, requiring claims to be supported by evidence, and deducing and inferring conclusions from the available facts. Cognitively, critical thinking includes reasoning, judgement and decision making, and problem-solving.

In personalisation processes, there is also *creative thinking* related to originality (thinking that is not predictable, that is unusual, and causes surprise because it is not logical) and appropriateness (usefulness) (Stenberg & Lubart, 1997).

Finally, personalisation also includes *metacognition*, the ability to be aware of one's thinking and to use this awareness to bring about a perceived change through reflection and to improve the results of one's actions. Flavell (1978;1987) quoted by Prieto & Hervás (1992, p.64) includes two metacognitive components: *the person's knowledge of what he/she does and how he/she does it*.

5. Recovery

This process consists of accessing the information stored in long-term memory by making it conscious. It includes two moments: firstly, the memory search, examining the stored contents until the desired information is retrieved. To do this, it is best to selectively use the available cues that help us to remember (for example, we remember things associated with an image of

the environment and associated with emotions, which is why surprising or shocking events are easier to remember than others, furthermore, if we can remember the place where an experience occurred, we can also remember the rest of the details). The second moment is to decide whether the information retrieved is accepted as sufficient (Beltrán, 1993).

6. Transfer

Learning does not end with the acquisition and retention of knowledge. Transfer has to do with the application of the knowledge (skill and content) learned in different contexts. For example, learning to drive a car helps a person learn more quickly to drive a truck. For Perkins & Salomon (1988), it involves learning within a given context and its impact beyond that context. Although it may seem a simple process, it is not. Transfer does not occur spontaneously. We do not normally transfer knowledge to new life situations, so it is necessary to use strategies that help us to apply what we have learned to other contexts.

7. Evaluation

The purpose of this process is to check whether the proposed objectives have been achieved. When the feedback is positive, when we check what we have achieved, motivation and self-concept increase. Evaluation entails justification or gratification for what has been achieved and informs us whether the objectives set have been reached. Evaluation closes the chain of learning processes that begins with the opening of expectations (awareness) that are confirmed or not by the evaluation.

These learning processes are a chain of cognitive events in which each of the processual moments are related with diachronic and synchronic continuity since all the processes are involved in each moment, and the relationship between the processes is bidirectional since attention influences comprehension and comprehension influences attention, and the same happens with the rest of the different phases of the process (Pérez and Beltrán, 1991).

3. Learning strategies related to awareness-raising and attention processes in museums

Strategies are action plans in the service of processes. They use techniques (specific activities in the service of a strategy) and trigger a series of cognitive functions that favour the acquisition, retention, and retrieval of information. The implementation of strategies can lead to an ability that with practice becomes automated, increasing the cognitive resources of each person (Jones et al. 1987; Beltrán, 1993).

Strategies refer to the cognitive resources that facilitate and develop the various learning processes. Through strategies, we can process, organise, retain, and retrieve information. Strategies also allow us to plan, regulate and evaluate these same processes according to our objectives.

3.1. Awareness-raising strategies for learning in the museum

3.1.1. Motivation

Motivation initiates the process of learning awareness. For Dufresne-Tassé (2015), one of the principles to be considered when planning a thematic temporary exhibition is to ensure the optimal motivation of visitors by reinforcing the interest and expectations that have led to the visit, favouring the acquisition of meaning through the observation of objects.

Learning requires effort and, above all, that is the visitor who mentally controls the knowledge. Without their active involvement, meaningful learning does not take place.

The public explores museums voluntarily and each visitor decides for how long and what he/she pays attention to. For Gottesdiener (1992), the public's interpretation of what they see depends on their expectations, needs, and preconceptions.

Loomis (1987) already pointed out that setting up an exhibition without considering the interests of the people to whom the message is intended to be conveyed encourages only one type of public to attend exhibitions, those who share the approaches of the museum's designers, curators, and commissioners. The active participation of the visiting public depends on the knowledge of their expectations and understanding of what they are looking for.

For Beltrán (1993) the functions or strategies that contribute to making an activity interesting and motivating are:

a) The challenge

The most obvious and permanent function of intrinsic motivation is to effectively challenge visitors' abilities. In the words of Dufresne-Tassé (2015), it is important to encourage maximum learning, psychological development, enjoyment, and learning. To this end, a theme for the exhibition should be chosen that is as unfamiliar as possible but that allows the visitor to connect their previous knowledge on the subject by making the new information meaningful and thus acquiring knowledge; to reinforce their cognitive and imaginative functions.

b) Curiosity

It is triggered by activities that surprise visitors and include somewhat incongruous information. The design of an exhibition incorporates asking questions to the public to increase their curiosity and provoke uncertainty about the possible answers. Cognitive conflict increases visitor motivation. Berlyne in his book *Conflict, arousal and curiosity* already described the benefits and importance of surprise, doubt, incongruity, and perplexity as a novel, unexpected and surprising stimuli that provoke a cognitive conflict that increases motivation (Berlyne, 2014).

Increasingly, the idea that controversy must be explicitly present in museums, particularly in modern and contemporary art museums, is gaining ground, leading to occasions when the museum must directly confront public interrogation of its often subtle and misunderstood decisions and processes. The museum's increasing engagement with its communities raises questions: how can museums manage controversy, and can museums learn from controversy to discover better ways of working with their audiences? (Davis, 2015; Lorente, 2015).

c) The control

Motivation is enhanced when visitors control the environment they are in and can be autonomous because they know and recognise how the exhibition is organised, they can locate the pieces they want to visit... The visitor expects and wants to feel in control, to make choices and decisions (Perry, 2012). In this sense, information brochures should help visitors to orient themselves spatially and control the setting in which they find themselves. However, being one of the resources most used by visitors, recent research by the Permanent Laboratory of Audiences of the Spanish Ministry of Culture indicates that it is one of the least valued resources (2013). Museums are beginning to replace these information leaflets with current and practical maps. The aim of this measure is for the visitor to achieve greater autonomy during the tour of the museum, the location of the key pieces selected, and greater effectiveness in understanding the museum's contents. The floorplans should be simple and contain essential information, avoiding complex codes that are difficult to understand. Meaningful colour to differentiate the different exhibition areas; identifiable spatial references in the environment also facilitate the visitor's orientation and autonomy.



Figures 1 and 2- Providing information on where to go by indicative signs
LPPM. Leaflets and Plans in easy reading. National Archaeological Museum (Spain)

d) Utility and the effort-benefit ratio

According to Bitgood (2013), when the public perceives that the contents of an exhibition are highly useful (relevance, importance, benefit, satisfaction), they feel motivated to visit it because they relate it to the high personal value it brings them in relation to the effort they have to make.

e) Physical comfort

Also, the physical comfort that visitors experience in spacious exhibition halls that allow for a smooth flow of visitors and a museography suitable for comfortable viewing of objects facilitates motivation (Dufresne-Tassé; O'Neill, Marin, 2015).

3.1.2. The emotion

Emotions have always been present in museums, although relegated to a secondary place and disqualified for a long time in the sociology of arts and culture as irrational phenomena.

However, as Bennett (2012) points out, emotion is present in the promotion of places, in the marketing of *merchandising* products, and the love for a city. We get angry with subjective exhibitions that do not reflect the reality of a territory's history or we get moved by an exhibition that captures our attention and provokes contemplative and renewing, calm and pleasurable sensations.

Museums are emotional places. We find emotions in the interactions between visitors as they move around the museum, commenting on the exhibits or chatting over coffee in the café. There are also emotions in the interactions with museum objects: we often talk about "loving" certain exhibits, while "hating" others. There are also emotions in the storerooms and restoration workshops of works of art, of objects in an exhibition, where curators care for them because they matter. However, it is still unclear how emotions are "integrated" into our understanding of museums (Munro, 2014).



Figures 3 and 4- Jewish Museum Berlin. Museography evokes remembrance through the emotions of Holocaust victims.*

Emotional strategies that help visitors to use their cognitive functions in the museum to activate and energize their learning mechanisms and to obtain and process incoming information are as follows:

a) Know the reasons for the visit and what experiences satisfy and move visitors.

Certainly, museum professionals take the role of emotions in the museum experience very much into account. For Falk (2020) we visit museums to satisfy a need that can be emotional, social, to learn... Emotion drives the decision to go to the museum. For this author, the museum experience is not a linear process. The visit is an emotional continuum in which each of the moments is related to the others and all of them are mediated by the emotions that the visitor experiences. It is emotions and not reason that drive the public to visit museums, visitor satisfaction in the museum, and, ultimately, long-term memories and future visits to museums.

Falk (2020) understands that the decision to go to a museum is a learned experience because to decide to visit a museum one must have learned, at some point in life, that museums are places that can positively satisfy one's needs. In the absence of this mainly unconscious and emotional perception, no one would voluntarily visit a museum.

It is well known that as a result of past experiences and word-of-mouth recommendations from friends and family, many (but not all) people consider museums to be good places to spend leisure time. Museums are great places to go as a family, but they also help to satisfy personal interests in art, history, or science. So, when we look for ways to spend our leisure time during a weekend, consciously or unconsciously, we start to think about which places could best meet our needs. We assess suitable places, and it is then that past experiences and word-of-mouth recommendations work. If a person remembers that his or her need(s) for that day could be "best" satisfied by visiting a museum, the idea arises that a visit to one of them is the best thing to do (Falk, 2020).

Many researchers have tried to list the expectations and interests that visitors seek in museums. The results of Falk's research (2006, 2020) have allowed him to classify them into 7 categories:

1. Curiosity with a generic interest in the museum content: it is about finding something that catches their attention, attracts their attention, and stimulates their learning.
2. Socially satisfying experiences of learning, interacting, and interacting in a group, as a family.
3. Satisfy a specific objective related to the specific content of the exhibition.

* Photos when not specifically stated: Rosa María Hervás Avilés.

4. Go to an interesting place. Being there, in the museum, and having seen the exhibition.
5. A contemplative, spiritual, or restorative experience. The museum becomes a haven away from work where it is possible to relax surrounded by beautiful and inspiring things.
6. Going to an important place is about a feeling of duty to be in a respected place.
7. Reaffirm their own identity because in the museum they can learn more about themselves, who they are, where they come from, and what makes them different from the rest.

The results showed that the most influential reasons for long-term learning were those associated with visitor identity and satisfying personal needs and curiosity, while those who visited the museum motivated by social experience had fewer memories associated with the content. However, the latter were able to remember more details of the visit than the former (Falk, 2020).

When visitors come to the museum to see exhibitions, they talk to the people who arrive, people-watch, and use the shops and cafés. For Falk (2020), visitors' attention is focused on: a) objects and works that motivate them because they are related to themselves, including those they have been talked to or heard about as worthy, b) objects and works which, although potentially distant to them, coincide with their previous interests and experiences.

Although it is impossible to predict what will happen during a visit, there are particularly significant moments that make the experience, especially moving, such as when a parent connects with their child through an object or when a visitor suddenly discovers something that piques their interest and satisfies their curiosity. Visitors often find these experiences particularly satisfying.

After the visit, these emotional experiences not only increase the satisfaction of museum visitors but also lead to long-term memories. People remember experiences that they find very satisfying. The fact that virtually all museum visitors report positive experiences and that almost all can recall and describe these positive experiences months and even years later is a testimony to the value and emotional importance of these kinds of memorable experiences are exactly the kind of things that visitors share with others later, i.e., experiences that lead to positive word-of-mouth recommendations. In this way, emotionally satisfying experiences drive future visits to museums.

As we can see, the museum experience begins and ends with emotions, and museum professionals can apply the results of this research to design strategies to improve practice. Positive emotions are a driver for motivation, for recalling memories. Satisfactory experiences of the public are fundamental for repeat visits and recommendations to family, friends, and acquaintances.

b) Planning emotions. Hospitality

Feldman (2018) has shown that emotions are constructed at the moment by core systems interacting throughout the brain through individual experiences and acquired learning. Thus, emotions are unique to each person, and their emotional response is unique to their museum experience.

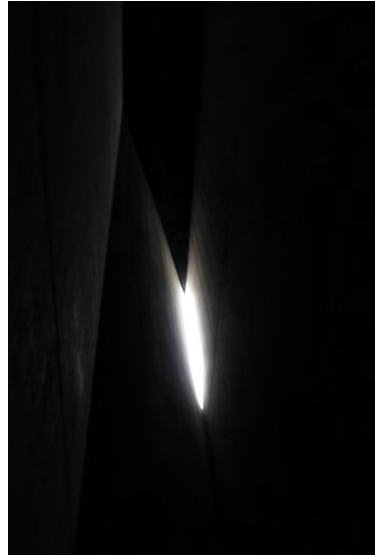


Figure 5- Provoking emotions with light and darkness - Holocaust Tower at the Jewish Museum Berlin

For Owen (2020) the museum experience is essentially sensory. Museographers can position the content to create emotional experiences. They use lighting, music, smells... to achieve the impact that favours different experiences. Moving from a dark place to a brightly lit space, for example, provokes excitement and little pleasure, which is appropriate for arousing visitors' curiosity and attracting their attention. A gradual transition from bright outdoor lighting to a relatively dim gallery could provoke a calming and relaxing effect... It is all about making the experience memorable.

This author considers that the moments of the museum experience that most need emotional planning are the arrival and departure from the museum.

Arriving at the museum for many first-time visitors can be something from which they expect nothing. However, other visitors show excitement and enthusiasm, they are happy, and their joy is reduced by the long queues to buy a ticket, the cold or the heat, the security measures, the social distance, the hygienic measures, the need to go to the toilet, the tiredness of the journey or the wait... This first impression can lead to an initial evaluation of the visit before entering the museum: is it worth the time, the effort, and the cost of the ticket? These annoying circumstances produce dissatisfaction that can be mitigated but not eliminated. In this case, museum professionals can organise the arrival by helping them in these moments of uncertainty, creating a positive first impression that will underpin the rest of the visit. How? By organising the arrival of visitors, managing waiting times, and the issuing of tickets satisfactorily; by receiving them with welcome messages, favouring comfort and convenience with the deposit of their personal objects, facilitating the entry to the exhibitions.

For Owen (2020) hospitality may be the most important of all moments in emotional planning. It is about welcoming and entertaining kindly and generously the museum's guests, its visitors. Hospitality is a cultural requirement that museums must prioritise to succeed. Even the smallest measure must be anticipated and planned as a good host.



Figures 6 and 7- Mediators welcoming visitors
Tate Modern Art Gallery, London. 2017

When the public finishes an experience in which they have been able to get involved because they have been safe and comfortable and have been able to understand, then comes the moment of, what next? It is usually when tiredness, hunger, the need to go to the toilet or to check the elapsed time or to find their way around the museum require the attention of the museum staff who, knowing these cycles of the visit, foresee them and plan moments of emotional satisfaction.

Today, research on museum visitors and the recognition of the value of emotions as essential to experience planning is important. Museums can use this powerful tool and better serve their visitors.

c) Emotions in museums to improve health and wellbeing

Contemporary museum studies are increasingly interested in how museums can contribute to social policy objectives, and as a result, curators are interested in emotions around health and well-being. Experiences at Glasgow Museums show that social engagement by museums can be beneficial in developing social inclusion strategies and can have a positive impact on people's physical and emotional wellbeing. Cultural activities can influence individuals' self-esteem and self-confidence (Munro, 2014). Likewise, in Alzheimer's patients, art has been used as a means of communication, a visual stimulus and an emotional catalyst that awakens memories and sensations which these people can no longer access spontaneously, making it easier for them to express their emotions when they receive evocative artistic stimuli (Delgado, Hervás, Arnardottir, 2013).

Through art, and its therapeutic potential, research and intervention projects for people with Alzheimer's have been developed, such as ARTZ directed by John Zeisel, TimeSlips by Anne Basting, Dementia Positive by John Killick, or the research carried out by Delgado (2016) at the University of Murcia based on the experience "Art and culture as therapy against Alzheimer's" at the Museum of Fine Arts in Murcia (Spain).

This research on emotions and Alzheimer's patients concludes that the experience in a museum is emotionally significant for these patients, provoking positive emotions such as joy through the evocation of memories. Museums become inclusive spaces by hosting activities and workshops that facilitate this type of non-pharmacological therapies that improve the quality of life of these patients thanks to emotionally rewarding experiences. In addition, the mediated visit facilitates the shared participation of people with Alzheimer's disease and their relatives in the cultural leisure activities of their city, outside the daily familiar environment, generating a feeling of social competence in the participants, and a reason for conversation and memory afterward. For people with Alzheimer's disease, sharing a museum activity can awaken their curiosity and enthusiasm to relate common memories to the other participants, leaving apathy aside, improving their self-esteem and quality of life. Observing the behaviour of the participants and their level of individual self-esteem confirmed the idea that each

person's perception of themselves is never self-constructed in isolation, but is conditioned by the social context, their individual history, concerns, expectations, and direct environment. Cultural mediation, essential to build trust and avoid the feeling of fear of error, facilitated verbal and non-verbal communication in a spontaneous way (Delgado, 2016).



Figures 8 and 9 - Art to stimulate emotions and memories in Alzheimer's patients. Fine Arts Museum of Murcia (©Delgado, 2016).

Through the workshops previously planned to improve the well-being of Alzheimer's patients, links were established between the emotion that facilitated the evocation of memories, artistic perception, and cultural mediation. It became clear that recalling and evoking life stories, stored in remote memory, was a stimulus for people with Alzheimer's disease to converse and share their life experiences, memories and common feelings was a strategy to strengthen capacities that were beginning to degenerate and to improve communication and social interaction.

3. 2 Strategies for keeping people's attention during learning in the museum

Attention processes are very important in exhibition design. Bitgood's (2000,2013) work on the role of attention in museum learning processes is embodied in his "attention value" model. This model is based on a cost (effort)/benefit ratio whereby if the visitor's attention is not sufficiently rewarded, he or she "disengages", and learning does not take place.

For Bitgood (2013) it is virtually impossible to support learning without attention as a prerequisite, and while paying attention does not guarantee learning, learning is unfeasible without attention. In other words, visitors must focus their attention for a meaningful experience to occur.

As previously mentioned, attention is selective and limited and it is not possible to attend to several meaningful tasks at the same time (Johnson & Dark,1986, as cited by Bitgood2000, p.32). Moreover, visitors' attention is only achieved when they are motivated (Rand,1990, as cited by Bitgood, 2000, p.34).

Similarly, information processing is also limited, we can only process a few elements simultaneously (Beltran, 1993). For Kahneman (1973, as cited by Bitgood, 2000, p.33) time and effort diminish the available attention. Visitors are often overloaded with more information than they can mentally process.

In this model, we find two main ideas: 1. The success of an exhibition depends on how well it manages the attention of its visitors. 2. The audience's motivation to attend is the value they perceive in doing so, i.e., what benefit they get from trying (cost) at an attraction, focus, or engagement stage. This translates into the formula: utility (or benefit) divided by cost (Bitgood,2000, 2013). Research findings indicate that "visitors seem to make this calculation, sometimes unconsciously, before deciding to attend to something in the exhibition" (Bitgood, 2013, p. 60).

Bitgood (2013) defines visitor attention in museums as a continuum of three interconnected stages (attraction, focus, and engagement). Each stage is influenced by a combination of interrelated factors: personal (values, interests, experiences, cognitive and affective resources), psycho-physiological (decision-making and physical condition),and environmental (social stimuli, museographic and architectural design).

Indicators of visitor response are manifested in different ways through actions such as: approaching the object, prolonged observation by interrupting the walk, the time spent by the visitor contemplating a work or object, reading the texts, the relationship and comments made with other visitors. The visitor's reaction at each stage depends on the unique combination of these variables that influence the processes of attention.

Strategies to help maintain the attention of visitors to an exhibition are related to the attentional characteristics of each of the different stages of Bitgood's (2013) valued attention model, which as noted above are interconnected. For that reason, we will consider the implications that the interconnected stages of attention have for exhibition design (Bitgood, 2000, 2013).

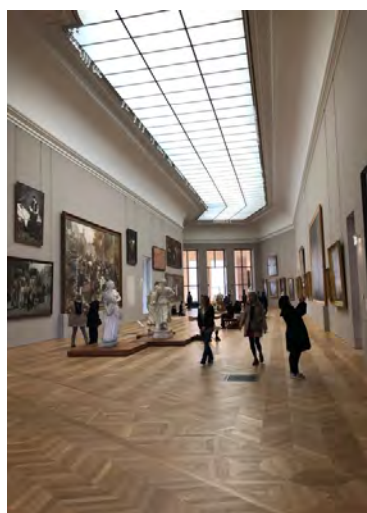
3.2.1. Capturing attention

What happens during the attention-capturing stage?

During this initial stage, the public's attention is broad and not fixed on any one object. The visitor observes or looks for what is displayed in the room as if it were a shop window with global attention (Beltrán, 1993). How to capture the attention during this phase? Through orientation and searching (Bitgood, 2013).

Orientation is an automatic response to a powerful stimulus, such as a loud noise. The visitor's attention is stimulus driven (Corbetta and Shulman, 2002), unfocused and sensitive to external elements that distract their attention. The public in this case moves in response to sensory stimuli such as large objects that stand out or move, loud sounds...

Searching is a process of exploration of the exhibition environment in which the visitor looks for something of possible use (something interesting, familiar...). It is targeted attention. During the process of searching, the public looks at an element of the exhibition, approaches the object and stops to look at it. Often a powerful stimulus disturbs and distracts them from the systematic search they are carrying out. Once distracted, visitors rarely return their attention to the original element of the exhibit (Posner and Cohen, 1984). Fatigue and energy level can influence the search process. A lower energy level or a higher level of fatigue may decrease the visitor's willingness to pay attention. Searching can be sequential (step-by-step) or simultaneous related to a global perception.



Figures 10 and 11. The visitor observes or looks for what is on display in the room.
Petit Palais. Paris.2018. National Gallery. London.2019

There are two main strategies to help to **capture the visitor's attention**:

a) **The salience or distinctiveness of the stimulus**

This refers to the fact that powerful stimuli automatically capture the attention of visitors as part of the orientation reflex. At this stage, it has to be considered how large objects, isolation of objects from competing stimuli, the contrast between form and background, multi-sensory stimulation affects visitors' attention capture.



Figure 12- Prominent object. Exhibition "Art and Mathematics. Chances".
Exhibition Hall of the University of the Basque Country. 2021.

Some strategies for improving the salience of objects are summarised in Table 1.

Table.1

Strategies for capturing attention through object salience

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Isolating the exhibit from other objects increases the likelihood of attracting the attention of visitors.• The size of objects is important to capture the attention of the audience. The more an object stands out, the more likely it is to attract attention.• High contrast with the surrounding background facilitates the prominence of the object.• Incorporating multisensory stimuli such as sound, smell or touch that are complementary to the object on display helps to capture attention.• The contrast produced by spot lighting is another way to enhance the distinctiveness of an object.• Placing objects in the line of sight of visitors better captures their attention. |
|--|

Adapted from Bitgood (2013, 2020)



Figure13- Contrast between form and background. Exhibition Tornaviaje. Ibero-American Art in Spain. Museo del Prado. 2021

a) Flow patterns in the environment

It has to do with the visual and physical access of visitors. It has to do with the physical proximity of the object along the circulation path. Very few "iconic" exhibits are sufficiently attractive to justify moving away from the most time- and effort-efficient route.



Figure 14- Organised circulation of visitors
Exhibition The Machine. Magritte. Thyssen Bornemisza Museum. 2021

Strategies that favour flow patterns in an exhibition are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2

Strategies to facilitate the movement of visitors

- When entering an exhibition hall, visitors are attracted to objects that stand out because of their size, lighting, etc. (Bitgood et al., 1991). The public may ignore non-prominent objects to get closer to see the most striking and emblematic ones.
- Designing the exhibition space with a single entrance and exit door makes it easier for visitors to walk through more of the exhibition space, and therefore pay more attention to the exhibits (Melton, 1935).
- Creating a clear itinerary for viewing the objects and encourage visitors' attention. The arrangement of objects in an exhibition determines how the public will move around. Too many "islands" in the room can create chaos in the flow of the public, causing them to overlook many of the objects on display (Bitgood, Hines, Hamberger & Ford, 1991).
- Supporting attention to all exhibits, bearing in mind that when entering an exhibition hall, the public tends to follow a path in a straight line and to the right unless a prominent stimulus captures their attention.

Adapted from Bitgood (2013, 2020)

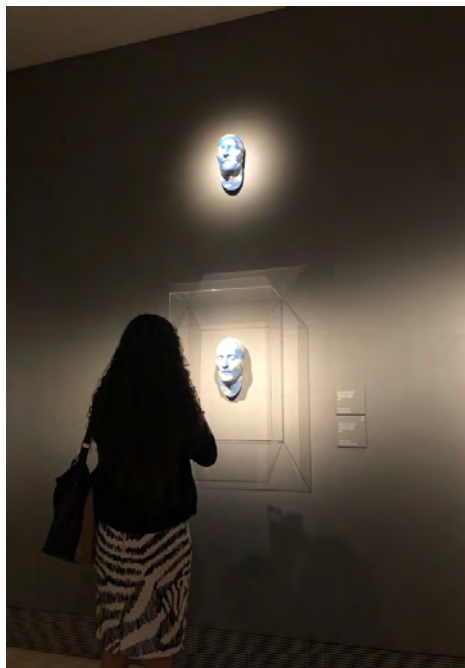


Figure15- Capturing attention with the illumination of objects.
Exhibition The Machine: Magritte.
Thyssen Bornemisza Museum. 2021

3.2.1.1. Implications for exhibition design

Exhibition designers need to understand the processes involved in the attention-capturing stage as part of a continuum.

Orientation and wayfinding mechanisms help to plan how visitors are expected to divide their attention and how they divide their attention as they move through the different exhibition spaces.

Stimuli compete against each other. What attracts can also distract attention to a particular element of the exhibition. For this reason, it is important to spatially distribute the objects in the exhibition by eliminating powerful stimuli that distract visitors and divert their attention from a target element.

The organisation of objects in an exhibition should help visitors' orientation by making it clear how to sequence attention from one element to another, from one part of the exhibition to another.

Interpretive devices, such as those offered by audio guides, when designed effectively, help manage attention by allowing visitors to focus visually on an element of the exhibit while listening to relevant information. These techniques eliminate the need to shift attention sequentially from text labels to exhibits.

Circulation flow should be carefully designed to ensure that visitors have clear pathways to ensure that all-important elements of the exhibition have an equal opportunity to capture attention.

3.2.2. Focusing Attention

After the capturing attention, the next stage of the continuum is that of focusing or concentration. It consists of limiting attention to one object at a time, ignoring the others. It is selective attention that increases (Beltran, 1993; Bitgood, 2000). Visitors need guidance to decide what is important through labels that provide information about the object. Interests, expectations, and knowledge of the activity favour attention to some objects or others in a museum.



Figure16. Focusing attention involves reading identifying information.
L'Art du Pastel. Petit Palais. Paris. 2018.

Focusing involves shallow processing and attention can easily be distracted from the object by different stimuli. Visitors read identification information without mental processing. This level of attention does not imply sustained attention related to the content of the exhibition. However, it is necessary to focus to have an engaged level of attention.

Focused attention requires motivation. Motivating audiences to focus their attention is not easy. Rand (1990) identified some ideas on how to motivate audiences through language,

while Screven (1992) focused on what variables increase visitors' interest when reading exhibition texts.

In addition to the possible strategies during the previous stage of capturing attention, there are some that help to improve focused attention, such as increasing cognitive-emotional stimulation (provoking interest in the subject if it is not already present), minimising distracting factors (when the visitor loses attention it is difficult to recover it) and mitigating the decrease in attention during the visit.

a) Increasing emotional cognitive stimulation

The aim is to provoke the visitor's interest and thinking so that they are more aware and inclined to focus their attention by reading the posters and reflecting on the content of the exhibition. The strategies that can be used are summarised in Table 3.



Figure 17-Encourage interest with questions. Figure 18-Provoking challenge. Geffrye Museum (now the Museum of the Home). London. 2017. Tate Modern Art Gallery, London. 2017

Table 3
Strategies to stimulate motivational cognitive processes

- Asking questions provokes the reading of the texts (Hirshi & Screven, 1988; Litwak, 1996).
- Highlight possible contradictions in the texts.
- Use the challenge to provoke reflection.
- Awaken interest with a clear, familiar, communicative, direct narrative style, with analogies and mental images.
- It is important to know the interests of the public before planning the exhibition.
- Brochures with detailed descriptions reduce museum fatigue (Robinson, 1928).
- Preferably display three-dimensional objects.
- Explain the sequence envisaged by the curator of the exhibition with a well-organised arrangement of elements and facilitating signs or graphic indicators.
- Encourage social interaction by motivating visitors to share information, ideas...

Adapted from Bitgood (2013, 2020)

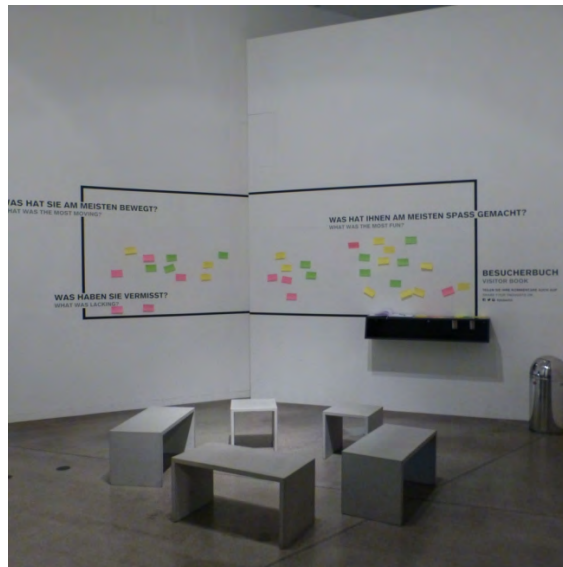


Figure 19-Finding out the public's opinion to know their interests... Jewish Museum Berlin

b) Minimise distracting factors

The most frequent sensory distractions come from sounds such as a crying baby or noises from outside the exhibition hall.

Some strategies to reduce distractions are summarised in Table4:

Table 4

Strategies to minimise distractions

- Minimise distractors such as powerful images and sounds that divert the audience's attention.
- Spatially distributing the elements of an exhibition prevents them from competing against each other and diverting attention.
- Reduce disorientation when arriving at a place for the first time by providing information on where to go through guidebooks or signposts.
- Avoid visitor conversations unrelated to the exhibition that distract visitors' attention from the content of the exhibition.
- Use resources that allow attention to be focused simultaneously on the objects and the associated information on the posters.

Adapted from Bitgood (2013, 2020)

- c) Mitigating the decrease of attention during the visit has to do with those strategies that help to maintain the interest of visitors by avoiding repetition, providing places to rest, reducing the level of complexity of the contents with easy-to-read labels...



Figure 20-Saturation of similar objects diverts attention. Tate Modern Art Gallery, London. 2017

Some strategies to keep the public's attention are summarised in Table 5.

Table 5

Strategies to mitigate the attention decline attention during the visit

- Designing exhibitions with varied and heterogeneous content and objects to maintain interest.
- Reducing mental effort in every possible way.
- Increasing visitor interest to curb satiation of the object and renew energy.
- Taking breaks and nourishment will help cognitive resources to be refresh and consequently, fatigue will be reduced.

Adapted from Bitgood (2013, 2020)



Figure 21-Importance of taking breaks during the visit. Pergamon Museum. Berlin

3.2.2.1. Implications for exhibition design

Are the elements of the exhibition organised in such a way that it is clear to the visitor how to sequence attention from one part of an exhibition element to another?

Exhibition designers need to be aware of that which favours the focus of attention understood as part of a continuum:

To sequentially focus the attention of visitors by highlighting an object and making it more visible.

Spot lighting stimulates the focus of an element of an exhibition, thus suggesting that it is important.

Another strategy to indicate the importance of an object is to isolate it from others or to magnify its importance by giving it a value that encourages visitor participation. They can also spatially distribute the elements of the exhibition so that they do not compete against each other for attention.

Audio guides for visitors, when designed effectively, help manage attention by allowing visitors to focus their attention on an object while listening to a relevant explanation, and information leaflets are also effective (Bitgood and Patterson, 1992). These resources allow attention to be focused simultaneously on the objects and the information associated with the object.



Figure 22-Use of audio guides helps to manage attention. National Galerie (Berlin)

Although most exhibitions tend to use some form of attention-focusing device, they often fail to control many of the distractions that interfere with concentration. These should be identified and eliminated as far as possible.

It is not easy to maintain sustained attention throughout time without fatigue setting in. Places of rest and contemplation should be provided along the exhibition route.

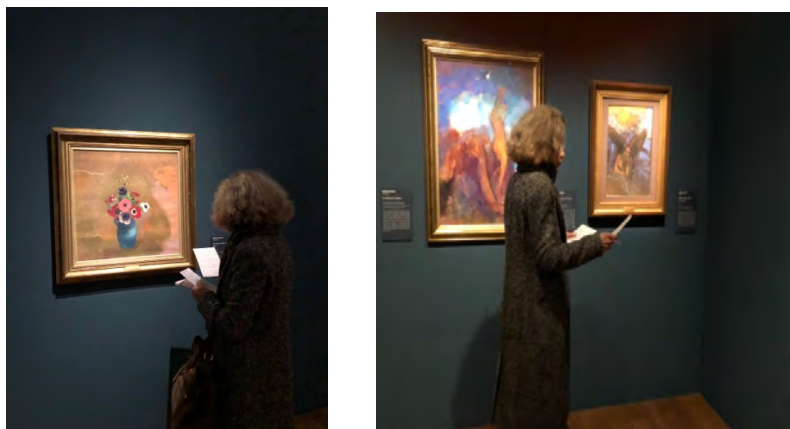
3.2.3. Engagement stage

In this last stage sustained attention is maintained over a complete sequence as it develops progressively (Beltran,1993; Bitgood,2000). Engagement requires deeper information processing than the previous stages.

For Easterbrook (1959, as cited by Bitgood, 2000, p.32) if we are highly motivated, we can concentrate with a high level of attention. The degree of concentration is related to the level of motivation.

Engagement implies a deep sensory-perceptual, mental, and affective involvement with the content of the exhibition. It usually requires effort and enough time to engage (more than a few seconds). For example, reading a text for more than 10 seconds is a sign of attention as reading needs deeper mental processing than passive viewing of an object. At this stage, visitors try because they expect a reward. The audience usually has deep processing of the information and gets a personal interpretation of the content of the exhibition creating significance.

When the visitor has engaged attention, he/she can use cognitive functions and processes related to critical thinking which manifests itself in discussions and reflective analysis of the exhibition content with other members of the group, reasoning by deducing and inferring conclusions from facts and evidence they find in the exhibition in a novel way.



Figures 23 and 24- Visitor with engaged attention. *L'Art du Pastel*. Petit Palais. Paris. 2018

He/she also uses processes related to creativity by selectively coding by recognising the importance of information that is not relevant to others; selectively combining by bringing together pieces of information whose relationship is not obvious, and selectively comparing by deciphering how information from the past can influence present problems. The engaged visitor uses analogical thinking as he/she sees that something from the past is analogous to something existing in the present (Sternberg & Lubart, 1997).

For Bitgood (2013) engagement is a set of processes that lead to inferred outcomes that we label as learning, attitude change, feeling of being at a particular time and place...

Strategies to maintain the engaged attention of visitors are related to the exhaustion or mental fatigue involved in maintaining this concentration, given that the resources of attention have a limited capacity and are depleted over time and with the effort made. Reserves are renewed slowly with periods of rest. How to stimulate the renewal of these resources? According to Bitgood (2000) by considering the size of the reserve, the rate of depletion, and the rate of renewal.

The size of each person's attention reserve is limited and different. It depends on available physical energy, state of health, and mental attitude. Serrell's research (2010) suggests that the attention span for a single non-extraordinary exposure is about 20 minutes, while Falk et al. (1985, as cited by Bitgood, 2000, p.38) attention reserves appeared to be depleted within 30 to 45 minutes.

In terms of the rate of depletion and renewal, Bitgood (2000) argues that attentional resources may be depleted by mental and physical effort or because, although attentional capacity is high, some inhibitory mechanism decreases it.

Strategies that help maintain an engaged level of attention are linked to the need to minimise perceived effort and thus increase cognitive resources and motivation.

a) Minimise perceived effort and thus increase cognitive resources and motivation. Related to the principle of limited capacity are the difficulty in maintaining cognitive resources after a long-sustained effort and the tiredness associated with fatigue. The main ones are summarised in the table below 6.

Table 6.
Strategies to minimise perceived effort during the visit

- Writing short texts makes them easier to read (Bitgood and Patterson, 1993).
- Place the labels close to the object so that they can be seen and read at the same time.
- Facilitate the cognitive processing of information using graphic organisers, concept maps... instead of long fragments of information.
- Favour the contrast between the background and the text to reduce the perceptual effort.
- Reduce the number of objects and labels as much as possible to avoid sensory overload and saturation.
- Focusing attention simultaneously on the objects and the information associated with them. Audioguides for visitors, when designed effectively, help to manage attention by focusing it on an object while listening to a relevant explanation, and information leaflets are also effective (Bitgood and Patterson, 1992).

Adapted from Bitgood (2013, 2020)

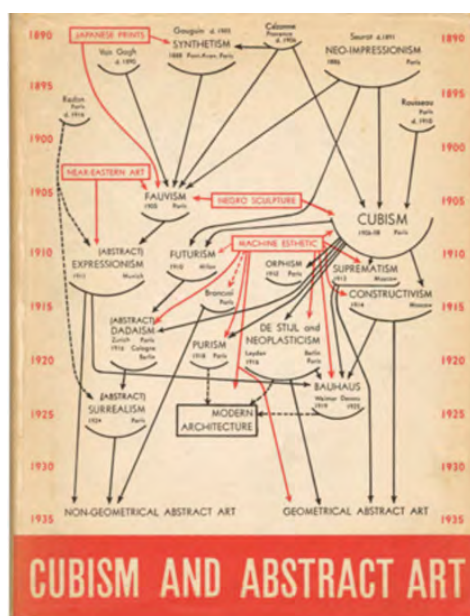


Figure 25- Importance of information organisers for cognitive processing-Exhibition "Genealogies of art, or art history as visual art". Picasso Museum Malaga

3.2.3.1. Implications for exhibition design

It is important to redistribute the visitor's attention by combining its selective character, concentration through motivation, and the depletion of reserves of cognitive resources.

The museography of an exhibition should focus visitors' attention on the important messages and objects while minimising their mental effort.

Exhibition curators must ensure educational messages that communicate with all audiences. Gaps in comprehension that reduce cognitive resources due to fatigue and the effort made to understand the messages must be avoided. A text that is difficult to understand discourages visitors.

The cognitive processes of attention are among the most important factors for a successful exhibition design.

Understanding how attention processes work helps to improve the effectiveness of museum design.

Attention-capturing is related to several factors in addition to perceived value. Mental strategies to capture attention are varied. For example, how to ask questions, the planning of the visit, learned behavioural patterns such as persistence, contribute to shaping the way visitors go about their visit. In addition, other factors such as physical/mental states, energy level, 'museum fatigue', 'object satiation' and 'attention span exhaustion' are influential (Bitgood, 2013; Dufresne-Tassé, 2015).

Once attention is focused, visitors decide whether the object or content of the exhibition is worth their engaged attention. Engagement requires deep processing of the content and involves a mental effort that is difficult to sustain for long periods without fatigue. It is unrealistic to think that all messages on display will receive engaged attention, nor that all visitors can be engaged.

4. Conclusions

Environment and culture determine which cognitive resources are meaningful and which mental operations are useful in the environment in which a person lives. Intellectual potential is only used according to the requirements of the environment. For this reason, meaningful experiences in the museum or during a visit to a temporary exhibition provide an extraordinary opportunity for visitors to apply and use their intellectual resources and develop their intellectual potential. In other words, the more meaningful experiences they have in the museum, the more possibilities they have to build the functions that favour knowledge, personal development and autonomy.

Learning occurs when a person relates new information to existing information in his or her mental structure. Information is organised and represented in schemas that include everything an individual knows about a topic. It is important to provoke experiences that help visitors to connect the presented content with their previous ideas. The audience can be stimulated to compare the new information with other information they already have and to construct new schemas of thought.

The level of thinking in museums is related to how well the information presented in an exhibition is structured to use it meaningfully. Organization provides cohesion and unity and favours content coherence and vocabulary accuracy. When a text is structured, it is easier to understand and assimilate it, making extrapolations on what has been learned; on the contrary, if the text is disorganised and senseless, the viewer finds it difficult to establish the appropriate relationships and cannot find meaning and make it his or her own.

Museum learning involves an engagement of visitors using thought processes and the strategies that develop these processes. It requires the performance of certain mental activities that must be adequately planned to achieve the initial expectations.

Museum learning also requires a commitment from exhibition designers to incorporate knowledge and research findings on learning processes and strategies and apply them to support the thinking and intellectual development of their visitors.

Applying strategies related to the different learning processes is a way of activating cognitive operations and functions that over time become automated and turn into skills, increasing cognitive resources and improving visitors' thinking.

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Summary

From the perspective of meaning-making, or if one prefers, meaning-development, this article takes a close look at the stages of the learning process and the strategies that promote successful learning and how these are applied in the museum context. It systematically and comprehensively discusses how an autonomous adult proceeds when engaging in knowledge acquisition or skill development based on the research of contemporary pedagogues and psychologists who have examined it in various contexts of adult life.

Based on these notions, we question the intellectual functioning of museum visitors: what resources and variables can they use during their museum experience?

To answer these questions, in order to study the learning processes and strategies used for the acquisition of knowledge during educational experiences in museums, the cognitive factors as a whole, the learning processes and strategies from a constructivist perspective, the learning strategies related to the processes of awareness and attention in museums such as motivation and emotion, as well as the attentional strategies for learning in museums are successively discussed.

How do museums meet the expectations and interests that visitors seek?

Finally, how can visiting a museum become an experience that helps visitors reflect and contribute to their personal development?

Key words: learning process, motivation, emotion, visitor expectations

Exhibition-learning and exhibition-meaning-making; their educational filiation

Colette Dufresne-Tassé

Introduction

The exhibition museography, i.e., its design, influences the meaning-making of its visitors; poorly lit objects or texts that are difficult to decipher, for example, reduce this production, whereas a label that refers directly to the visible characteristics of a work encourages it. And it goes without saying that the higher the level of meaning production related to the exhibition subject, the more the museum can pride itself on having fulfilled its educational role with its visitors.

It is generally accepted that education has rules and ways of doing things that promote learning and personal development. It therefore offers means which, if used skillfully, can achieve important goals. It is therefore in the interest of the exhibition designer to use them. The following three questions arise from this position and guide the present text:

- . Does the exhibition designer-producer, - be it a curator or an entire team, - draw inspiration from the work of the great educators, for example Jerome Bruner, John Dewey, Philippe Meirieu, Jack Mezirow, Jean Piaget or Alfred North Whitehead?
- . If so, from whom does he borrow? What conception of education guides his work and what does he take from it?
- . With what results, or equivalently, to what kind of exhibition does this conception give rise to?

In order to answer these questions, I have analysed a body of work on the visitor-exhibition relationship, as this relationship is the main locus of educational theories.

I shall describe the corpus studied, answer the previous questions and conclude by proposing some follow-up to the observations made.

A somewhat complicated corpus

I analysed 15 of the 22 books written in English¹ available in the library of the Université de Montréal² (see Appendix 1 for a list of these books). This corpus is representative of those published between 2000 and 2020³. They provide access to the current understanding of the visitor-exhibition relationship and the contribution of education to the success of this

¹ I have chosen works published in English rather than in French or Spanish (also official languages of the International Council of Museums) because of the preponderant influence of these publications on museography and on the museum world in general.

² This library serves the needs of researchers from some 1000 teaching and research units. It offers an excellent tool for working on museology. A search on Google Scholar, ERIC and PsycINFO did not reveal any new title.

³ A look at the table of contents of the seven other books (see Appendix 2 for a list and overview of their contents) suggests that they address the same themes as the books under review. However, it is possible that they offer

relationship, both among theorists and professionals who speak on the subject. These works are divided into two groups: on the one hand, nine books signed by one or two authors plus a collective; on the other hand, five collectives.

The first of these groups presents models of what the visitor-exhibition relationship should be. In addition, it offers many recommendations on how to design exhibits that capture the visitor's attention, hold it, provides the learning intended by the exhibit producer, and at the same time offers the visitor an enjoyable experience.

The second looks more at the components of the visitor-exhibition relationship and is short on practical advice.

However, both sets share a common feature: they use research as a basis or support for their content⁴.

A COMPLEX AND INTERESTING SITUATION

Do those responsible for preparing an exhibition draw inspiration from the great authors whose work informs the world of education?

No

A very small number of major figures who have been important and who continue to make their mark on the educational community are cited, but not often. This is the case of John Dewey and Jerome Bruner⁵. The names of David Ausubel, Robert Gagné and Jean Piaget also appear here and there. But neither these authors, nor Dewey or Bruner directly influence the authors of the works analysed. In fact, these authors limit themselves to pointing out from time to time the kinship of their writings with some of the great theorists. They treat a myriad of adult education specialists in the same way, be it: Alan Chadwick, Paulo Freire, Alan Knox, Malcolm Knowles, Sharon Merriam, Jack Mezirow or Annette Stannett. It seems, therefore, that educational thinking has little resonance with those responsible for producing exhibitions. However, it should be pointed out that the works studied also refer to museum educators, researchers who have dissected the public, but also to museologists and specialists in a wide range of fields.

But the two groups of publications use these sources in different ways. The first one gives pride of place to the constructivist museum educators George Hein and Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, and to researchers who empirically study some aspects of the visitor-exhibition relationship. It also incorporates Tilden's (1957) concept of interpretation, which in fact implicitly adopts the constructivist approach and several principles of adult education.

However, the second group cites, from afar and with little importance, Hein, Hooper-Greenhill and Tilden, as well as researchers who study the visitor's relationship to the exhibition. However, in a great movement of conceptual exploration, it takes into consideration the work of museologists of various orientations, and above all specialists from fields such as anthropology, the economy of experience, history, art history, narratology, philosophy, psychology or sociology.

slightly different positions or details that would have led me to take more nuanced positions than those I support in this text.

⁴ Almost everything presented in the 15 books is based on research conducted by the author of the book or chapter and, of course, by other researchers. In any case, it serves either to establish the conceptual context of the investigation or to support the interpretation of its data. It is mostly inductive, rarely deductive. Finally, it belongs to various types or fields. Indeed, it can be quantitative or qualitative empirical research, action research, analytical or critical research, developed in museum education, in the field of audience studies, semiology, psychology, anthropology or sociology.

⁵ The great thinkers of education are often philosophers - as in the case of Dewey - or psychologists - as in the case of Bruner.

Yes, but ...

Borrowing from Dewey and Bruner, Hein (1998*)⁶ and Hooper-Greenhill (1994*) have taken these ideas to the museum environment. Each in his own way reformulates them in texts that clearly express the constructivist orientation in education with a marked pedagogical sense.

In view of the above, it is obvious that the Hein and Hooper-Greenhill texts play different roles for the authors of the two sets of publications. For the former, they constitute a kind of conceptual foundation, a patent and powerful base, whereas for the latter, they are merely a set of ideas that are part of the Zeitgeist, the spirit of the times. In any case, the omnipresence of Hein and Hooper-Greenhill means that the cognitivist orientation of education, in its form of museum education, permeates the entire literature on the visitor-exhibition relationship of the first part of the twenty-first century.

What conception of education currently guides the work of the exhibition designer-producer?

As we have just seen, this is the constructivist movement, adapted to the museum world by Hein and Hooper-Greenhill. This situation leads me to briefly describe some relevant aspects of their contribution. I shall do so based on their own texts, and then I shall specify how each of the two groups of publications appropriates them.

For Hein, learning is a process of meaning-making (1998, p. 88*). Hooper-Greenhill, who borrows her definition from Bruner (1960), places it at a more macroscopic level. For her, learning is the acquisition and assimilation of new information, skills or experiences, and making sense of them in relation to what a person already knows (1994, p. 146*). In sum, meaning making is central to the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

On the role of the museum, Hein and Hooper-Greenhill again speak in complementary terms. Hooper-Greenhill says:

"Museums and galleries have the potential to be ideal learning environments across the age-range. [...] Museum and galleries can offer a range of opportunities for formal and informal learning, active participation or observation. [...] Museum staff are full of expertise in an impressive array of areas. Museum buildings and sites as environments offer new places to learn in and topics to learn about." (1994, p. 169).

As for Hein, he says:

"Visitors make meaning in the museum, they learn by constructing their own understandings. The issue for museums, if they recognize this principle, is to determine what meanings visitors do make from their experience, and then to shape the experience to the extent possible by the manipulation of the environment. Every museum building will send a message (or multiple messages); every exhibition will evoke feelings, memories, and images; every encounter with an object brings about a reflection (even if it is only incomprehension and frustration); every social interaction reinforces connections, stimulates new ones, or triggers personal anxieties. We know the range of visitor reactions to their museum experience is tremendous; we know that powerful, enriching, even life-changing moment are possible in museums. Visitors do learn in the museum. What the cumulative result of these experiences will be is up to future exhibition designers and museum educators working together and with their audience." (1998, p. 179)

⁶ Hein's and Hooper-Greenhill's publications are numerous; those listed here are major and are the most frequently cited by the authors of the 15 books reviewed.

The first group of publications and the Hein-Hooper-Greenhill legacy

The writers of the first group of publications adhere to the dual definition of learning proposed above in the following way. They regularly use the Hooper-Greenhill level of knowledge and skill acquisition and occasionally refer to the lower level of meaning-making adopted by Hein. In addition, they make extensive use of all the publications of both museum educators. Not only do they detail them, but they develop ten more or less explicit models⁷ that give rise to principles and recommendations concerning various aspects of the visitor-exhibition or visitor-device relationship. More specifically, these models state the factors that influence learning; they identify a sine qua non condition for its occurrence, visitor engagement, detail several aspects of it, and specify the benefits when the condition is met; finally, they focus on the exhibition itself, its production process and its content. These models are presented below, each with its own characteristic elements.

*Model 1: Factors affecting learning (Falk and Dierking, 2000)*⁸

Three factors, three dimensions of a visit influence learning, its major benefit:

- . The characteristics of the visitors: their intellectual and emotional potential, the way they use it, their expectations, and the time they can devote to the exhibition;
- . The social context of the visit, i.e., the presence or absence of companions, their type and behaviour, but also the rules that dictate the conduct to be adopted in a museum;
- . The place where the visit takes place, its qualities and particularities, especially those of the interior architecture of the museum and the museography of the exhibition.

A series of five other models make explicit the principle that without the visitors' engagement, their experience is meaningless and learning is not possible (*Bitgood, 2014*).

Model 2: Engagement manifests itself through the visitors' attention (Black, 2005)

Attention is sometimes focused on an object, a text, an interactive; it can even be aimed at a part of the exhibition.

Ideally, attention is intense and prolonged, and when these two conditions are met, visitors may have an important experience.

Model 3: Engagement depends on the visitors' motivation (Perry, 2012)

Satisfaction of five needs or expectations arouses or supports the visitor's motivation: feeling safe and competent, making sense of what one observes or reads, but also being surprised or intrigued, being excited, being challenged by what one discovers and, finally, managing one's learning.

Model 4: Behaviors that reflect commitment (Monti and Keene, 2013)

Commitment is expressed through a set of behaviors that should appear in the following order:

- . Visitors stop in front of a device, object or text;
- . During the break, they decide whether it is interesting or not;
- . They examine it, explore it and enjoy it;
- . They benefit from its exploration.

⁷ Sometimes the model was presented outright in the text, but most of the time it only emerged from an analysis.

⁸ References to the authors of the works analyzed are in italics in the text. They are listed in alphabetical order in Appendix 1.

Model 5: Mental operations produced during the engagement behaviours (Roppola, 2012)

Unlike Monti and Keene, Roppola proposes a non-linear model; the mental operations she identifies can, theoretically, occur on the occasion of any of the behaviors identified in the previous model. There are four such operations:

- . Framing: When 'framing', visitors use their own schemas, i.e., their ways of thinking or seeing, to process a part of an exhibition or an entire exhibition designed, needless to say, according to the schemas of its designer;
- . Resonating: Visitors "resonate" when, mentally, they succeed in being sufficiently attuned to the content of the exhibition to create meaning (or learn) from and in accordance with that content;
- . Channeling: Visitors "channel" when they direct their production of meaning; they may do so autonomously or under the influence of the exhibition's museography;
- . Broadening: Visitors 'broaden' when they build on the information they manipulate or understand, they go further, i.e. deepen or broaden the meaning of what they are interested in.

A break

From model to model, we have just identified the elements which allow, favour or, on the contrary, hinder learning in the visitor. Throughout this chain, learning has been the main goal, or if one prefers, the main benefit of a visit. What then becomes of the 'other' benefits, such as pleasure, relaxation, the delightful sensation of letting one's imagination associate the images of the deepest memory with those of the exhibition? There are three possibilities: they facilitate learning, they accompany it or they derive from it. The following model retains the latter possibility.

Model 6: The 'other' benefits are in fact only by-products of learning as a central one. These 'other' benefits form two main groups: individual benefits and social benefits (Paddon, 2014).

Individual benefits include:

- . Changes in attitudes and values;
- . Pleasure, inspiration and creativity;
- . Projects and new forms of behavior.

As for the social benefits, they include:

- . An increase in the strength and security of the environment;
- . The strengthening of participation in civic and political life;
- . An improvement of the individual health and well-being.

Comment

In fact, Paddon uses the two categories of benefits, GLO (Generic Learning Outcomes) and GSO (Generic Social Outcomes), proposed in 1973 by the UK Museum, Libraries and Archives Council. These benefits-outcomes are now widely used by British museums and those in several other countries to establish, at the request of the State, their profitability. (Black, 2005; Sas and Smit, 2011).⁹

In their initial formulation by Hooper-Greenhill (2002; 2004), these benefits-results are the outcome of a well-known managerial logic: objective-means-results. It is a rationality which, by tightening its profitability requirements, takes up a logic established in the school

⁹ In the United States, for example, any museum that receives governmental funding must carry out an Outcome-based evaluation (OBE).

environment following the work of Robert Gagné (1965): goals-objectives-evaluation. This logic was popularised in the English and then French-speaking museum world, notably by Chandler Screven (1974; 1992).

Thus, visitors learning corresponds to a specific expectation of the museum, at least partly induced by profitability requirements. The exhibition developer will therefore have to use all the means at his disposal to obtain it. Even though he is working in a cultural institution and not in a school, he still has to intervene in conditions of formal education, just like the teacher who, in his class, has to teach the date of America discovery by Christopher Columbus.

On the other hand, in the museum, the visitor knows that he will not be punished if he does not learn or learns incorrectly, while the exhibition producer knows that his institution will be punished if he fails! The resulting situation is therefore an hybrid of non-formal and formal education.

Introduction to models 7, 8 and 9

So far, the focus has been on the first part of the visitor-museum relationship, the visitors themselves. The publications of the first group also offer models that clarify the second, the exhibition. They deal with three aspects corresponding to the following three questions:

- . Who conceives and sets up an exhibition?
- . How does he do it?
- . What principles and recommendations guide the work of developing the exhibition content and the museography that supports that content?

Model 7: Who designs and sets up an exhibition?¹⁰

Black (2005), *Chicone and Kissel* (2016) and *Paddon* (2014) answer this question and do not hesitate: it is a team. Paddon justifies this position in the following way. The British museums she studied when they were renewing their permanent exhibition - with National Lottery funding - wanted to both 'tell really new stories' and encourage visitor participation (engagement). They considered that the curator, in his traditional role as sole architect of an exhibition, could not entirely meet these requirements and they simply made him the member of a team.

Composition of a team (according to Paddon)

An exhibition conception and production team consist of: a project manager, a curator, an educator and a museographer (designer).

Description of each role (Black, Chicone and Kissel, Paddon)

Note: Paddon, relying on what she has observed, describes each of the roles schematically, while *Black*, as well as *Chicone and Kissel*, having considered them rather theoretically and ideally, sometimes add details.

The **project manager** juggles with the requirements of the museum management, the limits of the exhibition budget, the demands of the team and the obligation to open the exhibition on a specific date. In addition, he or she decides on the best way to proceed in order to achieve a quality project and ensures the timely involvement of specialists, such as the building's architect, when the building has to be modified to accommodate the exhibition.

The **curator** introduces the team to the available collections, those of the museum, but also those that can be borrowed. He or she informs the team of their strengths, but also of the requirements for their conservation and safety. In addition, the curator is the team's guarantor

¹⁰ Device development is usually dealt with in the production of an exhibition.

of the correctness of the interpretation of each object, of the correctness of the overall content of the exhibition and of its correspondence to the most recent scientific data.

The **educator** is the visitors' representative. As such, he or she helps the team to clarify target audiences, encourages them to consider new ones, and makes them aware of the needs of the disabled and the variety of learning styles. He or she is also involved in the choice of means used to "tell" the story of the exhibition, some of these having to meet the expectations of the teachers and school programmes. In addition, he or she decides on the writing of the texts. Finally, he or she is responsible for the formative and summative evaluation of the exhibition, as well as for the development of programmes or activities peripheral to the exhibition.

Chicone and Kissel significantly reduce this set of tasks. In fact, in a very traditional way, they limit them to the preparation of the programmes and educational or cultural activities accompanying the exhibition. They also distribute the other tasks identified by Paddon to various team members, for example to texts writers or evaluation specialists.

The **museographer** (designer) creates the style and general appearance of the exhibition. In addition, he or she designs and produces (or has produced) the furniture for the presentation of objects, hands-on devices and texts. His or her contribution to the exhibition depends on how open the team is to his or her proposals.

In addition to the above permanent roles, *Black* and *Chicone and Kissel* add three others that may be ad hoc: a community worker, if the team is considering input from the local community; a communications specialist, responsible for promoting the exhibition and possibly seeking funding or patrons; and a new technology specialist, if the team decides to incorporate these sorts of devices into the exhibition.

Some remarks and questions

It is easy to understand the importance of a team because an exhibition is almost never limited to simply hanging works on picture rails or displaying objects accompanied by labels. These gestures are now accompanied by multiple and varied interventions, carried out by a wide variety of professionals. One also understands the importance of providing the team with a project manager, as this professional is likely to facilitate everyone's work and make it both more productive and enjoyable.

But the tasks assigned to the curator and educator raise several questions. For example, why devalue and restrict the role of the curator as presented above? Knowing his/her collections and the most recent research on the meaning that can be attributed to them, he/she seems to be quite capable of renewing the discourse created with a set of objects, i.e. "telling new stories". He or she also seems to be most able to write illuminating texts about the meaning of each object; if necessary, the educator could suggest modifications to facilitate the understanding of future visitors.

As far as the educator is concerned, why, on the pretext that he or she represents the public, should he or she be entrusted, as *Paddon* observed, with so many and varied tasks? No academic training can give him/her all the skills to do the lot properly!

The task assigned to the curator and the educator, and their possibilities of working together, in short, their respective roles, would probably benefit from being reviewed. But before any rethinking can take place, at least the following three pieces of research should be carried out: a survey among institutional directors to understand their motives for dividing up the roles as described above; a survey of the teams they create to find out how they experience and view the roles assigned to them; and finally, a critical study of the exhibitions created by these teams.

Model 8: A team has been formed and is about to embark on the creation of an exhibition space. They adopt a precise approach.

Black (2005) and *Chicone and Kissel* (2016) propose rather similar approaches. However, *Black* insists on preliminaries, while *Chicone and Kissel* stress the importance of the steps that precede the writing of specifications.

Preliminaries

Before embarking on the production of an exhibition, the team should carry out the following series of checks: Are the collections available to the team adequate? Are the target audiences accurately identified? Has the local population been consulted? Are the available rooms suitable? Are the results of recent academic research accessible? Is the budget allocated satisfactory?

The process itself

The method to be followed includes:

- . Determining the central concept of the exhibition, its main message, i.e. the big idea that visitors "should take with them" when leaving the museum;
- . Specifying the aims of the exhibition, in other words, the concepts and content that explain the main message that visitors should remember;
- . Detailing the experiential goals, i.e., what the visitor should experience and will generate the expected behaviours;
- . Specifying the type of engagement expected from visitors and how to get it;
- . Designing the 'discourse' of the exhibition, its main themes or concepts, its secondary themes, and diagramming their relationships;
- . Planning the writing of the texts and the production of the whole exhibition;
- . Checking by means of formative evaluations whether the texts and museography elicit the expected reactions and learning;
- . Draw up the specifications.

Preamble to the following model

During the process of designing and making an exhibition, the team draws on recommendations from Hein's and Hooper-Greenhill's constructivist conception of learning discussed above. To these recommendations are added the notion of interpretation as formulated by Freeman Tilden (1957) and a principle, that of profit-based investment developed by Bitgood (2013).

Tilden, a journalist by trade who promotes the natural heritage of the great US national parks, publishes a book detailing what he means by interpretation. It is about presenting heritage in a way that engages and involves visitors confronted with "real things", encouraging their participation and, through it, the development of skills necessary to independently explore and understand a cultural institution's offerings.

In fact, Tilden formalises for the museum world the American humanist orientation, taken up at the same time by psychologists such as Abraham Maslow (1962) or Karl Rogers (1951), or educators who distanced themselves from formal education and were interested in adult education, such as Malcolm Knowles (1950; 1973). For these proponents of informal or non-formal education, learning is self-directed, and those who try to promote it must take into account the intellectual and emotional needs of the individual (learner).

The kinship and complementarity of this movement with the constructivist orientation is so great that the authors of the first group of works have no difficulty in using them together. Tilden thus plays a role similar to that of Hein and Hooper-Greenhill, so that all three can be considered as the transmitters to the museum world of the same main current that characterises the North American humanities in the second half of the 20th century.

Model 9: What recommendations guide the design of an exhibition content and museography?

The recommendations formulated in the 10 works of the first group of publications are, in the end, quite similar, their differences depending on the weight attributed to variants of the visitor-exhibition relationship. For example, here is the series proposed by *Perry (2012, p. 203-207*)*. It is particularly concerned with the family group.

Recommendations

General principle: Museum visitors want to make sense of the objects, phenomena and experiences they are offered.

Note: Groups of recommendations are preceded by a principle.

Importance of collaboration between visitors

Principle: Communication between visitors is most effective when they work together as a group on a task or meaning-making venture.

- . Designing spaces that encourage group members to stay together and close to each other.
- . Making sure everyone has something to do.
- . Proposing a problem that encourages joint work.

Importance of guidance

Principle: The more visitors will have a meaningful communication experience, the more they will engage in a teaching/learning process.

- . Guiding the group to a successful teaching/learning process.
- . Modelling appropriate teaching/learning strategies.
- . Using the visitors' language.

Importance of curiosity

Principle: Visitors want to be surprised and intrigued.

Perceptual curiosity

Principle: Visitors are attracted to an exhibit when their perceptual curiosity is aroused

- . Stimulating perceptual curiosity using auditory, visual or other sensory effects.
- . Making appropriate use of a variety of these means.

Intellectual curiosity

Principle: Visitors become interested and engaged in the treatment of an exhibit when their intellectual curiosity is piqued.

- . Presenting information that contradicts what visitors already know.
- . Offering incomplete information.
- . Using progressive disclosure.
- . Using questions that stimulate intellectual curiosity; it should be done with caution.

Importance of interest

Principle: Visitors become attracted to and engaged with an exhibit that deals with a subject that already interests them.

- . Presenting topics that are of interest and relevance to visitors.
- . Relating new information to what visitors know and are already familiar with.
- . Using metaphor and analogy but choosing carefully and using wisely.

- . Contextualising the artefact or object on display.
- . Balancing the familiar with the new.
- . Ensuring that the exhibit is personally meaningful and relevant to visitors.
- . Providing an exhibit that contains elements of interest to all.

Importance of confidence

Principle: Visitors want to feel safe and smart.

Confidence and success

Principle: Visitors feel confident and competent when they experience success.

- . Writing clear, simple and easy-to-read texts.
- . Using simple and inclusive vocabulary.
- . Providing space that chunks information.
- . Making short sentences.
- . Minimising concept density.
- . Defining unfamiliar terms and including pronunciation guides.
- . Using readability indices, while recognising their limitations.
- . Providing answers.
- . Answering visitors' questions.
- . Designing labels so that at least one member of the group has access to the answers to the questions included in an exhibit.
- . Providing feedback.
- . Guiding visitors through a series of mini successes.
- . Preventing leaving visitors at a dead end.
- . Directing visitors to other exhibits that deal with a similar or related subject.
- . Developing discovery rooms that accompany exhibitions.
- . Developing relationships with local public libraries and other community resources.
- . Capitalising on computer and Internet resources.
- . Presenting the same content in different ways.
- . Eliminating unnecessary or extraneous information that could confuse or intimidate visitors.
- . Anticipating and providing for the visitors' physical needs.

Importance of speed

Principle: Visitors feel confident and competent if they are quickly successful.

- . Making the exhibit immediately understandable.
- . Developing labels that can be read at a glance.
- . Answering first to: "What is it?" and "What am I supposed to do?" questions.
- . Eliminating obstacles between visitors and content.
- . Getting visitors to "eat their dessert first".
- . Using advanced organizer with care and caution.

Importance of challenge

Principle: Visitors want to be challenged.

Challenge and expectations

Principle: Visitors feel appropriately challenged when they know what is expected of them

- . Including a clearly stated goal.
- . Ensuring that the title of the exhibit is descriptive and goal oriented.
- . Telling visitors directly what they are supposed to do and/or learn.
- . Using carefully designed implicit (non-verbal) goals whenever possible.
- . Drawing visitors' attention to the important parts of the exhibit, object or artefact.

Challenge and uncertainty

Principle: Visitors feel appropriately challenged when they perceive that success is not automatic.

- . Asking questions.
- . Holding hidden information (which is only revealed after an investment).
- . Using labels whose content is only revealed after lifting a panel.
- . Taking advantage of the limited size of computer screens.
- . Using 'less noticeable' texts.

Importance of control

Principle: Visitors want to feel in charge of their experience.

Control and choice

Principle: Visitors feel in control when they are given appropriate choices.

- . Ensuring that visitors have the right information to make wise choices.
- . Checking that the exhibit includes a choice of activities.
- . Offering a variety of different types of activities.
- . Becoming familiar with the magic number "7 plus or minus 2".

Control and power

Principle: Visitors feel in control when, with little energy expended, they produce significant effects.

- . Letting visitors manipulate the object or artefact.
- . Allowing visitors to interact with an exhibit at their own pace.

Importance of play

Principle: Visitors want to be playful.

Play and imagination

Principle: Visitors feel playful when they use their imagination.

- . Ensuring that the exhibit includes activities that encourage visitors to use their imagination.
- . Incorporating endogenous (as opposed to exogenous) fantasy whenever possible.

Play and sensory exploration

Principle: Visitors feel playful when they use several senses to explore the exhibit.

- . Including playful ways visitors of all ages can use their senses to explore the exhibit.

Comment

As we have just seen, the museum, through its exhibition production team, does everything possible to achieve the goal it has set itself, often in response to the demands of its funder; it does all it is capable to obtain learning from its visitors. It considers their dispositions and expectations and uses all the museographic means to ensure that the path to learning is smooth, rewarding and even playful.

Thus, we are not far from what is observed in a good contemporary school where students who accept to 'play the game' easily acquire the expected knowledge. But students whose spontaneous approach does not correspond to that proposed by the institution, or the 'headstrongs' who take the museum seriously as a place of non-formal education and decide to act as they please, really risk coming up against a system that is not very permissive, not very welcoming, because it is closed on precise learning, carried out according to methods decided in advance.

The freedom to start wherever one wants does not improve the situation of the two 'deviant' visitors, as they encounter the same system everywhere in the exhibition. This freedom actually hides a problem of another kind. It implies that an exhibit, a device or a part of an

exhibition is conceptually independent of the others and that the museum provides for a superimposition of pieces of learning, in fact their stacking, rather than their organization and integration. To put it a little colorfully, the museum is then like a supermarket where the housewife accumulates eggs, fresh tomatoes, instant coffee ... and dog food in her shopping basket! Wouldn't it be better to play the theatre where, from scene to scene, we could construct, inspired by Molière's text, Harpagon's relationship to his 10,000 gold crowns, and where we finally grasp the parallel between the father's attachment to money and his children's love for their fiancé!

Introduction to the latest model

While sharing with the other authors of the first group of publications their central concern, learning, *Wood and Latham (2014)* treat it differently.

Model 10: Objects are given a multitude of meanings at the outset (Wood and Latham, 2014)

When preparing an exhibition, the team members try to find the maximum number of relevant meanings for each object. The range produced is large, as each member has a different background and experience. Their exhibition then consists of a series of objects, each with several meanings. According to Wood and Latham, this abundance stimulates visitors to engage in a lush production of meaning, which in turn leads to multiple learnings and an intense and enjoyable experience.

In sum, a metamodel

If we exclude model 10, the other nine, articulated together and accompanied by recommendations, constitute a constructivist-inspired metamodel of the visitor-exhibition relationship and its central production, learning. But this metamodel diverts the original meaning of the constructivist current in education; it is no longer the visitors themselves who elaborate their learning, unit of meaning after unit of meaning. It is the museum that makes them realise it by assembling a thousand clever means. If this is the case, should one think that during this instrumentalized, not to say obligatory learning process, the museum robs visitors of their initiative and the pleasure of a personal journey towards the acquisition of knowledge? Should one rather consider that the museum plays the prodigious role of the wooden formwork that supports the construction of an arch, stone by stone, until the introduction of the last one, the key, which closes it, and by closing it, creates it, solid and autonomous? In other words, does the museum simply supports visitors as they are building some learning?

In any case, the metamodel just presented is of a high level of completion. If there are still failures in its use, i.e., exhibitions where visitors do not learn or do not acquire the intended knowledge, this does not seem to be due to any particular weakness, but to a misinterpretation of its requirements or to a particularly difficult context.

But any model, when it reaches a high level of perfection, as Thomas Kuhn showed in "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions" (1970), raises unreasonable expectations. Disappointed, researchers then start to 'produce alongside' the model. Could this be what Wood and Latham started to do when they proposed the Model 10 and the researchers who expressed themselves in the second group of publications?

The second group of publications and the Hein-Hooper-Greenhill legacy

The second group of publications consists of five collectives whose aim is very different from the above; they do not wish to make specific recommendations on museography or, more generally, on how to deal with the visitor. Instead, they propose to examine four concepts,

both to detail them and to draw out their potential meanings through all sorts of conceptual treatments. They focus on:

- . Interpretation: *Fritsch (2011)* coordinates 17 articles which sometimes criticise the notion as disseminated by Tilden;
- . The object in its materiality: *Dudley (2010)* leads a collection of 17 texts that examine the museum object, its material characteristics and its ability to elicit certain responses;
- . The curator-educator collaboration: *Mörsch, Sachs and Sieber (2017)* compile 17 articles on this collaboration, as well as on the co-option of the visiting public on the occasion of an exhibition production;
- . The exhibition itself, considered in various forms:
 - Rare forms, their characteristics and interest, explored in 10 texts collated by *Macdonald and Basu (2007)*;
 - The contemporary art exhibition explored from the point of view of the curator through 15 articles gathered by *Marincola (2006)*.

The treatment of these notions leads the authors who express themselves in the collectives to address the same themes as the authors of the first group of publications, namely: commitment, learning, interpretation, benefits of visiting. This happy coincidence allows to multiply comparisons. And these never cease to be interesting, for here the constructivist approach no longer directly inspires the texts; at most, it serves as a backdrop for them.

Visitor engagement

While the meta-model just presented considers engagement in three of its aspects: its definition, the visitor's motivation as a condition for its occurrence, and the behaviours that testify to it, the collectives discussed deal only with the first of these aspects. They do, however, add new information on the types of engagement.

Below the radar

For *Dudley (2010a)*, *Basu and Macdonald (2007)*, and *Sachs (2017)*, attention is the product of intense psychological functioning. It operates through its three components: cognitive, imaginary and affective. And the affective one is expressed in a complex way through not only emotion, but also affect, empathy and desire.

Thus conceived, attention is engagement that becomes an experience in itself, the experience that *Csikszentmihalyi (1990)* calls 'flow', and *Dufresne-Tassé (2014)*, immersive. This functioning-experience is important not only because it enables learning, but also because, as a primary source of cognitive and affective development (*Csikszentmihalyi, 1990*), it constitutes an essential moment in itself. Thus, engagement is transformed from a means to an end.

Types of engagement

While the main concern of the authors of the meta-model is the distinction between purely physical and psychological engagement, *Dudley (2010a)* proposes four types. There would be cognitive, sensory, aesthetic, and affective engagements. If *Dudley's* identifications are correct, one would therefore have cognitive, sensory, aesthetic, and affective 'flow' (or immersive) experiences. This categorisation, which is based directly on components of the psychological functioning, is particularly interesting for researchers who are working on the immersive experience content, as it seems to them difficult to identify (*Engeser, 2012*).

Learning

For the authors of the meta-model, learning was the key word because it was both the aim and the great benefit of a visit to the museum. Here, it is a concept that is rarely used and that plays an almost insignificant role. On the other hand, meaning-making, which is of little

importance above, becomes the term for designing the result of the visitor's interaction with the exhibition.

What is meaning-making?

Nakashima Degarrod borrows the answer from Roland Barthes (1977): the meaning of texts and images is 'at the destination'; it comes from the interpretations of readers and viewers and not from the author's intentions as such. In the museum, meaning is created in the interaction between the audience and the objects (Nakashima Degarrod, 2010, p. 136). And the production of meaning ideally gives rise to fascination, enchantment, a moment of wonder, concentration, but also the desire to 'reach' the object, to 'touch' it in its very essence (Wingfield, 2010). Finally, if the production of meaning gives rise to a 'deepening', it does so through openness to the impressions felt, to the feelings experienced, and to openness to 'the other' through empathy, that is, through the work of the imagination (Witcomb, 2010, p. 40).

Comment

And if one relates learning and meaning-making, what happens? When the central concept of the visitor-exhibition relationship is learning, the outcome of the relationship is a specific product, either knowledge or a skill that is arrived at by a finely tuned, in other words, predetermined path. Seen in this light, the exhibition is a binding system. The playful and pleasant atmosphere in which the path is immersed does not change the closed nature of the system. However, when the central concept is the production of meaning, one is faced with a profusion of elements where benchmarks are hardly distinguishable and articulations that organize them painfully lacking.

In view of this observation, one should first ask whether the impression of a poorly organized profusion is not simply due to the fact that the authors surveyed had other concerns than precisely structuring a discourse concerning the production of meaning. If this is not the case, spontaneous meaning-making preferably occurs in an open context. And if this is correct, then exhibitions designed with meaning-making in mind should result in quite different visiting conditions and experiences than exhibitions produced with learning as an aim.

Interpretation

The group of texts devoted to interpretation (*Fritsch, 2011*) adapts it to the presentation of various types of collections, more specifically to collections of ancient and contemporary art. In doing so, it takes up aspects already explored in the first group of publications and addresses others.

Definition and aims

Here, interpretation is first defined negatively: it is not a discourse on objects or phenomena, and then positively: it is the meaning (the message) to be transmitted. Taking up this last definition, the collective attributes to it the same goals as Tilden: offering information that joins the visitors' baggage of knowledge and experience to obtain their commitment, and to develop in them the skills necessary for an autonomous treatment of the objects.

But the collective adds a goal of its own: to improve the ability to read the museography and draw from it information useful for a treatment of the objects that satisfies the visitors' intellectual requirements. This is an important addition, because in the exhibition context, interpretation is not just a matter of texts. It is the result of everything that surrounds an object: other objects, their grouping and the way in which these groupings are delimited and organized, texts, furniture, lighting, space distribution, in short, all the elements of the museography, including the architecture of the building.

Sources

The authors of the collective substantially clarify the sources of interpretation by identifying the following three:

- . The results of research done by specialists who worked and are still working on understanding the collections;
- . The knowledge, skills and sensitivity of the 'connoisseur' who manages to adapt itself to the 'taste' of the time;
- . The process of a person trying, to the best of his or her ability, to make sense of what is new for him or her.

Types

Finally, the same authors identify three types of interpretation:

- . Laissez-faire interpretation: meaning is given by the visitors and is limited to what they think and express spontaneously;
- . Closed interpretation (also called pedagogical): meaning is given by the museum, which categorically conveys the information to be retained about the nature of the object, its context, its meaning and possibly how to look at and understand it;
- . Open interpretation: meaning is again offered by the museum, but it is multiple; it includes the possible discourses on the object, including what seems uncertain or unknown. Visitors use this information to develop a meaning that seems satisfying. This is the type of interpretation clearly favored by the authors of the five collectives.

Comment

All in all, the collectives borrow from Tilden the open-ended concept of interpretation, insisting on the visitors acquisition of skills for autonomous processing of the objects. Then, the collectives expand on it. To help visitors, museums offer, in all its complexity, the most up-to-date information possible. This information is embedded not only in the texts, but also in all the elements of the museography surrounding the objects on display. With the help of this information and their ability to confront the unknown, visitors create a profusion of units of meaning which, ideally, lead to knowing the objects that corresponds to their demands for precision and accuracy, but also to the greed of their curiosity. In this way, an open visitor-exhibition relationship is sketched out.

Benefits

The authors of the texts of the five collectives take as given the categories of individual and social benefits proposed by Paddon. They use them as a basis from which to intervene in three ways.

- . They add two categories to Paddon's: (a) The benefits to the museum of visitors providing experiences or 'life stories' used to enrich the content of an exhibition (Sachs, 2017); (b) The professional development of the curator who develops an exhibition in a reflexive way (Färber, 2007).
- . Regarding the visitors, they explore personal benefits, such as the empowerment and identity enhancement that come from acquiring knowledge and skills, but also the emergence of new questions that stimulate the need for lifelong learning and development (Continho, 2017; Pearce, 2010).
- . They link - some explicitly, some implicitly - the 'other' benefits to meaning-making, whereas Paddon, it will be recalled, made them a by-product of learning.

Note

The last two interventions have important consequences. Indeed, they make the production of meaning as such a source of 'empowerment' or development of the visitor's capacities and, more generally, of all the benefits of a visit (including learning). The production of meaning thus becomes the central pivot of the visitor-exhibition relationship, so that this proposition, which was only an assertion at the beginning, now follows from a demonstration.

Exhibition

The authors of the collectives deal with several themes already examined in the first group of works, including the process of making an exhibition, the actors responsible for it and the involvement of visitors. They also explore new ones, in particular, certain characteristics of the exhibition and the place they give to visitors, as well as some forms of research that it could be developed.

The process of producing an exhibition

Broadly speaking, the authors of the collectives adhere to Black's position outlined above: designing and implementing an exhibition requires rigorous planning and realisation (Fritsch, 2011).

The person responsible for creating an exhibition

Here again, the position adopted in the collectives is not very different from that seen in the first group of publications. When works of art are exhibited, the person in charge is a curator or 'commissaire'. In other cases, it is a team, which includes an educator. This innovation, discussed at length by Graham (2017), Paillalef (2017) and Ware (2017), could be a source of tension. Indeed, it forces the group to review 'who is qualified to do what', 'who is now responsible for what', and 'how resources should be allocated to each member of the team'. Tensions could increase when the museum invites local people to provide some of the information presented in the exhibition, as it is the educator who usually oversees this collaboration. This greatly increases his status, making it easier for him or her to threaten the more influential members of the team.

Some features of the exhibition and the place they give to the visitor

The collectives are focusing on the following three characteristics:

1) The object is the central element of an exhibition because it has an unparalleled evocative potential. It appeals to the visitor's imagination and capacity to recall memories and knowledge, but also to his or her ability to conjure up all sorts of possibilities (Dudley, 2010b, p. 99-102). It therefore generates a wealth of meaning-making. Not to mention that this production is accompanied by sensations, affects and desires which, when 'named', also participate in the production of meaning (Dudley, 2010a, p. 1-18; Fritsch, 2011, p. 1-13). In so doing, from personal addition to personal addition, the visitor develops his or her own perception of the subject of the exhibition. To the point of becoming its co-author (Dudley, 2010b; Fritsch, 2011).

The discourse of the exhibition cannot therefore be a closed discourse (Basu and Macdonald, 2007). Rather, it should be conceived as a theme from which each visitor, like a musical composer, develops variations which, 'in fine', constitute an original personal work. And to encourage this production, Continho (2017) suggests that there should be moments of pause in the exhibition that the visitor can spend to reflect on and enrich what he has just produced.

2) Basu (2007) discusses another aspect of the exhibition discourse, namely its labyrinthine character. As in a labyrinth, visitors only know the part of the exhibition that they already have seen. They are therefore led to make sense of what they observe in relation to what they have seen. So one can think that this link ensures a certain continuity in the visitors' production of meaning.

3) According to Nash (2006), Rugoff (2006) and Schaffner (2006), the context in which the designer-producer immerses his or her exhibition influences not only what visitors look at, but also how they look at it, and what information they seek about it¹¹. This designer intervention can help visitors to grasp the content of the exhibition and, once understood, to use it as an anchor for the development of personal content.

Comment

Cosidering the above characteristics, the exhibition appears an open work as conceived by Umberto Eco (1965). Indeed, the visitor is offered a base (a set of objects) from which he or she freely produces meaning, which can eventually take the form of personal variations. This production is both stimulated and marked out.

The production of meaning is stimulated by the evocative character of the objects that invites the visitor to use his or her knowledge and experience. It is marked out both by the context that guides the perception of the objects (and the information surrounding them) and by the continuity that is established from one production of meaning to another because of the labyrinthine nature of the exhibition.

The question arises as to whether these characteristics are sufficient to ensure an optimal production of meaning in visitors, since any open work aims at this type of outcome. The answer cannot be positive, because it is well known that the mere presence of an object in an exhibition room does not necessarily lead to an abundant production of meaning. We also know that if a production of meaning influences the next, it does not ensure its production, i.e., the maintenance of the production. So the production of meaning, its maintenance and its persistence until the end of the exhibition remain problematic, and I propose to express three requirements according to the following three questions:

- . How does an exhibition encourage the triggering of meaning-making?
- . Once the production has started, how is it supported? More specifically:
 - How is supported the production of meaning through the visitor's interaction with the exhibition discourse?
 - How is supported the personal production of meaning that makes visitors true co-authors of the exhibition?
- . How can the production of meaning be sustained until the end of the exhibition, so that by the time visitors leave, if they so wish, they are familiar with the content of the exhibition and have created a personal parallel discourse in dialogue with the content?

The above three questions are benchmarks that could facilitate the work of the exhibition designer-producer. However, these benchmarks cannot be adopted until they have been tested by empirical research. This verification is crucial, as they are necessary for the success of any form of exhibition, and especially for the success of rare forms, as visitors have not usually developed the skills that facilitate their processing.

Research on the exhibition

The authors of the analysed collectives attach great importance to research on exhibition, and they envisage it in the following two forms.

- . The study of the medium itself and the ways of exploiting the resources of museography. Francis, Slack and Edwards (2011) present the example of a systematic series of attempts to 'materialise' the content of an introductory panel too copious to be read by visitors travelling through a huge museum (the British Museum) in under two hours. After several experiments, the materialization adopted is a lighthouse object, whose characteristics, briefly treated, offer the information needed to understand the whole of those around.¹²

¹¹ Although applicable to a collection presentation (permanent exhibition), the positions of Nash, Rugoff and Schaffner seem more appropriate for a thematic temporary exhibition.

¹² It goes without saying that the solution adopted was designed for the presentation of a collection (permanent exhibition).

- . The testing of rare forms of exhibition such as:
 - The metaphorical exhibition where a theme, for instance, the collections of the Tate Modern, is presented through an analogy, the Bank of England, its capital, the revenues it generates and the management of these (Cummings and Lewandowska, 2007);
 - The multi-voiced exhibition, which deals with the same subject as seen by different actors, such as the scientist, the artist, the curator and the historian (Carolyn and Haynes, 2007);
 - The reflective exhibition, which proposes questions rather than facts (Färber, 2007);
 - The uncertainty-sharing exhibition where the areas of ambiguity surrounding the knowledge authenticated by experts are explored (Kraeftner, Kroell and Warner, (2007).

The authors of the collectives consider research on rare forms of exposure to be easy and desirable. It is easy because if one proceeds rigorously, one can easily appreciate their value (Weibel and Latour, 2007). It is desirable because it contributes to the broadening of the range of available exhibition types, but also to the professional development of the exhibition designer-producer (Färber, 2007).

In short, a potential model

An outline of a new model emerges from the analysis of the five collectives studied. Its central concept is the production of meaning in response to an open structure exhibition. The major benefit for the visitor is his or her own psychological development.

More specifically

The exhibition

A team, a curator or a 'commissaire' responsible for the development of an exhibition proceeds according to a rigorous approach. The result is an open work in two ways. On the one hand, the content of the exhibition is multifaceted, as it encompasses the scientists' knowledge, questions, and doubts. On the other hand, because of their evocative character, the objects strongly stimulate the intelligence, imagination, and affectivity. The multiple units that these three entities produce together result both in the knowledge of the content of the exhibition and in the elaboration of a personal content that turns the visitor into a co-author of the exhibition.

In such a situation, markers are needed, because the personal content can drift so far away from the content of the exhibition that the production of meaning is left without a basis, without a point of support, and is bound to dry up.

The visitor

For its part, the functioning of visitors just outlined amounts to a strong commitment, an experience that can easily take the form of Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) 'flow'. The dialogue with the object is so close, so intense, that visitors enter the world of the exhibition, explore it and forget the passage of time as well as the fatigue of their feet.

Such an engagement-experience is only possible under certain conditions. Firstly, to have skills, such as the ability to draw information from the whole of the museography, the ability to confront novelty and also the ability to 'play' with it until it makes sense. Then, to demonstrate sufficient intellectual agility to organise the pleasing and sparkling array of sensations, images and ideas produced into an articulated representation of the exhibition's content.

When these conditions are met, the engagement-experience brings many benefits which contribute to the psychological development or, if one prefers, to the visitors 'empowerment', in other words, to their capacity to be and to act.

In sum, the above ideas all share a common orientation: openness. They can therefore be considered as a rather coherent outline of a model. It remains to detail them, to deepen them and above all to rework them until they are finely adjusted to each other. However, this exercise will not be of any real benefit as long as a definition of meaning production adapted to the exhibition visit situation is missing. This is still the case, however, because the authors

of the five collectives avoid this task. ¹³They are indeed content with identifying the origin of the production - the visitor - or the place where it takes place - the visitor-exhibition relationship - or its outcome - benefits such as enchantment.

AND AS IN GOOD STORIES, IN THE END, THE READER DOES NOT HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN A GOOD AND A BAD GUY

Summary and outlook

At the beginning of the 21st century, the great educators' thinking penetrates the museum world according to one of its major trends, the constructivist approach. Hein and Hooper-Greenhill are the carriers of this approach through their works on museum education. These works, Tilden's and some borrowings from adult educators serve as the conceptual basis for a set of 15 recent publications on the visitor-exhibition relationship and for a series of recommendations on how to conceive this relationship. There are two models, as different from each other as one can imagine. One is very sophisticated, in fact, it is a metamodel which, like a Russian doll, contains several mini models; the other is a draft model, almost a potential model, so few are the milestones it offers.

I will briefly recall each one, critique it and end up with two personal reflections.

The models

The *first model* is based on learning, and to ensure it, the visitor's engagement.

Prepared by a team, the exhibition is a directive and closed structure. Everything is planned, not only the learning to be achieved, but the pathway to it, and even what the visitor should feel at each stage. Everything takes place in a pleasant and even playful atmosphere, and the benefits to the visitor derive from learning.

The demanding work of designing such an exhibition is supported by numerous and detailed recommendations, because visitors must learn, and learn what has been planned. The success of the design team depends on it, but also the success of the museum, and eventually the approval of its funders.

The *second model* focuses on the production of meaning through the materiality of objects and their evocative power. The process that leads to this production is not planned. It depends entirely on the visitor's engagement, which in turn depends on many factors not precisely identified. The benefits of the engagement are the visitors' psychological development and their empowerment, i.e., the increase in their capacity to live and act.

So, the exhibition is an open work. Its creator - a curator, a 'commissaire' or a team - is guided by a single preoccupation, an abundant production of meaning and its maintenance with the help of sketchy guidelines.

Critique

Model 1

The first model includes several advantages, several beneficiaries, but it is problematic in several ways.

¹³ And this seems to be the case for the authors of the first group of publications, and even for Hein, who limits himself to deriving learning from the production of meaning, without specifying what this production represents.

It offers the exhibition producer a simple, articulated, safe and therefore attractive way of doing things. All that is needed is to set goals, choose resources and check whether the intended learning takes place. Moreover, the means and their use are the subject of a thousand precise and well justified recommendations. Their use is therefore reassuring.

As for the visitors, once they have left school and even university, they often still feel the need to learn. For example, surrounded by the Coronavirus 19 pandemic, they want to know if there are other types of vaccines than those reported in the newspapers, and they wonder about their composition, mode of action, and production. Like most adults, they have little time and want to get accurate and detailed information quickly. Provided that the devices manipulated in the museum or science centre are properly sequenced, the information they generate usually meets the visitors' expectations.

But learning, which is the central element of the model, is extremely difficult to identify. Indeed, the means used so far, whether it be tracking, a questionnaire or an interview, have all proved unsatisfactory.¹⁴ Furthermore, but in a completely different vein, in order to satisfy the demands of the curious and hurried visitors already mentioned, the exhibition must be stripped of any marginal elements that might attract their attention and distract them. It then becomes dry as a textbook, and tasteless as porridge, in short very unattractive. And if Andrew Pekarik (2010) is to be believed, it attracts only a limited audience: those who have already developed an interest in the subject of the exhibition, or those who, attracted by the playfulness of its devices, do not care about learning!

The above observations suggest at least the following questions: Is the 'dryness' of some exhibitions, especially science exhibitions, simply a matter of using devices that are manipulated by the visitor? Or does it depend on the obligation to generate specific learning, while the devices could be used in many ways? Finally, is there a form of scientific exhibition where, appropriating the content of the exhibition, visitors could play with or around it in a personal and creative way? The benefits would be threefold: the acquisition of knowledge, the exercise of a very important adult capacity, and the pleasure of playing with ideas.

Model 2

The central concept, this time, is the production of meaning. This leads to a very personal appropriation of the exhibition's content. The curator's aim is no longer, as we saw above, the acquisition of precise knowledge, but the optimal production of meaning; given the visitor's characteristics, it is the development of the greatest possible number of interconnected units of meaning that satisfy his or her interests.

Another important notion in the second model, that of engagement, corresponds to an experience that is cognitively, imaginatively, and emotionally intense, absorbing, and which is known to bring several benefits: (temporary) elimination of worries and concerns (Berto, 2014; Packer 2008*), restoration of energy (Packer, 2014; Soren, 2009*), feeling of well-being (Taylor and Brown, 1998; Thompson and Chatterjee, 2014*).

¹⁴ Behavioural *observation* offers little valid information because the visitors' gestures are equivocal. For example, when they stop for a long time in front of an object, are they assimilating information, i.e., learning, or are they struggling with a difficulty that prevents them from understanding and acquiring new knowledge?

The *questionnaire* cannot target all the learning that visitors are capable of. It is usually limited to identifying those that correspond to the aims envisaged by the exhibition curator and thus leaves out an unknown quantity of learning. Furthermore, if the researcher compares the knowledge at the exhibition entrance and exit, the risk is an overestimation of the acquisitions. Indeed, the sight of objects arouses the recall of "dormant" knowledge; when they are "awakened", they appear at the end of the visit and thus unduly and misleadingly increase the amount of knowledge acquired.

The *interview* allows visitors to express themselves freely and, once the visit is over, it should give access to all the learning realized. But for several reasons, this is unfortunately not the case. For example: a) Some acquisitions are so easy to make or are so similar to what visitors already knew that they do not think to talk about them; b) If visitors spend more than a few minutes in a room, they may think of so many new things that they cannot remember them all; c) As the information processed by visitors accumulates, it is transformed, so that when they leave the exhibition, what they deliver differs significantly from what they learnt during their visit.

The exhibition capable of these benefits is open-ended. It presents content that visitors discover according to their mood and use at their convenience. However, there are also problematic aspects to this model, in particular a structure that is still weak and has only a few milestones.

One last aspect is both interesting and problematic. This is the central role assigned to the objects and their materiality, which is of course emphasised by the texts and the rest of the museography. One after the other, the objects 'speak' the content of the exhibition. As a result, they foster a deep intimacy with their tangible aspects as well as with the scholarly information they convey, and this body-to-body encounter mobilises the visitor's sensory as well as intellectual capacities. However, although attractive, this position alone is not enough for the exhibition producer. The latter needs the precise recommendations that follow. As these do not seem to have been developed yet, I suggest going in search of them, taking as a starting point the following question.

Generally speaking, how should the presentation of objects and their arrangement be designed to ensure the body-to-body encounter evoked, and that this body-to-body results in an intense experience which, in turn, guarantees an abundant production of meaning? More precisely, how can starting the meaning-making be facilitated? And how can it be maintained, step by step, until the end of the exhibition? Finally, how could the recommendations resulting from this questioning be adapted to various forms of exhibition, and more particularly to rare forms such as the metaphorical, the multi-voice, the reflexive or the sharing of doubts exhibition?

It goes without saying that this questioning could not be productive if what is meant by production of meaning has not been defined and determined the forms it can take in an exhibition hall.

This completes the analysis of a representative set of works written in English at the beginning of the twenty-first century. This study offers a first understanding of the visitor-exhibition relationship. In order to verify its accuracy and to detail or qualify it, it would be useful to study the *articles* released in English and, above all, the texts published at the same time in the two other official languages of ICOM.

And to conclude, two personal reflections

It seems to be a given that an educator is now part of the exhibition design and implementation team. However, as was seen before, his or her role oscillates between 'too little' and 'too much'. An in-depth knowledge of the psychological functioning of the visitor in the two types of exhibitions explored would enable him or her, on the one hand, to sort out the many recommendations offered by the proponents of the exhibition-learning approach, and on the other hand, to appreciate the new suggestions that might be offered by the proponents of the exhibition-meaning-making approach. In this way, the educator could offer the team some knowledge that two of its central characters, the curator and the museographer (designer), are lacking. But, without this capacity, the educator is likely to disappoint, his or her status will suffer, and the museum will entrust to other categories of professionals the services that the educator could have offered with more competence.

On a completely different note, adults of the early twenty-first century benefit from visiting the two types of exhibitions corresponding to the two models explored here. They often wish to acquire new knowledge and to do so quickly. Often, too, they wish to discover a phenomenon or a human production and have fun gracefully grafting ideas, images, dreams and desires onto it. Adults benefit from both, as they provide knowledge to monitor and critique the current course of the world and maintain their creative capacities to respond to and benefit from the complexity of that world (Bourgeault, 2019; Sennett, 2019). Therefore, one should not succumb to the partisan temptation to privilege one type, to devalue the other at all costs, and to try to make it disappear. It seems more sensible to work on improving both models through systematic research.

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APPENDIX 1 WORKS ANALYSED

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APPENDIX 2 UNANALYSED WORKS

- Coleman, L.E. (2018). *Understanding and Implementing Inclusion in Museums*. Lanham, MD: Rowman&Littlefield.
Inclusion, the reasons why museums should practice it, the theories behind it, and the instruments for its implementation and evaluation.
- Cooks, B.R. (2011). *Exhibiting Blackness: African Americans and the American Art Museum*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.
An art historian analyses and criticizes two orientations of African-American art exhibitions: 1) an ethnological approach that focuses on the artists rather than their works; 2) a "reparative" approach that attempts to correct omissions from the past.
- Daniels, I. and Andrews, S. (2019). *What Are Exhibitions For? An Anthropological Approach*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

What if visitors could enjoy the collections in ways other than by attending exhibitions as we know them now? For example, exhibitions that really correspond to their tastes and expectations, as was the case when ethnographic research was carried out on the occasion of an exhibition on Japan at a London history museum.

Dudley, S, Barnes, A.J., Binnie, J., Petrov, J. and Walklate, J. (2011). *The Thing about Museums. Objects and Experience, Representation and Contestation*. Abingdon, UK; New York, NY: Routledge.

Twenty-five case study texts explore how objects enter a museum, what happens to them, how they can be used to address difficult or controversial issues, and how visitors experience them.

Lubar S.D. (2017). *Inside the Lost Museum: Curating, Past and Present*. Cambridge, MA; London, UK: Harvard University Press.

An exploration of the chain of operations that begins with the acquisition of objects, the building of collections, their conservation and finally their display for the benefit of the visitor, their aesthetic experience and their personal development.

McSweeney, K. and Kavanagh, J. (2016). *Museum Participation: New Directions for Audience Collaboration*. Edinburgh, UK: Museums Etc.

Thirty texts explore through examples what true public participation should be, i.e., a collaboration that implies a sharing of power and the disappearance of the demarcation between museum professional and the public.

Villeneuve, P. and Rowson Love, A. (2017). *Visitor-Centered Exhibitions and Edu-Curation in Art Museums* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, Ebook Central collection.

A collective work containing 18 contributions organised around the following three themes: 1) The basics of "edu-curation"; 2) The various types of collaboration and their implementation; 3) Cases and examples.

Summary

This article analyzes the relationship between adults and exhibitions based on related books published in English since the beginning of the 21st century. Do the people responsible for preparing an exhibition draw inspiration from the great authors whose work nourishes the world of education?

Two trends and two positions are emerging. The first gives pride of place to the constructivist museum educators George Hein and Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, and to researchers who empirically study one or another aspect of the visitor-exhibition relationship.

On the other hand, the second trend takes into consideration the work of museologists of various orientations, and especially of specialists in fields such as anthropology, the economics of experience, history, art history, narratology, philosophy, psychology, or sociology.

Thus, of these two trends: one makes specific learning the central goal and primary benefit of an exhibition visit, while the other privileges an optimal production of meaning making for each visitor.

Each of these two goals leads to different conceptions regarding the support a production team should offer to the visitor trying to appropriate the content of an exhibition.

When learning is central, this support appears into an exhibition structure that can be considered closed, as it guides the visitor step by step toward a specific acquisition or acquisitions.

On the other hand, when meaning making becomes essential, the structure is said to be open, because it facilitates this production of meaning making so that the visitor can make his /her own contribution and thus become the co-author of the exhibition.

Keywords: visitors, learning, exhibition, meaning-making

Affective functioning in the museum as a learning environment

Margarita Laraignée

By way of observation, I wish to state that this article is not a research study on the subject, but rather a modest attempt to compile, within the space allowed for its publication, the immense work carried out by leading professionals on the subject, such as the various publications presented by Colette Dufresne-Tassé, Marie-Clarté O'Neill, Hélène Barucq, Monique Sauvé and many other experts.

First reflections

In the 19th century, the first judgements about the role of education in the museum environment began. These reflections came from specialists but were focused on objects. It was in the 20th century that the foundations of the educational function for schoolchildren and adults were established. If we start from our evolutionary history, emotions are the protagonists of our lives. Traditionally, education has been aimed at controlling and, why not say, repressing emotions by subordinating them to reason. Western culture has not only given priority to reason over emotions, but the latter have been regarded as disturbances and obstacles, which have also magnified a unique conception of the episteme or science that reveals the objective truths of the real world. (Salcedo Ballesteros, M.E., Pérez Pérez, T. p.63).

Thanks to the great advances that are made every day in our knowledge of the human brain, we have accumulated experience that allows us to understand the essential role of our mental faculties. Curiosity and wonder, which play a role in motivation, are the essential ingredients of learning, as we are better able to retain in our memory information that is linked to our emotions. As Charles Darwin, one of the forerunners of affective neuroscience, announced, emotions are there because they serve the survival of the species. So why should we deny them in the world of museums, especially when we are thinking about learning in museums?

Affective manifestations

The word "emotion" derives from the Latin word "moveo" - to move - with the addition of the prefix "e" - from - so that the origin of the term reveals that every emotion holds within it the idea of acting, of moving; one cannot speak of learning without emotions. The concept of *emotion* refers to the term "feeling" in everyday life, although these two concepts are not always clear. Feeling is a mental representation of the state of the body, while emotion is the reaction to the stimulus and the associated behavior. In the field of neuroscience we speak of "emotions" when we refer to a set of physiological, cognitive, subjective and motor changes that arise from the assessment (conscious or unconscious) of a stimulus, in a given context and in relation to the objectives of an individual at a specific moment in life. Thirteen years after the appearance of *"The Origin of Species"*, Darwin published a book entitled *"The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals"*, in which, based on the theory of evolution, he tried to understand the way in which we humans express our emotions.

Darwin's original intuitions were developed by the evolutionary theorist Robert Plutchik (1927-2006), professor emeritus in psychiatry and psychology at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, in his famous article *"The Nature of Emotions"* (2001), in which he noted the number of definitions of the term "emotion" that have been proposed throughout the 20th century. Plutchik proposed to integrate the main contributions of the different currents in this field, from Darwin's evolutionism, Freud's psychoanalysis to the most recent neurological approaches, including William James' psychophysiological current, Cannon's neurological current or the cognitive point of view of the 1950s. He proposed a scheme with his name in which the functional point of view of emotional behavior is analyzed. Paul Ekman¹, between 1960 and 1970, together with his colleagues conducted experiments similar to those carried out by Darwin, from which they concluded that the six basic emotions proposed (anger, joy, fear, surprise, disgust and sadness) are universally recognized, irrespective of age, whether one is male or female, and the culture to which one belongs. Some questioned all six emotions and others considered only four: fear, anger, sadness and joy.

This paper will deal with different terms such as emotion, feeling, affect within the museum field. But what do we understand by affect? Affect could be defined succinctly as *the set of psychic reactions of an individual with respect to the outside world* [free translation] (Malacarne. 2017. p.11). The term encompasses all the emotions, all the feelings and all the states perceived by an individual in front of an object, person or event.

The interrelationship between affective, cognitive and imaginary functioning constitute the mental functioning of the individual. The American museologist John Cotton Dana (1856-1929) was the first to refer to aesthetic pleasure and also, without intending to do so, to consider the emotions that would be produced in the public when in contact with museum objects. But it was not until 1980 that the different types of museum audiences, their characteristics and needs, and the beginning of "cultural mediation" began to be taken into consideration.

Depending on the type of exhibition, the emotions perceived by the public can go far beyond simple delight to become an intense, unforgettable and unusual museum

¹**Paul Ekman** is a psychologist who pioneered the study of emotions and their facial expression. He is considered one of the hundred most outstanding psychologists of the 20th century.

experience. The term "experience" refers to the way in which each person perceives or reacts to a situation, an environment, an event; it is something completely personal, which depends exclusively on each particular person, his or her situation or psychological and spiritual state at the time of the experience. Consequently, when it takes place in a museum environment, it is much more difficult and complex.

Among the most important functions of human behavior is affect, which is an important aspect of psychic life. For the social development of the individual, all affective manifestations are indispensable (Goleman, 1996).

All educational institutions (regardless of the age of the learners) should tend to favor the field of emotional intelligences as they enhance affective, emotional, personal and social knowledge. The link recognized with that of "attachment" is a significant primary need for the human being, which serves to create a bridge between the individual and his social group (in this case the museum environment).

The term affect has its origins in Greek philosophy with Aristotle, who referred to the "passions" as the movement of the sensitive appetite, including emotions, motivations and other affective manifestations. Today, the human being is considered as one:

1. Psychophysical unity (sentient and psychic life).
2. Psychosomatic unity (body and mind).
3. Psychosocial unit (individual and social life)

(Digital magazine for education professionals. 2009)

Emotions, feelings, passions, desires, sensations, in short, affect is social and will therefore have an impact on visits to museums. Affect encompasses all the emotions, all the feelings and all the states perceived by an individual in front of an object, person or event. The mood will be an affective state that influences the whole of the individual's behavior. The feeling is a progressive awareness of something that occurred because of an emotional episode, it is a complex physical state that has a cognitive and affective aspect.

The first publication concerning the analysis of affective functioning in an exhibition hall was produced by a group of researchers from the Ecole du Louvre and the University of Montreal. The publication, "*Psychologie du visiteur de musée: contribution à l'éducation des adultes en milieu muséal*", was conceived in 1996 by Colette Dufresne-Tassé and André Lefebvre, with the intention of understanding the complexity of the museum visit and the mental responses to the presence of objects. Studies on the subject of affective activity within a museum visit have been based on the overall experience of the adult visitor in a museum. The museum space and the time spent in it by each visitor will be a matter of the adult visitor's own choice. The museum is a private space between the visitor and the work, but it is also a social space, where different behaviors interact. Each individual, adult, adolescent, child, arrives at the exhibition with a baggage of knowledge, memories, motivations that will interact with the exhibition (objects, texts, guided tours, etc.).

Cognition involves processes such as memory, attention, perception, language, problem solving and medium and long-term planning. The emotional state conditions cognitive processes. Today, thanks to studies on brain regions, it is known that these are involved in both cognition and emotion.

Robinson and Arthur W. Melon (1925-1926) developed the notion of visitor interest and the attractiveness of objects. The museum's evaluation of its visitors is linked to public policy and marketing. It evaluates how the visitor behaves when entering the museum, how he/she structures his/her tour, what are the mediation structures (billboards, images, videos, etc.). In general, the evaluation is focused on what they have used and how they have appropriated the contents of the exhibition.

Affect is one of the key elements in the visitor's understanding of an exhibition. Studying these effects will allow museologists and museographers to do a more productive job and thus be able to recognize those factors that will make the museum experience satisfactory. According to the work carried out by H  l  ne Barucq, in "*Caract  risation du fonctionnement affectif de l'adulte au mus  e Le cas des mus  es d'art :   tude au Mus  e des Beaux-Arts de Montr  al*" (2011), affect encompasses all the emotions, all the feelings and all the states perceived by an individual in front of an object, person or event. Depending on the type of exhibition, the emotions perceived by the public can go far beyond simple delight to become an intense, unforgettable and unusual museum experience. The experience is based on the visitor's contact with everything that is available to him (objects, texts, museography), giving rise to the idea of systematically studying the behavior of the adult visitor during the visit to the museum and the time he spends there.

1. the museum is the one that awakens affect (environment).
2. the museum is the one that provokes it through the exhibition.

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the museographic setting they take on another dimension. But not only the objects, but also the technical support, the discourse, the interaction between all the components of the exhibition. Although the exhibition is constituted by a physical space, the social space should not be discarded. The relationship of each person with the object is individual, particular and unique. It is an experience in which the visitor will not be able to touch it, manipulate it, see it from different angles, except in the case of special assemblies, the visitor will have the technical and technological means that will allow him to "delight" in it. The visitor will have to construct meaning for himself, through what he sees or can perceive using all his senses. The experience that takes place in the museum space is not seen as a "product" (learning or delight), but as the beginning, or the start of a process. The visitor will discover during the visit, what he thinks, what he feels, what he imagines, what he transmits will be translated into his psychological functioning.

It is therefore important to understand the complexity of a visit to a museum and the mental responses to the objects presented to the visitor. Certain reactions that occur in the museum environment can be of various kinds:

1. those that are linked to disgust, rejection and indifference.
2. those that correspond to the affective phenomena that can be triggered before, during and after the visit, away from the aesthetic or artistic.

What is the functioning of the mental operation performed by the museum visitor? Is it cognitive, imaginary or affective? The operation is cognitive when it treats reality as a fact, on the other hand it is imaginary when it consists of an evocation of a reality perceived by the subject; the visitor evokes a memory or something that is being constructed and finally, the affective operation is the reaction of the subject with his desires and his reactions.

Monique Sauv   (2011) states in her research that *"emotion is an experience of something or about something and it is this very emotion that produces a trigger that allows the individual to react to other situations by attributing a personal significance to it"* [free translation]. This takes place in a very short period of time and is difficult to assess, it is specific to each individual and differs according to the context in which it occurs. According to the instruments used for the assessment, affective-cognitive behavior is the most present and affective-imaginary behavior the least. Positive emotions are very well represented by the instruments used because they are linked to the aesthetic experiences that take place in a museum space. Pleasure, on the other hand, is less well represented because it is a social domain. The interrelation between affective, cognitive and imaginary functioning constitutes the mental functioning of the individual. According to the study carried out by Sauv   (2011), four types of affective functioning can be distinguished:

1. *purely affective*, an impulsive exclamation expressing a behavior that the visitor cannot control; onomatopoeics suggesting a strong reaction, a smile or a sigh, when the visitor refers to another event already experienced.
2. *affective-cognitive*, the visitor expresses a feeling as a fact, an evaluative judgement that affirms what he thinks he feels.
3. *affective-imaginary*, the visitor expresses a state or a reaction as an evoked reality, be it in the future, in the past or something possible.

4. *affective-cognitive-imaginary*, the visitor expresses comments in response to a past reality, something in the future or possible, a memory that is associated with something in the exhibition.

There are limitations to assessing the emotions associated with an affective reaction, as the methods used are not sufficiently reliable. Recently, wearable devices have been developed that are able to detect physiological responses with corresponding signal processing and the use of algorithms that measure people's affective reaction from signals. The most important advantage of this practice is that it is "unconscious and objective", those who are working with these devices detect "facial expressions", "body gestures" and some biological reactions of the autonomic nervous system such as "skin conductance", "heart rate", etc. These methods have been used in the field of entertainment: music, films, videos, etc. but have not been used in the field of museums, where it could be a great contribution. Moodscope is an online platform designed to track a person's moods over a period of time, asking the user to rate their feelings in different emotional states. There are other methods such as "Thinking avalanche" or "Daniel Schmitt's method".

If we start from the genesis of emotions, these would be produced in subcortical structures, such as the thalamus and hypothalamus, while their processing and control would be the responsibility of the cerebral cortex.

According to Paul Mac Lean²'s theory, the brain is made up of three structures, the first and oldest of which was the so-called reptilian brain, the seat of the most primitive emotions, for example, fear. The second structure, the visceral brain, corresponded to a later evolutionary state, typical of the first mammals, and was the one that allowed the range of emotions to be broadened, including the social emotions that interest us. The American neurologist James Papez³ developed the core of Cannon and Bard's theory by proposing the first diagram of the central nervous circuits responsible for emotions. This is composed of the thalamus, hypothalamus, hippocampus and cingulate cortex, prefrontal cortex and the amygdala. The most recent studies present the neocortex as having the function of confronting emotional and cognitive processes by controlling emotional responses.

The memories

Emilio García-García (2018), in *"We are our memory, remembering and forgetting"* establishes that the genetic program in us is found in a close relationship between the stimulation coming from the environment and the social environment, where culture and education give rise to the singular and specific memories in each one of us. These include: declarative or explicit memory, in which our consciousness is involved, and procedural or implicit memory, in which consciousness does not participate. García-García quotes in his

²**Paul Mac Lean** (1913-2007) was an American physician and neuroscientist who made significant contributions to the fields of psychology and psychiatry. His evolutionary theory of the triune brain proposes that the human brain is actually three brains in one: the reptilian, the limbic system and the neocortex.

³**James Papez** (1883-1958) was an American neurologist. A graduate of the University of Minnesota, his main contribution to science and especially to neurology and psychobiology is the description of the so-called Papez circuit, which is the neural pathway in which the cerebral cortex controls emotions; Papez was the first to propose the limbic system as a control system for emotions, which was a major breakthrough in the biopsychology of emotion.

work (p.14) Michel Gazzaniga: "Everything in life is memory except for the thin edge of the present" (p.14).

Explicit memory is made up of "episodic memories", which are those that allow us the conscious capacity to remember specific experiences that we have personally experienced, such as a visit to a museum or the performance of a cultural activity. This requires neural systems that allow us to encode the specific experience, separate it from another and store it in a lasting way. "Episodic memory" allows us to travel into the past, not only to relive it but also to construct and elaborate one's own identity, some also call it "autobiographical memory". It is the memories of the "I" that constitute one's own identity. Implicit memory" refers to motor skills, cognitive skills, such as mental arithmetic, is that which is unconscious and is retrieved through action.

All the experiences and learning in our lives, from a simple conversation or a visit to a museum or any other educational or pleasurable activity, moulds our "brain"; this is called "neuronal plasticity", a process for the proper functioning of memory, the capacity of our nervous system to store and retrieve numerous stimuli.

Memories include sensory memories, short-term memory, long-term memory and working memory. The latter refers to the mental operations we carry out with the information we receive, elaborating and reorganizing it in order to solve problems. It could be said that it adds to the short-term memory, an additional one. We use this memory when we talk, listen to other people, read, write, and in all kinds of mental operations, especially when they are carried out simultaneously. This memory is very important when visiting a museum, an exhibition or any other activity that involves our attention: reading a poster, understanding, answering questions that are presented, participating in a guided tour, carrying out an activity, in these areas, requires a large emotional component.

A group of neuroscientists at University College London, led by Eleanore Maguire⁴, in 2007, used various MRI techniques to map the physical characteristics of the brains of London taxi drivers, concluding that the brain is continually changing depending on the individual's experiences. In this case, because of the demand that the taxi drivers had to remember thousands of the city's streets and iconic landmarks (hospitals, museums, temples, etc.). Research has shown that this type of skills training can reduce the deterioration of memory in older adults.

According to García-García (2018), several studies have established that engaging in cognitive activities at older ages, such as reading, playing board games, solving crossword puzzles, doing arts and crafts, as well as participating in social activities, significantly reduces the risk of mild cognitive impairment. People who engage in stimulating and intellectually rewarding activities such as museum visits have better verbal and memory capacity compared to other adults who do not engage in such activities. Museum visits, then, may increase "cognitive reserve" and the affective relationship that may be created by the visit may delay the onset of symptoms of ageing or other impairments.

Although there are opposing positions in this field, from the scientific point of view, there is a study called ACTIVE that highlights that the directed practice and training with mental

⁴ **Eleanore Maguire** is an Irish neuroscientist and academic. Since 2007, she has been Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience at University College London, where she is also a Wellcome Trust Senior Research Fellow.

exercises, allow enriching "the cognitive reserve" in the face of a degenerative process. This study involved 2,832 healthy adults between 65 and 94 years of age who retained the cognitive skills they had acquired for two years after the experience.

Museum environments are environments enriched with an innumerable amount of stimuli, highly favorable for children and adults, unlike other spaces from a cognitive point of view. Although this subject has been worked on for more than two decades, it will require a theoretical and scientific study in order to be applied both in the field of formal and non-formal education.

If we analyze the basic emotions, we will be in a position to evaluate the responses of our visitors to museums. Starting with "fear", this is one of the most basic human emotions, the one that ensures survival and procreation, shying away from all threats that put integrity at risk. In the case of our subject, the visit to an exhibition, the fear of the unknown, of being in the presence of facts, images that can take the visitor back to other moments that he or she does not wish to remember, can be one of the reasons for not wanting to enter the exhibition. For example, a Museum of Memory where a genocide or similar aberrant acts are remembered.

Anger is one of the most complex emotions that man can perceive. "He who masters his anger masters his worst enemy" (Confucius). From a neurobiological point of view, it causes an activation of the frontal orbital regions, which are also involved in the processes of social approach. In our case, that of museums, it is the adolescent public that has impulsive and irascible behavior; during adolescence, like our body, our brain undergoes monumental changes. The brains of children and adolescents show an increased response to rewards in areas related to pleasure seeking. The upbringing children and adolescents have received and the social environment in which they have grown up will have a direct impact on the emotions they perceive. Therefore, when considering an exhibition for children or adolescents, it would be very important to know the characteristics of each group in order to be able to approach, from an affective point of view, that the result is the most favorable for the characteristics of this specific audience.

In the art world, we often attend exhibitions, shows, performances or other artistic representations where the visitor can feel some kind of unpleasant feeling. The intention of the artist and the person responsible for the installation may have this intention, that of provoking, but what should be the role of the curator in the face of these feelings?

The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts with the Association des Médecins Francophones empowers members of this organization to prescribe their patients a tour of the museum grounds for therapeutic purposes. The museum will give each doctor 50 free visitor passes per year, allowing entry for two adults and two children, so that the project can be extended to patients and their families. The benefits have been proven by science:

1. the very act of walking is beneficial, as movement is fundamental to the body's health; walking the halls will contribute to improving joints, reducing cardiac output, etc.
2. improves mood by allowing the release of endorphins, dopamine and serotonin known as the happiness hormones.

3. helps to eliminate negative thoughts, by concentrating on a work of art and making a personal interpretation of it, allowing not only to increase their cultural background and aesthetic appreciation but also to improve their health.

In the field of museums, and always from the perspective of the public who visit them, we often come across people who have had to immigrate and who find themselves outside their cultural and social environment and even alienated through language, and for this reason are experiencing moments of profound sadness due to their situation. With the study of emotions and affect, it is possible that we can approach this vast majority of people who are moving from one place to another in search of new horizons where they can re-establish themselves and start again. Are museums capable of finding these paths to social integration?

Surprise is one of the least studied emotions, perhaps because it is not a problem; some authors do not consider it as such because it does not have all the characteristics of the other basic emotions. But surprise helps to focus attention and working memory on the information that has been acquired, thus facilitating learning, reinforcing and modifying this process in different species. It is surprise that is taking centre stage in innovative activities in school settings. Experts from the Memory Laboratory of the Institute of Cell Biology and Neuroscience (IBCN), belonging to the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Buenos Aires (UBA) have carried out studies that have proven that surprise is a mechanism that reinforces the fixation of memories in children. In an experiment with 1,600 pupils between the ages of seven and nine, they concluded that those who did a surprise activity retained 60% more memories than those who did not.

Primary emotions are those that our species carries after years of evolution, they are therefore adaptive and can be considered universal because they do not depend on culture or social value systems. But in addition to these, there are social or secondary emotions that are shaped by the culture of each social group. They are no longer innate, but require a certain cognitive development and arise from learning. It is worth remembering the difference between emotion and feeling. According to the Portuguese neurologist António Damásio, who was able to identify different kinds of emotions, feeling is a mental representation of the state of the body, while emotion is the reaction to the stimulus and the associated behavior. It could be said that secondary emotions are the result of the interaction between primary emotions and social norms.

Consequently, the work of the educational departments, with regard to **affect**, is that of sensitizing and educating the emotions of those who visit the museum and those who participate in the guided visits in their different applications. It is the museum educators who adapt the museographic presentation to each group, to each individual, so that they are "emotionally instructed" to receive it.

Today, the museum institution seeks to impart knowledge through all possible means, especially digital ones; all information is found on the internet, an environment created to provoke all kinds of emotions (pleasant, pleasurable or not) where the individual can open up to express his or her own. The museum, together with the school entities, must propose to work together for the development of the human being from critical thinking to behavioral responses that allow him/her to change behaviors that are harmful to him/herself and his/her environment.

Although the subject of emotions and feelings has been dealt with for only a few decades, it continues to be the subject of study. The need for a theoretical-scientific study in order to be applied in both formal and non-formal education (museums), it has taken a long time for it to become the subject of study in medicine, biology, psychiatry and psychology.

The personal and/or interpersonal perspective has always existed, but we are in a society and this subject has not been studied with the intensity it deserves. It is necessary, if we are in the museum field, to analyze the pedagogical and educational field, for formal and non-formal education and also informal education (family, society, etc.).

Feelings are part of the human being and as social beings we must "know and educate" them throughout our lives, even after schooling. By knowing our feelings, we will be able to build a more committed society where social, psychological and behavioral relationships allow us to achieve overall emotional health. From a theoretical point of view, much has been written on this subject, more oriented to formal education, but not so much to others (Elias, Tobias, Friedlander.2000, p30-38).

Affective functioning as a means of learning should lead us to:

- being aware of one's own feelings (emotional awareness): the visitor when confronted with the object is faced with something unknown or unfamiliar.
- recognizing and understanding the feelings of others (empathy) especially because the museum environment is a social environment.
- regulate the positive form of emotional and behavioral impulses, what is the behavior in the face of something incomprehensible or unfamiliar to others.
- to set ourselves positive objectives when planning our exhibitions
- use communication, through all possible means.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the museum institution seeks to impart knowledge and today, thanks to the presence of digital media, this can be found on the internet, but the museum will continue to be the place created to provoke all kinds of emotions.

In the museum environment, an emotional link is generated with the environment, which may be satisfactory, pleasant or not. But it will serve as a basis for forging human relationships, because in this area all kinds of feelings are generated, as well as links with the environment, generating a construction of identity, both individual and social.

The intention of the curators, those in charge of the museographic and museological setting, educational departments, guides, security staff will be those who will allow this "socializing process" to reach its maximum development. We must leave behind the concept in which visitors were considered to be mere empty vessels to be filled by the museum institution with previously selected knowledge.

In order to face the challenges of this century, it will be necessary to assign new objectives to education and, in the particular case of museums, to revalue their importance. The museum will be an alternative to formal education in order to respond to the new paradigms prevailing in the society of the 21st century.

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Summary

In the 19th century, the first judgements began to be made about the role of education and the educational base for schoolchildren and adults.

If we start from our evolutionary history, emotions have been the protagonists of our lives. Thanks to the advances that are made every day in our knowledge of the human brain, this has allowed us to accumulate experiences that have enabled us to understand the essential role of our mental faculties.

As Charles Darwin, one of the forerunners of affective neuroscience, announced, emotions are there because they fulfill a function for the survival of the species. Why should we deny them in the museum environment? And this is especially true when we reflect on affective functioning as a means of learning.

This paper will deal with the different terms such as "emotion", "feeling", "affect" in the museum field.

The interrelation between cognitive, imaginary and affective functioning constitutes the mental functioning of the individual. But it was not until 1980 that the different types of audiences, their characteristics and needs, and the beginning of "cultural mediation" began to be considered.

All institutions and within them, museums (educational departments) should aim to promote affective, emotional, personal and social knowledge.

The first publication concerning the analysis of affective functioning in an exhibition room was carried out by a group of researchers from the Ecole du Louvre and the University of Montreal, in 1996 by Colette Dufresne-Tassé and André Lefebvre. This work was based on the experience of an adult visitor. An exhibition experienced by the visitor, studying the effects of affect, allowed the specialists to do a more productive job and to be able to recognize those factors that would make the museum experience more satisfying.

There are limitations to assessing the emotions associated with an affective reaction, as the methods are not sufficiently reliable, but recently, portable devices have been developed that are capable of detecting physiological responses, with the corresponding processing of a signal perceived by the device.

All the experiences and learning in our lives, from an unimportant conversation to a visit to a museum or any other establishment where a pleasurable or educational activity takes place, will mould our brains. Environments, especially museums, are environments enriched with an innumerable number of stimuli that are highly favorable for all kinds of audiences. Despite the fact that this subject has been worked on for more than two decades, a theoretical and scientific study will be necessary to be able to apply it to both formal and non-formal education.

By way of conclusion to this summary of the article, the museum institution seeks to impart knowledge; today, thanks to the presence of digital media, the museum field has needed them to overcome the crisis of isolation that the Coronavirus pandemic has caused in the world. The closure of institutions has forced them to create "emotional links" with their public, both the public in person who usually approached the institutions and the "virtual" one. This global epidemic has led to a paradigm shift in communication, interaction and engagement with diverse audiences. These new "emotional bonds" will serve as the basis

for forging new human relationships, based on a construction of identity, both individual and social.

To meet the challenges of the century, it will be necessary to set new goals that will lead to better affective functioning and to set positive objectives when planning exhibitions.

Key words : museum-education-emotion-emotion-affect-cognition

CULTURAL ACTION

The roots of CECA and cultural action¹

Nicole Gesché-Koning

No mention of cultural action in the early years of the different ICOM committees dealing with education

If the word "education" appears since the very creation of the first ICOM international committees in 1948 (ICOM being created in 1946), "cultural action" however is first mentioned in 1963. No mention of cultural action in the names of the two first ICOM committees n° 6 on Education in museums and n°7 on Children's museums and activities for

children in museums. Informal education is though mentioned and will lead to further cultural action activities. Still no mention of cultural action in the name of the new Committee on Education created in 1953 merging the first two ICOM committees.

Birth of CECA and first mention of cultural action

After the dissolution in 1962 of the Committee on Education (Gesché-Koning 2018, p. 93) discussions took place on education in its widest sense rethinking the birth of a new committee which had to include pedagogues (sometimes mentioned as educationalists) as well as sociologists, and had to cover wider fields than the old committee did, i.e. to encompass not merely education as it had been considered in the past but a whole new sphere of cultural action (*ICOM News*, 16 (4-6), August-December 1963, p. 60-61). This is the first mention of the second term in the title of the CECA Committee. The meaning of 'cultural action' is though not clearly explained; it must be understood from a French point of view, the words 'action culturelle' being linked to culture in its broadest sense and separated from education (O'Neill, 2018).

Cultural Action

1968 marks a turning point in the history of the CECA committee. Its members met in Leningrad and Moscow on Education and Cultural Tasks of Museums. The same year, an international conference was organised in Krakow, Poland, on museums and their new public in different social systems and cultural backgrounds.

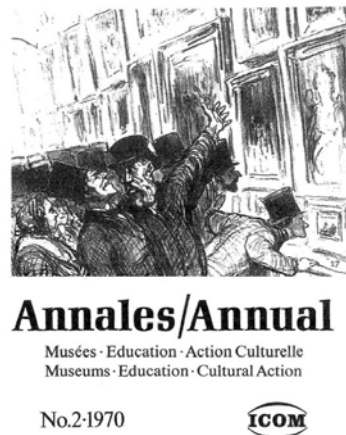
Cultural action a French notion meaning all activities organized in museums not necessarily educational ones.

The issue of cultural action was discussed during the first CECA annual conference held in Moscow-Leningrad (14-21 May 1968) by Jean Favière in his presentation *Musées et action culturelle* (Favière, 1969, p 37-43). Cultural action is clearly explained as being all activities organized in museums following the creation in

France of the *maisons de la culture* (cultural houses); these are defined as "multipurposed

¹ This paper first published in English in *ICOM Education* 28 (Gesché-Koning, 2018, 23-30) has been shortened and translated into French and Spanish for this special issue 30.

centres" (*centres culturels polyvalents*), i.e. organisations aiming at reaching all publics, all works, all types of expression. Jean Favière then raises the question of knowing if the vocation of a museum is to support these culture houses or not and if the answer is yes, what is needed to make this collaboration successful. He further develops these ideas at the 9th ICOM General Conference in Grenoble *The museum in the service of man today and tomorrow. The museum's educational and cultural role*: education and cultural action as defined above are complementary: "museums should be seen as instruments of cultural promotion, places of attraction, encounters and influence" (Favière, 1972, p. 80). For Favière, all cultural centres and specifically museums may develop two types of actions: "centripetal (the public is asked to come and participate to the activities the museum offers) and centrifugal (happening outside the museum)" (Favière, 1972, p. 84) or also called 'peripheral activities' (Wittlin, 1970, p. 204).



Picture 1: *Annales / Annual* © ICOM-CECA

The first issue of the journal *Annales / Annual*, which will become from issue no. 7 onwards *ICOM Education*, is published in 1969 and shows clearly the three words Museums - Education - Cultural Action on its cover page. Supported by Hugues de Varine, who signed the first editorial, the six first issues owe a lot to the CECA secretary Renée Marcousé. Their content and the numerous articles published in the following issues of the CECA journal called from n°7 onwards *ICOM Education* (Gesché-Koning, 2006) show the manifold activities of the CECA committee.

Cultural action is from then on linked to the word education and the committee has kept its name for more than fifty years. If its meaning is not clear for English speaking people as George Hein stresses in 2011: "I'm not certain what the original members of the committee had in mind by adding those two words "cultural action" (Hein, 2012, 9), the archives of CECA and the former committees on education clearly relate these words to its French meaning. To quote G. Hein they "assert that education is a social function and how significant the inclusion of social cultural actions is for any educational theory" (Hein, 2012, 9).

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Summary

Education - Cultural Action, these key words linked to the CECA committee did not appear at the same moment and have their own history.

Research in the ICOM and CECA archives show the evolution between 1948 and 1965 when the CECA committee was officially recognised and how to interpret the key words of education and cultural action. The CECA Committee for Education and Cultural Action came officially to light in 1965. It followed the first two committees linked to museum education created by ICOM in 1948. These two committees merged in 1953 to form one Committee on Education. The latter was then dissolved under the request of the ICOM Executive Council eager to rethink the aim and organisation of the committee. The meaning to be given to the words education and cultural action were the object of many discussions.

A seminar organised in Paris in November 1964 may be considered as the fundamentals of the future CECA Committee.

The words 'cultural action' are first mentioned in 1963. They must be understood in the French context of the 'cultural centres' created in France in the 1960s by French Minister of Culture André Malraux. They have been translated into English without further reflection on the meaning they could have in this language, hence the questions put forward nowadays.

Keywords: education, cultural action, ICOM

Cultural action in museums in France

From founding intuitions to diffraction

Marie-Clarté O'Neill

"No two opinions were ever the same in the world, any more than two hairs or two grains. The most universal of qualities is the diversity of minds"
Michel de Montaigne

Introduction

The following text is an attempt to respond to a question raised by ICOM's Committee for Education and Cultural Action (CECA), a question that concerns its dual title: education and cultural action. The committee's work on the notion and practice of museum education seemed long-standing, numerous, extraordinarily varied and relatively well-defined by definitions derived from the educational sciences: formal education of the school type, informal education of the leisure type targeting acquisitions, non-formal education allowing each person to take advantage of an offer as he or she sees fit, constructivist education attempting to mutually support the natural abilities of visitors and the resources provided by the institution (objects, texts, spaces, various activities), etc. The term cultural action, although present in the title of the committee, was either not mentioned in the proposals for papers or publications or was used without a precise definition or one that could be validated by the international ICOM community as a whole. Thus, the definition given to so-called cultural programmes by the CECA *Best Practice* tool first published in 2014, while not wrong, would certainly need to be clarified and/or modulated.

One of the ways chosen to try to circumscribe this field was to consider this notion of cultural action from a geographical, regional angle, sensing that the anthropological dimension of culture, one of the two terms included in the expression cultural action, should have an influence on what was proposed in each regional entity.

I have therefore taken on the responsibility of describing the French case in order to present the various orientations around what could be called, at least at one time, cultural action.

Two clarifications are necessary at this stage:

- It is a question of trying to specify the possible specificity, in France, of the cultural action offered by museums in relation to museum education. This makes all the more sense since ICOM was created in France and the impact of this initial geographical location can be clearly seen in the evolution of the names of the committees, including ours, at the beginning.

1948 is the date of the first ICOM General Conference, held in Paris, which creates 12 international committees, two of which are devoted to education in museums: *Museums and Activities for Children* (No. 6) and *Museum Education* (No. 7).

1953 saw the merger of these two committees into one: the *International Committee for Education*.

It was in 1963 that the duality that interests us appeared, which is reflected in the title of the international committee that we still bear: *Committee for Education and Cultural Action*

- The subject of cultural action as such in France has already been widely dealt with, being the subject of numerous publications, in particular within the framework and at the instigation of the History Committee of the Ministry of Culture and Communication created in 1993 around the conviction that an administration must reflect on itself, on its past and its roots, in order to understand its present and prepare for the future. The aim of my contribution is not therefore to produce new elements, but to include the French case and its specificities in the concert of nations convened by this international publication.

These two types of museum functions, education and cultural action, unquestionably include all the activities of the museum staff responsible for the link between the museum

Education and cultural action regroupent l'ensemble des activités des personnels de musées responsables du lien entre l'institution et les citoyens.

institution and the public in most of its dimensions: programming of the offer outside the specifically scientific and disciplinary offer linked to the collections, reception, information and training of the public, research into new targets, insertion of museums into the dynamic of using heritage as a tool for the development of the public and social cohesion, etc. CECA's *Best Practice* tool highlights

the museum's overall educational role by attempting to differentiate between a so-called cultural offer, open to all, with no clearly defined objectives, which would correspond to so-called cultural programmes, and a so-called educational offer targeting identified audiences with more clearly defined objectives. However, beyond the discussions that these definitions may rightly trigger, we can see that we remain at the level of products, productions and programmes, without analysing more subtly the question of the mission or missions. The CECA is not the Committee for Educational and Cultural Programmes but the Committee for Education and Cultural Action, two missions and not two types of productions, or more exactly productions informed by missions. It seems to me that we need to go back to the level of missions, and particularly the one we are being asked to analyse here, cultural action.

Defining the terms

We can start by making an etymological analysis of these two terms, culture and action: The term culture, which comes from the Latin adjective *cultus*, cultivated, in the agricultural sense of the term, as distinct from wilderness, covers multiple realities in contemporary usage. It is the anthropological dimension of the definitions that may be

more useful to us here. This identifies culture as "*the totality of material and ideological phenomena that characterise an ethnic group or nation*"¹.

Action, on the other hand, is defined as "*what someone does to carry out an intention or impulse*."² »

The intention specified by the combination of these two terms, action and culture, thus indicates a voluntary mission to disseminate objects and ideas representative of human societies, a fine definition of the fundamental mission of museums, in fact.

However, one is struck by the global nature of such a definition, if one adopts the etymological approach. The museum itself would be a cultural action in its very existence, and one may wonder about the meaning of the connection between "cultural action and education" in the title of the CECA. Would culture be considered, in this title, as a goal and education as a means? What then is the nature of so-called cultural action as distinct from education?

When we look at the literature that inspires and illustrates the relationship between museums and citizens, we are in fact struck by the multiplicity of terms used to illustrate their fundamental mission of disseminating culture and by their evolution over time. At times, some people even object to the very idea of defining cultural action as presenting a risk of reductively freezing a term that is in a constant process of redefinition.

To be relevant, therefore, it is probably necessary to carry out a sort of historical scan, examining the use of successive terms, the meanings given to them, and their possible relationship to culture and education.

History

Origins

In France, at the end of the 18th century, the thinking on the democratisation of culture and the role of museums in this phenomenon stemmed from the thinking of the philosophers of the Enlightenment and the political positions taken by the French Revolution, "*with regard to the emancipation of the people through education and culture and the legitimacy of the State to intervene in the field of the arts*" (Krebs and Robatel, 2008). The Popular Front (1936-1938), after others, took up this idea that culture helps the development of society and in particular the working classes. But from the inter-war period onwards, another voice was raised, which also announced the continuation of the biases, those of authors who refused to allow the confrontation with art to be conditioned, whatever the public considered, by information provided by the museum institution or by a third person. What Valéry would castigate as "*Venus turned into a document*". At the same time, Georges Salles, director of the Louvre, in his little book *Le regard*, took up this intuition of the pre-eminence of the sensory and personal relationship to art over the information given about art. Each individual is therefore supposed to be equipped, naturally, with a sensoriality of access to the material world, without any exclusion, on the contrary, of artistic productions.

¹ www.larousse.fr/dictionnaires/francais/culture/21072

² <https://www.larousse.fr/dictionnaires/francais/action/924>

The 1960s

It was to this trend that André Malraux and the intellectuals around him clung in the 1960s. André Malraux, a writer renowned at the time both for his novels (*The Human Condition*) and his writings on art (*Voices of Silence*, *The Imaginary Museum*, etc.), was appointed by General de Gaulle, President of the Fifth Republic, as the first Minister of State in charge of Cultural Affairs in France. The government thus created a Ministry of great political importance, distinct from the Ministry of Public Instruction. This decision to distinguish cultural issues from those of education, by creating a Ministry specifically dedicated to culture, was adopted around this time in several other European countries, such as Belgium, for example. André Malraux and his team worked conceptually on the definition of culture and cultural action and positioned them in relation to the definition given to education.



Illustration 1 - André Malraux, State Minister for Cultural Affairs culturelles from 1959 to 1969

Source : BNF, département Arts du spectacle³, photographe : Roger Pic

Culture, in this context, is defined by them as the institution's overall cultural policy, i.e. the mission that this institution sets itself, the choices that result from it: orientation of its scientific development, acquisition policy, positioning in the cultural administrative

For André Malraux, Minister of Culture, culture is defined as the institution's overall cultural policy

landscape, relations with society in all their forms, existing relations or relations to be developed. Cultural action then designates the vectors for disseminating this culture to the institution's public. This provision is made in an open, spontaneous, free manner, without any deliberate steering, without any acquisition or learning objective, without any strictly pre-established goals. It is the very quality of what is shown that is communication and ignores the nature of the recipient. The personal development of the individual is sought here, but in a non-formal way. The programming put in place at the Théâtre National

³ Bibliothèque Nationale de France, département Arts du spectacle, DIA-PHO-1(957), disponible sur Wikimedia Commons https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Andr%C3%A9_Malraux,_1974,_photo42.jpg (28.06.2018)

Populaire (TNP) by Jean Vilar from 1951 is an example of this approach. Works from the great repertoire, therefore demanding in their content, intended for an audience that was sought to be as diverse as possible through the network of 'members and correspondents' within popular associations and works councils.

The results of the important research carried out by the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, *L'amour de l'art: Les musées d'art européens et leur public* in 1965, however, undermine the conviction that art can be spontaneously approached by all, since access to artistic treasures is identified as being both open to all and, in the reality of the facts observed and analysed, forbidden to the largest number of people, those who do not usually visit museum galleries. These results highlight the relative importance of the socio-cultural background and prior education of potential visitors in creating opportunities for access to museums. It should be noted, however, that although the scope of Bourdieu's study makes these results indisputable, they only cover part of the phenomenon of access to collections: art museums only, and this by questioning spontaneous entry into institutions and not the relative richness of the experience once the threshold of these same institutions is crossed. It is therefore the relationship to the institution that is analysed and not the relationship to the object.

Education is aimed at targeted audiences through precise acquisition goals

Education, for its part, for the followers of Malraux, would be aimed at targeted audiences through means that are personally adapted to them and with precise prior acquisition goals. These acquisitions can be of a formal or non-formal nature, depending on the type of relationship maintained with the school and

therefore the Ministry of National Education. In fact, the relationship with the Ministry of Education in France has continued to diversify and strengthen since the Second World War. One of the initial reasons for the strong presence of formal education, of the school, in the public policies of post-war museums is, first of all, an administrative reason that is not often enough mentioned. The grid of administrative functions in public museums, whether national or local, until the 1980s, is extraordinarily poor. Only the functions of curator, documentalist and caretaker, as well as the administrative functions, correspond to the statutes of the Ministry of Culture. All the functions related to the reception of the public (hostesses, tour guides) are the responsibility of a partner but independent organisation, the Réunion des Musées Nationaux, which has a rather commercial aim. The educational functions themselves are therefore entrusted mainly to civil servants who are recognised as having educational competence, teachers seconded by the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Culture. The functions of dealing with the public in a more general sense (children outside the school system and adults) are entrusted to temporary guides, without recognised status, despite the growing number of services they provide (around 20,000 groups outside the school system in the national museums alone in the early 1980s).

But let us return to French cultural action, which also has historical roots that need to be analysed.

Its evolution began in the 1960s, in connection with the gradual balance effect that saw the public/collection balance tilted from the care of the collections to the public. From the

post-war period, and gradually reinforced by the demonstrative apparatus of Malraux and his entourage, the characteristics of this cultural action became clearer:

- It is common to the various cultural institutions, without any particular specificity around museums and heritage. The most active and prolific individuals involved in the notion of cultural action are not those from the heritage professions but from those of the performing arts (theatre with Jean Vilar), libraries, Maisons de la culture around André Malraux. The subsequent tools for disseminating cultural action in museums came, moreover, from the world of theatre. The Centre Pompidou, from the moment it opened in 1977, an institution that was certainly a museum but also multidisciplinary in vocation, also adopted, like Jean Vilar for the Théâtre National Populaire, the call for a network of "members and correspondents" to disseminate its cultural action offers. This same method of finding new audiences was also used later by the Musée d'Orsay's "Carte blanche".



Illustration 2 - Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, a pioneer of cultural action around a museum collection

Source : www.pixabay.com, licence CC0, photo: pixabairis

- Cultural action is strongly linked to the role of the State in relation to culture, since it is a matter of cultural policy. Culture is included as such in the major development plans of post-war France. From the beginning of the Fifth Republic, the importance of the political dimension of structuring the national territory of cultural action was emphasised, seen in France as an essential role of the State and the local authorities.
- Cultural action contains an important voluntaristic dimension, not, like education, in relation to the modalities and results aimed at by the sharing of knowledge, but by the political obligation of dissemination itself.

Voluntaristic dimension of cultural action of sharing of knowledge

- Cultural action differs from cultural animation. Whereas cultural activities refer to a sum of spontaneous events, organised as they happen, cultural action is a reasoned project, intrinsic to the institution's project in its relationship with the public and the collections. Initially one-off and peripheral, it is now a regular

and central activity. In short, cultural action is the result of a reflection on the activity

of creating and programming activities in an institution to give it more meaning, coherence and legibility.

The website of the Ministry of Culture, in its description of its missions, gradually shifts from the notion of cultural action to that of cultural development: *'In the 1960s and 1970s, the notion of cultural action is linked to both a policy and the institutions responsible for implementing it... From the beginning of the 1970s, the notion of cultural development appears to name a policy intended to put culture at the heart of people's lives, also responding to the State's obligation to ensure that everyone can exercise their right to culture.'*⁴

Cultural development thus becomes a goal to be achieved, which must impact on the life and rights of every citizen. It becomes the desired result and not just a political intention.

The 1980s

Previously known as "educational services", institutions, sensitive to the perceived reductive nature of the term education in the French sense (univocal, authoritarian, scholastic), gradually favoured the term "cultural service" from the 1980s onwards: 1986 for the creation of a *cultural service* at the *Musée d'Orsay*, one year after its opening, then 1988 for the creation of the *cultural service* at the *Musée du Louvre*. This development accompanied the diversification of the target audiences, in particular adults, who were increasingly referred to as being "distant from culture". Many departments in charge of the public changed their name at this time, as the increase in cultural funding and the major renovation and extension of the French museum network enabled them to be strengthened in terms of personnel and resources. Spaces dedicated to education and cultural action were developed, thanks to the massive renovation of French museums, and a more diversified staff such as "youth jobs", dedicated to the care of the public, tried to compensate for the lack of civil servants belonging to the Ministry of Culture.

To highlight these two complementary roles of museums in relation to their audiences, the organisation chart of the Ministry of Culture and Communication shows a Direction des musées de France, Bureau de l'action culturelle et des enseignements (1991-1992). On 2 September 1991, local authority museums, sensitive to the issue of more local and more identified audiences, created a cultural sector for local authority employees, with a specialisation in heritage and a mediation option, validated through a competitive examination.

⁴ Dictionnaire des politiques culturelles de la France depuis la dir. de Emmanuel de Waresquiel; with the advice of Laurent Le Bon, Philippe Régnier; and the collaboration of the Centre national de la recherche scientifique and the Comité d'histoire du ministère de la Culture. Paris: Larousse: CNRS, 2001

Emergence of mediation

The term "mediation" was introduced, albeit timidly, in the early 1980s in order to differentiate the offer to schoolchildren, which was still very much marked by the presence in museums of seconded teachers, from the less formal offer, intended for audiences that we were trying to diversify. The use of this term also followed the results of Bourdieu's work, showing that transmission could be more or less easy or problematic depending on the type of public and that, in particular, socially fragile publics required

Mediation : less formal offer to bring diversified public to the museum

support in their personal approach to coming to the museum, without necessarily wishing to find school-type or strictly formal teaching there. Mediation is therefore seen as an offer that has two functions: to bring people in and to accompany them. On the one hand, it must, through the nature of its offers, encourage everyone to come to the museum, and more

particularly the populations that do not spontaneously go there, the "culture-distant"; it must ensure that the confrontation with heritage in all its forms is encouraged. On the other hand, mediation questions the methods of presentation of tangible or intangible heritage. This presentation should not be teaching or pedagogical, but rather should support the visitor's more spontaneous personal activity. At the same time, mediation postulates that culture is not immediately accessible to everyone: to make it accessible, we therefore have recourse to the intercession of mediators (informers, guides, educators) and mediation procedures (explanatory texts, signposting, instructions). There are numerous, diverse attempts, inspired in their intentions. The precise methods of implementation, the reality of the natural intellectual functioning of visitors, the means of supporting them, all this is still very often a matter of generous improvisation. Research and training are still non-existent at this stage.

From the 2000s to the present day

The term cultural action thus seems to be gradually disappearing from the official vocabulary. This French-style centralising vision, where development is steered by national plans, is gradually being replaced by a political will based more on institutions,

The new 2005 law on museums obliges all museums to define a precise, appropriate cultural policy to obtain the "Musée de France" label

emanating from a political will, certainly, but developed by each museum within its national or local territory and contained in its "Scientific and Cultural Project". The new 2005 law on museums obliges all museums to define a precise, appropriate and convincing scientific and cultural policy with the State, evaluated by the Ministry of Culture, to enable the candidate museum to obtain the "Musée de France" label with the associated

recognition and subsidy possibilities. Among the obligations related to obtaining this label: to have a "public service", the definition of which (educational, cultural, mediation) is no longer specified.

The State's steering role now takes another route, that of interministerial agreements and labels, the aim of which is to provide political incentives to steer the cultural dynamic in directions identified as priorities by the government. The spirit of cultural action

remains, that of making culture one of the State's levers, but the forms of its implementation are more decentralised.

Conventions were successively signed between the Ministry of Culture and other ministries: Culture/Health in 1999, Culture/Tourism in 2008, Culture/Justice in 2009, etc. The role of the State becomes that of an incentive for institutions, including museums, to develop their activities for specific audiences. Financial and logistical support is available to accompany this political incentive. The obtaining of labels, such as the Accessibility label, granted and validated by the State, broadens and improves the offers of partner institutions. As for the school system, an uninterrupted succession of agreements and laws, co-produced by the Ministries of Education and Culture between 1968 and 2016, specify the obligations and incentives of Artistic and Cultural Education, one of the consequences of which is an increasingly strong obligation to fully integrate culture into teaching, from primary to secondary school. The notion of culture is taken in a very broad sense, going beyond the notion of heritage, of course, but encouraging museums to strengthen the co-construction of projects with educational actors.

What remains from the early days of the cultural action/education tandem is the idea that the school public has specific needs and dynamics, an obligatory relationship with the different curricula, a need to comply with academic rhythms.

We can ask the question of the real role of the mediation dynamic as a specific means of communicating the collections in this distinction between formal and non-formal education, between culture and education: is mediation reserved for audiences said to be "distant from culture" or of a specific nature? Do schoolchildren coming to the museum benefit from a specific educational approach or from a reproduction of more or less school-based didactic models? In these contexts, the term mediation often seems to serve as a smokescreen. Does mediation apply to the incentive to come, to the nature of the speakers in the rooms, to a method of communication around the objects, displayed and shared by the community of museum educators or mediators? A recent European study on the term "cultural mediation" concluded that the generic and imprecise term "cultural mediation" encompasses a wide variety of practices and is subject to a constant process of redefinition, and that it is also subject to different assessments from one country to another.

The conclusions of the "Mission Musées du XXI^e siècle" represent, in 2016, the latest

The conclusions of the « Mission Musées du XXI^e siècle », presents an interesting shift in perspective pointing to the desire to open to younger generations and in touch with society

important text to be published on the issues of museum audiences under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture. It presents an interesting shift in perspective, insofar as, although the work was led by the administration, it is the synthesis of a very important collection of information from multiple interlocutors. As the Ministry's website presenting the results of this survey points out, this collective reflection involved the local authorities, which

are the State's co-partners in terms of public policy on culture, and the various professional categories in the sector, as well as the museums' partners in the fields of creation and dissemination, teaching and research, work and business, the social field and *popular* education, the economy and tourism, as well as foreign experts for an international perspective. The report's conclusions point to the desire *for a museum* open to the younger generations, a museum that addresses the full diversity of the public, a

museum that is more collaborative and welcoming, and a museum that is in touch with the society of the 21st century. The lines of development are identified, but there is no mention of possible or desirable "educational" means, which seem to be left to the initiative of each individual.

Les conclusions de la « Mission Musées du XXI^e siècle » représentent, en 2016, le dernier texte important en date publié sur les questions de publics des musées sous l'égide du Ministère chargé de la Culture. Il présente un basculement intéressant de perspective, dans la mesure où, si le travail a été piloté par l'administration, il est la synthèse d'un très important recueil d'information auprès de multiples interlocuteurs. Comme le souligne le site du Ministère présentant les résultats de cette enquête, cette réflexion collective aura associé les collectivités territoriales co-partenaires de l'État en matière de politique publique de la culture et impliqué les différentes catégories professionnelles du secteur, ainsi que les partenaires des musées dans les champs de la création et la diffusion, l'enseignement et la recherche, le travail et l'entreprise, le champ social et l'éducation populaire, l'économie et le tourisme, ainsi que des experts étrangers pour un éclairage international. Les conclusions du rapport pointent le désir d'un musée ouvert aux jeunes générations, d'un musée qui s'adresse à toute la diversité des publics, d'un musée plus collaboratif et plus accueillant, d'un musée, enfin, en prise avec la société du XXI^e siècle. Les axes de développement sont identifiés mais on ne trouve plus mention des moyens « éducatifs » possibles ou souhaitables qui semblent laissés à l'initiative de chacun.

La « Mission Musées du XXI^e siècle », vaste réflexion collective, prône l'émergence d'un musée ouvert aux jeunes et à la diversité, collaboratif, accueillant. Les « moyens éducatifs » ne sont pas précisés.

Conclusion

On voit ainsi qu'un véritable glissement sémantique s'opère, appuyé sur des évolutions de convictions philosophiques autour de la culture, sur le développement progressif de publics moins spontanés ou naturels, sur des évolutions politiques liées à des personnes (d'André Malraux à Jack Lang), d'évolutions professionnelles et administratives.

Le terme de médiation est, en France, une prise de position dont le but est de sortir de l'alternative « Éducation » assortie d'une double orientation autoritaire en termes d'apprentissage et scolaire, c'est-à-dire réservée à la jeunesse.

Versus « Culture » où l'on se contenterait d'une offre, même de qualité, telle que suggérée par Malraux, mais qui ne prendrait pas en considération les difficultés spécifiques d'accès à la culture des publics dits défavorisés ou éloignés.

La médiation, élevée dans les années 80-90 au rang d'une obligation sémantique par le milieu muséal français, est peu à peu remplacée par la notion de co-construction, qui va plus loin que le terme « médiation », puisque le public considéré est partiellement générateur de contenus, au gré de ses besoins, mais cependant soutenu par la compétence professionnelle des agents officiels de la culture.

L'attention portée en France à l'amélioration de la professionnalisation des agents culturels de tous niveaux vient en partie de la prise de conscience de la difficulté de la posture de médiateur ou de co-constructeur, fonction qui est censée être partagée tant par les conservateurs que par les gardiens. On doit cependant noter, qu'au-delà des réflexions généreuses du pourquoi, c'est le comment qui est encore balbutiant par absence de

connaissances scientifiques appliquées sur le fonctionnement intellectuel des visiteurs et leurs modalités de construction de sens dans les situations de confrontation à une offre culturelle libre ou plus orientée.

Le dernier stade historiquement, celui des dernières années, est celui où l'action culturelle est utilisée comme un potentiel outil de progrès possible de la cohésion sociale, de la compréhension mutuelle au sein d'une société multiethnique.

Se pose alors, à cause de l'orientation majoritaire sur les publics, la question de la limite entre action culturelle et action sociale comme le décrit la critique de l'opération HIP-HOP Dixit-Graffiti Art à la Cité de l'architecture à Paris (Dubois, 1994, p 27-42). Le musée risque-t-il d'être instrumentalisé ou de perdre de sa spécificité, celle même vantée par les premiers chantres de l'action culturelle ?

Enfin, au-delà de l'incitation à l'action constamment encouragée par les instances politiques, on voit bien qu'il reste aux institutions musées et aux professionnels qui y interviennent, à pousser une réflexion plus construite et articulée sur les modalités précises de prise en compte des divers publics une fois qu'ils ont été amenés au musée. La co-construction ne peut se substituer entièrement à une expertise de médiation menant à un but, l'éducation du public au sens étymologique du terme : *e-ducere*, soit « faire grandir » la société et chacun des citoyens qui la composent.

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Summary

The aim of the article is to propose a quick synthesis of the French reality of museums around the notions of education and cultural action. Both terms are used in the title of the International Committee of ICOM dealing with questions of public and to question their contemporary relevance. The description of the historical evolution will be favoured in order to examine these two notions.

The crucial moment is that of the appointment, in 1959, of André Malraux as first Minister of Culture of a ministry henceforth separate from that of the National Education in charge of schools. ICOM, created in France in 1946, decided, in 1963, to merge committees dealing with public issues in museums, within CECA, the Committee for Education and Cultural Action.

Two very different meanings are attributed by André Malraux and those around him to these two notions: education aimed at offering a knowledge constituted to targeted audiences, cultural action was defined as the global, multimodal offer of any cultural institution in its natural dimensions. This openness, however, is strongly guided in its orientations by government recommendations, determining axes and development modalities.

The relay is taken from the 80s, in various ways. The displacement of cultural initiatives, even if the State continues to issue a certain number of general orientations, takes place progressively at the level of museum institutions. At the same time there is a shift in the terms used, from educational service to cultural service. The term mediation is gradually becoming a kind of semantic obligation, pointing both to the need for an intermediary between works of scholarly heritage and publics more or less removed from culture, and the refusal to equate this mission with education, which in France has a strong academic dimension. This evolution is gradually accompanied by an administrative reflection around the status of the staff responsible for this mediation, leading to the creation, for the museums of local authorities to a real professional "mediation", to reduce the use of staff from the National Education and therefore of the school world.

The major renovation of the network of French museums during the 1980s also allows the creation of a growing number of spaces dedicated to the reception of the public, now considered in all their diversity. The term cultural action gradually disappears from the vocabulary with the change of century. The cultural dissemination guidelines are referred to the institutions' level through the "Scientific and Cultural Project" made compulsory by law, for each museum, in 2005.

More recently, it is the term of co-construction of projects that has been promoted, pointing to a new obligation, that of associating visitors and their own culture with the development of cultural projects intended for them, no longer experienced as imposed products but as more direct expressions of the desires and needs of society. In this ambitious orientation, however, there are great disparities from one museum to another, mediation still a concept insufficiently worked out in its implementation.

Keywords: cultural action, museum education, cultural policies, mediation, professionals in charge of publics

An approach to the cultural action of museums in Spain. From democratization to cultural democracy

*Rosa María Hervás Avilés, Elena Tiburcio Sánchez
and Raquel Tudela Romero*

1 Introduction

Traditionally, cultural policies have focused on access to culture as a collective good within the reach of citizens. From this perspective, cultural action is generated by institutions for a citizenry that attends as mere spectators to receive cultural proposals as a consumer good. Participation in cultural dynamics depends on the education received, the economic resources or the previous experiences of the public in processes of cultural democratization according to which everyone should have access to culture. In recent years, Spain has seen the beginning of significantly different cultural experiences in order to create culture as a social practice that is constructed in the conversation and the coexistence of social actors who share responsibilities with the administration. In this case, cultural practices are identified with the interests of citizens in a context of cultural democracy, with broad participation of the population. However, in spite of the achievements made in terms of public collaboration, it is evident that mediators and educators are needed to foster citizen co-construction.

The purpose of this work is to provide an approach to cultural action in Spain. We are aware that it is impossible to go into the cultural differences of the 17 autonomous communities that make up Spain, which are fundamentally marked by the cultural and linguistic singularity of a multi-identity country.

It analyzes the cultural policies that the state has used and is using to promote cultural action and the cultural development of its citizens. It also summarizes the two fundamental modalities of cultural policy: democratization and cultural democracy. Finally, it examines the models and strategies used to implement cultural action from social and educational perspectives.

2 Culture and cultural policies

Defining culture in a work on cultural action seems obvious. Culture is a concept and not a reality. The instrumentalization of its meaning is evident and therefore its definitions are multiple. It is a broad, complex, polyvalent and dynamic term that has diverse interpretations due to the fact that it is not a univocal concept on which there is consensus in its meaning (Úcar, 2000, p 331-363). These questions wonder what kind of culture are we talking about: Is it culture in a professional or artistic sense or culture in an anthropological sense, focused on the knowledge of human beings through their customs, beliefs, values that distinguish a social group? Academic culture or living culture? Subjective culture inherent to cultivated people or objective and external culture? For authors such as Carrier (1992, pp.448-450) the concept of culture includes at least two meanings. The

first of these is culture understood in a classical and humanistic sense that refers to an ideal to be achieved and is related to the cultivated person and the enrichment of the intellect. The second is anthropological, which is descriptive in nature and includes knowledge of socio-historical or socio-cultural situations.

The idea of culture as something objective and external to the individual, which shapes the cultural development of citizens, emerged in German universities in the 18th century and spread throughout Europe, influencing national constitutions and European institutions (Bueno, 2012). In Spain, Article 48 of the 1931 Constitution established that the service of culture was an essential attribute of the State and that it would be provided by educational institutions. The Spanish Constitution of 1978 included in Article 44 that the public authorities are the ones who promote and protect access to culture, to which everyone has the right. It also states that they shall promote science and scientific and technical research for the benefit of the general interest.

Promoting and developing culture and cultural heritage is one of the main purposes of European states.

Promoting and developing culture and cultural heritage has become one of the main purposes of the European states in the 21st century, acquiring a prominence that it did not have before when culture was something secondary and its attention did not imply concrete achievements in cultural development. In February 2000, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union adopted a resolution on culture.

European Union established the *Culture 2000* program considering that:

1. culture was an essential element for integration and the creation of a European model of society;
2. culture was also a factor of economic, social integration and citizenship to meet the challenges of globalization, the information society, social cohesion and job creation;
3. the European Union assumed responsibility for preserving the different cultures and languages of the Member States, taking special care of the lesser-used ones (European Parliament and Council of the European Union, 2000).

In Spain, the *Culture 2020 Plan* brings together the main initiatives that the Secretary of State for Culture intends to carry out based on five major objectives that define the cultural model that the current government wishes to promote:

1. to promote a quality cultural offering;
2. update the legal framework for the protection of culture;
3. promote a social alliance for culture;
4. to extend Spanish culture beyond our borders;
5. fostering creative activity (State Secretariat for Culture, 2017).

However, we can say that culture is an abstract idea that has become supreme. Those who have culture are dignified and everything is justified when it is accompanied by the word culture or is cultural (Bueno, 2012). In the words of Úcar (2000), culture has become a "disputed object of desire" of the public policies of states. However, the withdrawal of public investment in culture,

the abandonment of active cultural policies or the application of extemporaneous criteria are leading to a growing invasion of the cultural sector by the entertainment industry and, with it, a growing confusion of democratic ideals.

2.1 Cultural democratization versus cultural democracy

It was in the middle of the 20th century when a new way of understanding culture began in Western Europe, specifically in France with André Malraux, which from that moment onwards, ceased to be considered as something exclusive to privileged elites and became a democratized and democratizing space, of all and for all (Úcar, 2000). Cultural democratization policies were associated with governments' conviction of the civilizing value of culture and the aim of reducing cultural inequalities. From this perspective, culture was understood as a collective good that had to be made available to the greatest possible number of people, activated by the media and the cultural industries.

The model of cultural democratization was promoted by governments and public cultural services imbued with the principles of equality and citizens' right to culture and for market-related purposes of

cultural goods. Culture was considered a universal good that had to be extended to the whole population, even if its expressions par excellence were to be found in high culture. (Ariño, 2010). The fundamental objective of cultural democratization

Culture was considered a universal good that should be extended to the whole population.

was to reduce social inequality and increase the number of visitors, consumers and recipients of culture. The content of culture remained confined to the world of the arts and the artistic, the only thing that changed was that the audiences were broadened. Cultural consumption was democratized, but not the definition and creation of what was considered culture, which remained within the elitist parameters linked to the cultural offering (Trilla, 1998, pp.13-39).

Coelho's (2009) definition of cultural democratization from the Brazilian reality fits the scenario we are dealing with. For this author:

Democratization of culture is, in fact, a process of popularization of the so-called scholarly arts (visual arts, opera, scholarly music, etc.). At the core of these popularization programmes is the idea that different sectors of a population would like to have access to these cultural forms - or could be stimulated to resort to them - if appropriate instruments of education, awareness-raising and facilitation of these practices were used (educational projects based on cultural practices; programmes of guided visits to cultural institutions aimed at children, youth and adults; wider dissemination of cultural events; subsidy ticket prices and similar resources) (p. 118) (p. 118).

Although cultural democratization entailed superficial modifications, this new cultural perspective entailed changes in the concept of culture that Úcar (2000, p 331-363) summarizes as follows:

1. the desecration of a culture that is more accessible to the every day person, keeping the arts and renowned artists by a cultural elite
2. the expansion of agencies, managers and cultural industries competing for a highly diversified industry based on economic principles;

3. the commodification of accessible and competitive culture that can be bought and sold;
4. a distinction is made between culture designed for the masses, simplified and suitable for consumption. The concept of cultural democratization is opposed to that of cultural democracy. The two are related and have been seen as opposites and at the same time as complementary (Cuenca, 2014, p 1-16).

Cultural democracy questions the success of programs that popularize culture and the relevance of those who decide what is or is not of cultural value and what can or cannot be consumed. From this point of view, cultural democratization policies provide a generous cultural offering to a population that does not demonstrate the need to receive it and lacks the codes to interpret it, and are therefore ineffective. From the point of view of cultural democracy, the important thing is not to expand the population consuming culture, but rather who controls the mechanisms of cultural production and how to facilitate access to the production of culture (Coelho, 2009). Cultural democracy understands culture as social practice built on dialogue and social coexistence. It promotes the participation of citizens as protagonists in the creation of culture, based on their interests and needs, where they are the ones who decide at any given moment what is best and most convenient.

In the territory, in every community and in every social environment there is a living, multiform culture that depends only partially on the formal education received and another, popular education, in which the individual learns from the environment around him. This living culture is obtained in everyday life, in the family, in social relations, in

Cultural democracy puts the definition of culture in the hands of the people.

traditions, religious beliefs, etc. What is proposed by the cultural democracy is the recognition of the existence of the value of this living, dynamic culture, open to outside contributions. Cultural democracy places the definition of what culture is in the hands of the people (De Varine, 2018).

Cultural democracy in the museum means the participation of citizens not only in activities, but also in decision-making processes. In other words, they are the main actors taking part of the selection of themes that make possible a bigger citizen participation. How can this involvement be achieved in a politically and administratively structured institutional system in which the citizen is considered a consumer of culture when visiting museums, but at the same time is part of the non-public when they do not want to visit them? This is a question to be discussed and applied in specific and local contexts from a long-term perspective and taking into account the empowerment, training and preparation of community members.

3 Evolution of cultural policies in Spain

Both the concept of culture and the social, political and educational actions arising from it are a relatively new phenomena. International awareness of culture as an element of development began in Europe after the Second World War, in the context of the creation of supra-state institutions such as the Council of Europe (Úcar, 2011, pp. 7-10).

¹ The banking education that Paulo Freire describes as one in which the learner becomes a passive subject and in which the educator selects the information to be used in rote instruction processes (Freire, 1970, 2005).

Spain presents a series of differentiating characteristics compared to Western European democracies as a consequence of the Francoist period (Rubio and Rius, 2016, p. 41-57), and the 1950s are considered to be the time when the processes of cultural democratization began. Today, after decades of democratic governments, the diagnosis of cultural policy in Spain shows traits of systemic crisis, in addition to the effects of the global financial crisis at the beginning of the 21st century.

3.1 Second Spanish Republic (1856-1936): early attempts at cultural democratization

The Second Spanish Republic promoted culture as an element of social transformation through a series of educational reforms that sought its political consolidation. The “Institución Libre de Enseñanza” (ILE) and its pedagogical project inspired by the *Krausist* philosophy promoted a culture based on freedom and a deep reform of the educational system. The ideals of the ILE crystallized in the National Pedagogical Museum, an educational research center that introduced the most progressive innovations and from which the Pedagogical Missions (1931-1936) against the ignorance of the peasantry and the enhancement of rural culture emerged (Hontañón and Pericacho, 2015).



Figure 1 - Manuel Bartolomé Cossío, President of the Patronato de las Misiones Pedagógicas (1920)²

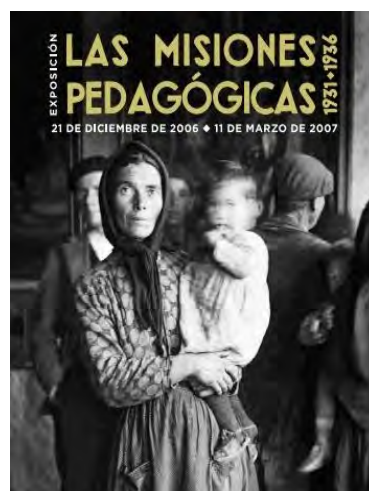


Figure 2 - *Las Misiones* Exhibition Pedagogical (2006-2007)³

Today, the Pedagogical Missions continue to be a reference point for culture based on freedom and profound reform of the education system.

As already mentioned, in the 1931 Constitution, culture was the power of the State and was developed through public and secular education. The government of the Second Republic undertook the protection of the country's artistic and historical wealth and the cultural expansion of Spain abroad (Cortes, 1931). These proposals were cut short with the outbreak of the Civil War (1936), which led to the death, exile and repression of many of the intellectuals and artists involved. These first attempts at cultural democratization had a strong humanist component, linking education and culture.

² Source: https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manuel_Bartolom%C3%A9_Coss%C3%ADo

³ Source: http://www.residencia.csic.es/misiones/img/sedes/dossier_prensa.pdf

They were based on the training of the population, the development of culture, and the dissemination of cultural policies that valued the culture of the peasantry.

3.2 Franco's dictatorship (1939-1975): indoctrination in education and culture

Cultural intervention in Spain during the Franco dictatorship was ultraconservative and repressive (Zallo 2011). The regime's ideology encouraged nationalist sentiment and the elimination of linguistic elements outside the official language. High illiteracy rates were maintained among the rural population.

Franco's cultural policies were based on control and censorship. A large number of

Franco's cultural policies were based on control and censorship.

of intellectuals and artists suffered an "internal exile" in order to live with a totalitarian regime. Others expatriated. A few years of autarchy were followed by a period of openness to the outside world and the need for artistic modernity in order to improve the country's international image (Díaz, 2012, p 143-156).

For years, cultural policy in Spain was far removed from international cultural trends. Franco's educational and cultural action was indoctrinating and exclusionary. The social use of languages other than Spanish was forbidden and traditional artistic styles were encouraged. The necessary change was not possible until the death of the dictator Francisco Franco in 1975 (Real Instituto Elcano, 2004).

3.3 The Spanish Transition (1975-1978): the beginning of cultural action

After Franco's dictatorship, a period of transition began for the institutional and cultural reorganization of the country that culminated in a democratic state. In 1977 the Ministry of Culture and Welfare became the Ministry of Culture⁴ (Linde, 1995). In 1978, the new Spanish Constitution was enacted, which established the need to promote access to culture and its development in order to ensure citizens a dignified life. Linguistic diversity was recognized and the defense of heritage was established (Spanish Constitution, 1978). There was an incipient impulse for the decentralization of education and culture and the development of open cultural policies that sought the recognition of the cultural diversity of our country and the beginning of cultural action. Spanish society struggled to achieve multiple rights, including the right to culture.

3.4 The first socialist governments (1982-1996): the importance of heritage and democratization in cultural policies

From 1982 onwards, democratic cultural policies were deployed at all levels of the country's administration to create a new democratic sensibility among Spaniards. The Ministry of Culture was committed to the dissemination of the common Spanish culture formed by its different regions and nationalities; the cultural development of society and the cultural industry and investment plans in museums, libraries, archives, auditoriums and theatres (Royal Decree 565, 1985; Quaggio, 2011, pp. 35-59). At this stage, the *Spanish Historical Heritage Law* was enacted for the conservation, promotion and

⁴ In the Royal Decree 2258/1977 that regulated it, it assumed the competences of heritage and arts previously exercised by the Ministry of Education, as well as those of cinema, performing arts and music, which previously belonged to the Ministry of Information and Tourism (Royal Decree 2258, 1977).

enrichment of heritage and the access of all citizens to it (Law 16, 1985). The Royal Decree of 1987 unified state-owned museums as fundamental cultural institutions (Royal Decree 620, 1987).

An educational and cultural policy was also developed in order to improve the country's illiteracy rates and to significantly expand the adult education by the "popular universities", adult education centers, cultural centers and municipal libraries. Educational programs in museums were promoted by the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education (Museum-Classroom Program) thanks to a network of teachers' centers and the incipient education and cultural action departments of museums.

Educational programs in museums were promoted by the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education.

In addition, international initiatives set the trend for the country's cultural policy in terms of access to cultural life, the affirmation of cultural identities and the strengthening of international cooperation (UNESCO, 1990). Subsequently, the concept of culture as an element in its own right for community development support a second stage in our country, from 1986 to 1996, which culminated in highly visible actions for Spanish cultural policy (inauguration of important museums, holding of major international events...). At the same time, cultural action abroad was boosted by the creation of the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (1988) and the Cervantes Institute in 1991 (Real Instituto Elcano, 2004).

The cultural policy of the first Socialist governments involved the modernization of Spain's international image. The regional diversity of Spanish culture, the development of the cultural industry, the presence of educational services in museums and investment plans in cultural institutions (museums, libraries, archives, etc.) were disseminated. Educational and cultural action was developed thanks to an institutional network whose work reduced the country's educational and cultural imbalances. Museums were considered cultural and learning spaces.

3.5 Cultural policies for foreign policy development (1996-2011)

A new stage in Spanish cultural policy began in 1996 with a new conservative government that focused its interests abroad, neglecting socialist cultural initiatives at home. Outdated approaches from the past, where culture was a tool supporting Spanishness, were taken up again. The public cultural policy used private management mechanisms. Culture shared a ministry with education and sport, coexisting administratively from 1996 to 2004.

In 2004, the shift in cultural policy with the new socialist government was visualized with a Ministry of Culture differentiated from the areas of Education and Sport (Royal Decree, 562, 2004) and a commitment to culture as a key of the country. In the cultural policy of this period, the 2007 Law of Reparation or Historical Memory stood out. It was the first initiative in the history of Spanish democracy to attempt to legislate on such a controversial issue. It was a recognition of the memory associations, but the initial expectations of the law were lowered so much that its value was more symbolic than material. In the same way, in 2008 the Ministry

of Culture created the Permanent Audience Laboratory to find out visitors' profiles and to meet their expectations and needs in state museums (MECD, 2018).

The Ministry of Culture created the Permanent Public Laboratory to learn about the profile of visitors to state museums and to meet their expectations and needs.

In both periods, the collaboration between the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was fundamental for the international projection of culture. Cultural action abroad was carried out through different companies that were merged in 2010 into the public entity Acción Cultural

Spain for a better image of the country and to channel artistic talent by establishing bridges with other countries (Acción Cultural España, n.d.). Cultural policies in these years were based on boosting and promoting Spain's culture and heritage with increasingly specific projects. The different governments of this period took on culture in different ways, placing greater or lesser emphasis on the creation of cultural plans and specific bodies or organizations in charge of cultural promotion and action according to their ideals and the economic and social situation of the country.

3.6 X^h, XI^h and XII^h Legislature (2011-2018): increasing national and international cultural action policies

As in previous stages, the new conservative government of 2011 linked education, culture and sports in a ministry whose cultural objectives were the protection and dissemination of heritage, museums and the arts; the promotion of Spanish culture and the promotion of international cooperation actions (Royal Decree 284, 2017). Cultural policy is currently guided by the *Culture 2020 Plan* mentioned above. The social changes of recent years have modified the traditional way of understanding culture. Museums are trying to open up and meet the needs of citizens.

Museums + Social Plan: an intercultural museum to promote connections between cultures and social groups and to highlight the intercultural dimension of heritage.

The democratizing cultural policy takes the form of initiatives that such as the *Museums + Social Plan*, promoted in 2015, which incorporates diversity as a guiding principle in culture and accessibility in museums for groups with difficulties in visiting or at risk of social exclusion.

This plan refers to the intercultural museum to foster relations between cultures and social groups and highlights the value of the intercultural dimension of the museum intercultural heritage (MECD, 2015).

At the same time, social movements claim democratic cultural policies and practices of mediation and socio-cultural animation in museums.

In terms of cultural action abroad, the projection of Spain's image is maintained. The General Strategic Plan 2012-2015 highlighted the role of culture as an essential component of the 'Spain brand', reinforcing the internationalization of cultural and creative industries through the promotion of cultural tourism, the dissemination of Spanish languages and the transmission of cultural elements (MECD, n.d.).

4 Education and cultural action in museums

Education, in its broadest conception, encompasses all those social practices through which the personal development and socialization of people in different scenarios are promoted (Pons, 2015).

In the museum field, the concept of education differs from formal education understood as the transmission of knowledge in a regulated way following the official curriculum. Education in the museum is characterized by awakening sensitivities and favorable attitudes, offering situations that allow visitors to learn about specific aspects of the works of art and the exhibition. (Domingo and Domingo, 2001; Hervás, 2018, p 155- 172).

Education in museums has been widely discussed in works on heritage didactics, museology and museography in our country (Montañés, 2001; Hernández, 2003; Fontal, 2013), but it is much too complex to find a generalized definition of the concept of cultural action, which sometimes resembles terms such as mediation and socio-cultural animation, far removed from what Freire (2005) understood by cultural action as "*a systematized and deliberate form of action that has an impact on the social structure, in the sense of maintaining it as it is, of verifying small changes in it and transforming it*" (p. 235). 235).

The Departments of Education and Cultural Action (DEAC) are in charge of education and cultural action in museums. They were created in the 1970s in order to answer the demand raised by the

application of innovative pedagogies in Spain that included museums as a pedagogical resource for the knowledge of cultural heritage. In other words, they were born with a clear educational content and without defining or clarifying what their didactic and cultural function was. Subsequently, their tasks took the form of planning guided tours for schoolchildren and designing the materials to be used in the museum

Education in the museum is characterized by the awakening of sensitivities, offering situations that allow visitors to learn about specific aspects of the exhibition.

or in the classroom (González and Polo, 1994, p 7-28). Initially, they were called cultural diffusion departments, although they were also known as museum pedagogical services, pedagogical departments or didactic cabinets, and for many years their only competence was to attend to schoolchildren in the museum.

In 1980, with the support of ICOM's Committee for Education and Cultural Action (CECA), the "I Jornadas de difusión museística" was held in Barcelona to share common problems, propose solutions, learn collectively, seek references and build the incipient profession of museum educator. In 1985, during the IV Jornadas DEAC held in Madrid, the name of the Departments of Education and Cultural Action (DEAC) of museums was proposed and its functions and lines of action were specified (Ministry of Culture, 1985). For years, the functions of DEACs have been linked to education, communication, dissemination, cultural action, stimulation, etc., terms that have been used interchangeably while maintaining a certain ambiguity. (Álvarez, 2007, pp. 109-127). An analysis of the educational proposals made by Spanish museums reflects this fact. We can see that many museums integrate all the proposals carried out by their DEACs,

but there is no clear differentiation between educational proposals and cultural action proposals.

On the other hand, some museums do make a distinction between educational proposals linked mainly to visits by schoolchildren, and proposals for formal education (guided tours, seminars, workshops, etc.)

In most museums there is no clear differentiation between educational proposals and cultural action proposals, which sometimes resemble mediation and socio-cultural animation.

etc.) of those cultural action initiatives that integrate actions aimed at the accessibility of all groups, inclusion, integration and social commitment, mediation, cultural diversity and community development.

Currently, very few museums have DEACs. Small museums and local museums usually have minimal staffing, most of the time without training.

More specifically training to work collaboratively with the territory and the community in which they are inserted.

For years, the departments of the major museums have developed interdisciplinary research, communication and didactic work focused on all the sectors of the public that access the museum, with the ultimate aim of making the institution more dynamic and giving it a projection in the social environment.

Linked to the policies of cultural democratization, different initiatives have been planned in recent years, such as the creation in 2007 of the Permanent Public Laboratory of State Museums and subsequently in 2015 the *Museums + Social Plan* for the planning of cultural practices and to make visible the importance of the social action of museums (MECD, 2015). Museums have started a process of awareness-raising towards accessibility and social integration, trying to get closer to the community through programs and activities aimed at all types of visitors, with special emphasis on ethnic minorities, disadvantaged groups or groups at social exclusion risk, people with disabilities or the elderly (Arriaga, 2011). Museum DEACs are beginning to include environmental education, social responsibility, participation and integration in their approaches, carrying out proposals in collaboration with different groups and associations and establishing links with the surrounding communities (López and Alcaide, 2011).

5 Socio-cultural education, community education, cultural animation and cultural mediation in museums: Is participatory cultural democracy possible?

We can simplify the definition of cultural action in museums by saying that it is the manifestation that these institutions make of their cultural objectives. From a political perspective, does the cultural action of the museum aim to promote an "official" culture, that of the museum officials or the authorities who decided to create the museum, or does it take into account the cultural interests and social reality of the citizens? Are cultural policy and cultural action established together? Is it cultural action that promotes community development?

Is it possible that a cultural democracy be based on neo-liberal education or on cultural democratization? Is cultural action linked to education and does it aim to develop citizens? What conditions facilitate a cultural democracy? Is a cultural democracy really possible?

A variety of models and strategies are at work education and the social function of museums associated with cultural policies. In this section we will identify some of the most widely used in Spain, at least theoretically: sociocultural education, community education and cultural mediation (linked to sociocultural animation).

There are various models and strategies that work on education and the social function of museums associated with cultural policies.

5.1 Socio-cultural education

Socio-cultural education is considered an evolution of potential political education which was understood and put into practice by the New School movement of J. Dewey and teachers such as Celestin Freinet who at the beginning of the 20th century worked to achieve a critical and emancipatory popular education linked to its vital context, and whose objectives were based on the development of human potential and the modernization of local and national communities (Viché, 2009, p 1-12). In Spain in 1914, the “Liga de la Educación Política” led by Ortega y Gasset was created for the organization of the intellectuality and the constitution of the Spanish people as a nation based on its pedagogical and social action (Bagur, 2015, p 139-157).

Freinet's educational innovations spread throughout Europe in the mid-1920s, creating international groups committed to Freinet's pedagogical practice and united by the principles of “*L'École Moderne*”. Convinced that cooperation between teachers and communication encouraged mutual knowledge, peace, democracy and equality, many groups supported this movement, seduced by the principles on which it was based. One of the main ones was the cooperation between adults working cooperatively and sharing experiences to enrich and renew the educational proposals that responded to the needs of the context.

The Spanish Freinet movement developed during two periods coinciding with different political and social situations: the first one started in Catalonia between 1926 and 1939. During the Second Spanish Republic, in 1934 Freinet came to the Escola d'Estiu in Barcelona to talk about printing in the active school and cooperativism at the service of the school. However, the civil war and the repression of Franco's dictatorship purged and expelled from the school those Freinet teachers who did not go into exile, accused of irreligiousness or atheism and of belonging to left-wing organizations (Errico, 2014, p 1-14). All innovation and educational modernization disappeared in Spain, giving way to the indoctrination in schools of the principles of the Franco's movement, which restarted with the “Movimiento Cooperativo” de Escuela Popular (MCEP) that brought together educators who wanted to transform through cooperative work. Freinet used the adjective “popular” for a pedagogy that sought the recovery of the oppressed and the outcasts through democratic, secular and active schools based on dialogue, experimentation and cooperation. In Spain, this movement of pedagogical renewal and its Summer Schools marked the beginning of a new era in education a milestone in the struggle for freedoms and for the recovery of public schools after so many years of repression (Errico, 2014, p 1-14).



Figures 3 and 4 - Schoolchildren making models of the Roman city of Carthago-Nova in C.P. La Asomada (Cartagena-Murcia, 1988).

Source: Rosa María Hervás Avilés

Almost during the same years, Paulo Freire, in very different contexts, published his work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), in which he defended critical positions in the field of education based on dialogue, calling for the importance of a transformative pedagogy and an educational practice with adults, young people and children that revolves around their own reading of the world, their experience, anticipating the texts in order to return to their reality. Education from a communicative perspective based on dialogue that emphasizes the role of conscience, which from one's own subjectivity makes it possible to work against ideological reproduction.

5.2 Community education

Community education is linked to social pedagogy and to the educational aspects of community development whose origins lie in Latin America and the need to improve the living conditions and economic development of citizens. It is a process to create conditions of economic and social progress for the whole community and its active participation by supporting and trusting its initiatives. Its focus is the community whose integrating elements are:

- the territory;
- the population with common interests, linked by proximity, belonging, unity and collective identity;
- the community's common needs, problems, interests and aspirations which, when shared, clarified, presented and prioritized, stimulate the community action;
- and the available, existing or potential resources (Cieza, 2006, p 765-799)

In order to put into practice a process of community development in a specific territory, it is necessary to achieve a deep knowledge of the community in which it is intended to work. Authors such as Requejo (1989, p 169-180) emphasize the need for a local dimension of development as a basis for carrying out any social initiative that has a positive impact on a community. This author indicates that development is generated from the dynamics of the community itself, through an adequate socio-cultural policy that takes into account both the necessary information and technical social advice as well as the essential associative, participative and democratic development within a community

5.3. Cultural mediation

Cultural mediation is one of the functions of every museum educator as a professional of social action from the perspective of community development. The concept of cultural mediator arose in France to distance itself from the term educator and its negative connotations, mainly linked to school audiences. Cultural mediation is imposed as a privileged model of action in order to attend to the diversity of museum visitors trying to use

Cultural mediation is a function of the museum educator as a professional of social action from the perspective of community development.

their own culture, knowledge, previous ideas and personal experiences in order to integrate them into the museum experience. Mediation is a way of initiating processes of cultural democracy and of transforming the analytical and critical capacity of each person from the perspective of Freire's dialogic process. Mediation

is indispensable for audiences who do not possess the codes of high culture but their own codes, those of living culture (De Varine, 2018).

In Spain, the definition of cultural mediation is associated with cultural animation. In March 2011, the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía started a free and continuous service of cultural mediators aimed at the general public who visit the museum independently. Wearing red T-shirts and located at strategic points in the museum, these "mediators" give individual advice to visitors and offer them the chance to visit the interpretation areas of the Museum Collection. In addition, a daily program of guided tours is offered, as well as materials for independent visits. The whole program is designed to help visitors learn about the criteria that have guided the layout of the Collection and to broaden the possibilities of reading it.

We can say that in Spain the profile of the cultural mediator is in the process of being defined, trying to delineate the differences between educator, mediator, facilitator ... cultural mediator. Let us remember the deep-rootedness of the socio-cultural education movement in this country. Different associations of cultural professionals (AVALEM, Invisible Pedagogies, AMECUM, AMUREM)⁵ work to make visible the importance of cultural mediation and education under the slogan "*Culture is everyone's heritage*". In June 2016, the First Professional Meeting on Cultural Mediation of the Valencian Community was held, organized by the Association of Cultural Mediators of Madrid (AMECUM) and the group Invisible Pedagogies, which has been followed by others in which there has been a dialogue on what a cultural mediator-educator is. A code of good practice for museums and cultural institutions was also drawn up to help professionals in the sector. Their mission statement can be summarized as "*We manage emotions*". They claim their work as facilitators of culture, beyond the misconceptions that place them as trainers, they want to link themselves to empowerment through culture.

⁵ Asociación Valenciana de educadores de museos y patrimonios (AVALEM), Asociación de mediadoras culturales de Madrid (AMECUM), Asociación murciana de educadores de museos y patrimonios (AMUREM).

6 Final reflections on democratization and cultural democracy

To conclude, we will make a series of reflections focused on cultural democracy: is it a practice, an ideology, a way of doing politics? Is it possible in Spain to attract the public to the museum action without falling into the trivialization of the contents or the proposal of artificial activities?

Our communities are not used to true participatory democracy. We live in a democracy by delegation based on periodic elections that entrust all powers to people who decide according to subjective and ideological criteria and that serve to keep in power those who already have it. It is difficult to develop experiences of cultural democracy without first carrying out local processes with groups of citizens in which people are given self-esteem in their critical capacity so that they feel capable and dare to take initiatives, to work collectively on projects of general interest, to assert their legitimacy in the face of the established powers. This is a long-term dynamic that must be based on experience and especially on the language of their living culture (De Varine, 2018). In Rappaport's terms (2005, p. 231-238), the two components of people's *empowerment* should be taken into account: personal self-determination or the capacity to determine one's own life, and social determination or the possibility of democratic participation in one's own community through intermediate social structures such as neighborhood, family, associations, school, etc.

How can we articulate experiences that move from cultural democratization to cultural democracy? This is a difficult answer that must be considered from local contexts and concrete experiences that are being carried out and that we do not find in official academic publications.

Recent research (Hervás and Tiburcio, 2017; Hervás, Sánchez and Castejón, 2017; Hervás, 2018, p 45-69) points to the need and social demand in Spain for greater understanding and openness of museum professionals towards other groups and associations. This is materialized in the design of proposals in collaboration with museums, socio-cultural centers, public administrations (universities and town councils) to favor social participation and cultural democracy based on the needs of those directly involved. The aim is to substantially optimize the quality of museum and cultural experiences that favor the local construction of identity.

The evolution from a democratizing cultural policy to a cultural democracy is a continuum that evolves over time and requires processes of citizen participation in cultural action, sharing responsibilities with public administrations. In recent decades, the cultural action of Spanish museums has been linked to the institutional policy of cultural democratization, increasingly receptive to the accessibility and inclusion of all audiences (disabled, immigrants and groups at risk of social exclusion). However, democratic cultural experiences are scarce. In order to make the visitor an active user, it is necessary for the museum to promote spaces of encounter, mediation and communication based on dialogue.

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Summary

The concept of culture with its emerging social, political and educational actions are a relatively new phenomenon. International awareness of culture as an element of development began in Europe after the Second World War, framed in the creation of supranational institutions such as the Council of Europe (Úcar, 2011). Spain presents a series of differentiating characteristics compared to Western European democracies as a result of the period of Franco's regime (Rubio & Rius, 2016). The 1950s is considered as the period in which the processes of cultural democratization that developed from the Spanish Transition began.

After decades of democratic governments, the diagnosis of cultural policy in Spain presents features of a systemic crisis intensified by the global financial crisis at the beginning of the 21st century. Traditionally, cultural policies opted for access to culture as a collective good available to citizens. However, culture has never been a central theme, but instead, remains subordinated in the political debate. Its definition and interpretation dependent on the context in which it is framed and, in the field of cultural action, it is closely linked to social and political transformations.

Cultural action is generated by institutions for a citizenship that attends as mere spectators and receive cultural proposals as a consumer good. Participation in cultural dynamics depends on the education received, the economic resources or the previous experiences of the public in a process of cultural democratization according to which we must all have access to culture.

In recent years, cultural experiences have started in Spain that are sensibly different in hopes of creating culture as a social practice that is built on conversation and the coexistence of social actors who share responsibilities with the public administration. In this case, cultural dynamics are identified with the interests of citizens in a context of cultural democracy, with broad participation of the population. However, despite the achievements in terms of public collaboration, it is clear that there is a need for mediators and educators to promote citizen co-construction. The purpose of this paper is to show what cultural action in Spain means, even when it is not possible to enter into the variety and cultural differences of the 17 autonomous communities that comprise it, marked fundamentally by the cultural and linguistic singularity of a country with multiple identities.

Keywords: cultural action, cultural policy, museums, cultural democracy, mediatio

Cultural policies and cultural development in the Argentine Republic

Margarita Laraignée

This article, commissioned by the Board of Directors of the Committee on Education and Cultural Action (CECA) of the International Council of Museums (ICOM), provides a brief description of the existing description in the Argentine Republic on the subject of "*cultural action*" and what this term involves in the reality of Argentine museums. Although there are numerous publications written or translated into Spanish, only those that best represent the situation in my country have been taken for this exhibition.

From the bibliography reviewed, it has not been possible to establish cultural action beyond the cultural policies developed by the State, since although many museums have a department of "education and cultural action", they do not specify cultural action because they identify it completely with museum education or with the dissemination of cultural policies.

It is essential to point out that the Argentine Republic lacks national legislation regulating the activity of museums: their purpose, their functioning, their aims, although there is a National Directorate of Museums, dependent on the Secretariat of Cultural Heritage of the National Ministry of Culture. Only two provinces have provincial laws on the subject, and a third has presented a draft bill on museums agreed by all sectors, which states that "the objective is to be able to organize and classify museums according to the guidelines of the International Council of Museums (ICOM)".

Definitions

What do we mean by culture?

In antiquity, the Greeks and Romans understood "*culture*" in terms of its relationship with nature. On the other hand, the Enlightenment conception favoured the opposition between nature and culture. European civilization, which colonized Latin America, encouraged this differentiation by classifying some peoples as more developed than others. On the other hand, the Romantic tradition inspired by Rousseau assumes a different understanding of historical processes, questioning the idea of progress where culture is autonomous and cannot be judged showing how each culture is autonomous and cannot be judged with the parameters with which other cultures are judged (Martinelli y Roselló, 1996).

According to Zygmunt Bauman (2013), culture was originally conceived as an agent of change, a mission undertaken for the primary purpose of educating the masses and refining their customs. Glifford Geertz (1973) proposes that the study of culture must first be conducted not in an objective (hard) way but must take into account various factors

that will enable everyone to understand *why, how and for what purpose* actions are taken that shape society. For Geertz (1973), culture is a whole that can be approached from a general or particular perspective, as the case may be. For him, "culture is a fabric of social relations created by human beings, which transform them, and the human being transforms them" (Geertz 1973, p.54).

Carmen Naranjo¹, in her essay *"La acción cultural en Latinoamérica"* (1978), understands culture as everything that sediments the heritage of a people to become a

Culture is to be seen as everything that sediments the heritage of people as a means of social communication ...

means of social communication, community tradition, national identification, general belief and artistic expression. And by **cultural action** he means any work that promotes culture. It must have two principles: 1) that the enrichment of a people lies in the growth of its culture. 2) that cultural heritage does not belong to one group but must be shared. Cultural action is the way to

ensure that culture is established for all and for the benefit of all.

García Canclini² argues that *"Under the name of **culture**, very diverse realities are placed. Popular language uses it in one way, philosophy in another, and in the social sciences one can find multiple definitions. Within social anthropology itself, the discipline that has dealt most with culture, not everyone understands the word in the same way. It has been said to include the whole of what is created by men; the totality of abilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society (Tylor); the organisation of experience shared by a community (Goodenough); the standardised ways of observing the world and reflecting on it, of understanding the relationships existing between people, objects and events, of establishing preferences and purposes, of carrying out actions and pursuing objectives..."* (1984, p.1).

For all these reasons, García Canclini reduces the use of the term *culture* to the production of phenomena that contribute, through the representation or symbolic reworking of material structures, to reproducing or transforming the social system (1984, p. 5).

But what is expressed by "being cultured"? This demand was born in the context of modernity as an effect of the acquired hierarchy of the patrons of cultural and/or artistic goods, who justify or classify being cultured or not. After post-modernity, the patterns of categorization and/or hierarchization changed, which does not mean that there are no cultural goods that depend on qualification and legitimization judgements. But today, in the 21st century, "a cultured person" in contemporary Argentinean society is one who moves in spaces of his or her own selection, investigates information, connects and interacts. They are interested in everything that comes into the country from abroad, but they are also interested in and value the local.

The conception of culture has been transformed as "modernity" and "globalisation" have advanced in society. Today in Argentina, access to certain cultural manifestations is provided through open, digital and cable television channels. The *Encuentro* channel is an Argentinean television channel that has been broadcast since 2007 with a state subsidy; it is a federal channel, with cultural content from all regions of the country. It is characterised by transmitting knowledge from various educational, scientific and cultural fields as well as the defense of the "human" and "social" rights of Latin American peoples. It is an innovative proposal that includes the production of an internet portal, which makes it possible to link television with information and communication technologies (ICT). The use of the internet has also been transformed into a medium that complements television content in order to bring it closer to school classrooms. In this way, it has become a

¹Carmen Naranjo (1928-2012) Costa Rican poet, novelist and essayist.

²Néstor García Canclini. Argentine anthropologist, writer, professor and cultural critic.

dynamic channel, where users participate actively, allowing the whole community to network. The objectives of this channel are: to provide schools with television and multimedia content to improve the quality of education; to contribute to equal access to knowledge for all inhabitants regardless of their place of residence or social status; to develop teachers' and students' skills in the use of information and communication technology in the framework of the knowledge society; to provide innovative tools to facilitate and improve teaching and learning processes.

What do we mean by "Cultural Action"?

Cultural action indicates any work that promotes popular culture and where the community is the protagonist of its management.

A basic definition of "cultural action" indicates any work that promotes popular culture and where the community is the protagonist of the management. However, when it comes to the state, we are talking about the development of cultural policies where the aim and purpose is cultural action to which a certain amount of economic resources and expertise are allocated.

All cultural action must take into account two principles:

- that the enrichment of a people lies in the growth of its culture.
- that cultural heritage does not belong to one group but must be shared.

The term "cultural policy" refers to a relatively new concept, which took root in the late 1960s and early 1970s (García Canclini, 1987) and is limited to the institutionalization - based on a certain international construction - of the conception that states should carry out certain actions aimed at culture. This construction translates into the development of a specialized infrastructure to undertake certain "cultural actions". For some authors there is a difference between "cultural actions" and "cultural policies". Cultural actions are those cultural projects inserted in a certain cultural policy or as a complement to certain social projects; whereas the notion of cultural policy implies a global dimension of intervention (Rabossi, 1999).

García Canclini (1987) understands cultural policies as the set of interventions carried out by the state, civil institutions, and organized community groups in order to orient symbolic development, satisfy the cultural needs of the population and obtain consensus for a type of order or social transformation.

Functions of cultural action:

- a. the protection, conservation and enhancement of cultural heritage
- b. dissemination through theatre, music, books (traditional media) and institutions and socio-cultural media (cinema/radio/television/new technologies).
- c. stimulating artistic creation and the social and legal status of artists and creators.

According to the Organization of Ibero-American States (OEI), *"the ideal of cultural policy development is, beyond planning culture, to ensure that cultural components and resources are present in all areas of public policy planning and development processes"* (OEI, 2018). The fundamental principles on which cultural policies are based are:

- the promotion of cultural identity;
- the protection of cultural diversity;
- the promotion of creativity, and
- strengthening citizen participation.

Cultural democratization and cultural democracy

Cultural democratization is understood as making elite culture accessible to all through cultural dissemination; the initiative and creation of culture is generated by the state and

Cultural democratización:
making elite culture accesible to
all through cultural dissemination

not by the citizenry. It starts from the institutions to the people. In this paradigm, culture is understood as a collective good that must be made available to all. The people are mere spectators and receivers of culture, since those in charge of deciding what will circulate as artistic quality are under the decision of the state and the private sector companies that sponsor the events. Participation in

the cultural dynamics is a function of social origin, economic resources, education received, etc. The projects provided by this type of policy aim to equalize access to services and the enjoyment of "high culture" goods. This model allowed for decentralization and dissemination, but the appreciation of works is one-way, without including popular culture, and therefore its results are uneven.

The use of new technologies has partly changed the concept of cultural democratization; today it no longer belongs to an elite that has the possibility of travelling to Europe every year, but with the use of technology it has allowed the dissemination of culture to be within everyone's reach. However, we cannot help but reflect that Argentina does not have equal technological progress throughout the country and that there are many who still do not have access to it. Today, "being cultured" in Argentina is not like it was at the beginning of the 20th century, when our middle and high society always looked to Europe. Today, this gaze is more global for all those who have the possibility of having access to culture. Economic inequalities are present throughout the country, and therefore, so is the possibility of access to the democratization of culture.

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culture, creativity and social participation. It means building culture from our own history, our own origins, understanding its meaning and transmitting it to future generations. When we think of the term "cultural democracy" we are thinking of the participation of all; it is the interests and needs of the citizens themselves who decide at each

moment what is most convenient for them. This paradigm is treated as a policy where diversity can coexist, as each culture is distinguished as autonomous and equal to its followers. It is important to determine that the point of view of this paradigm does not plan plurality but diversity, which means, a policy that aims at the existence of multiple cultures beyond their differences, and where each identity drives how it wants to be recognized, elaborating in an autonomous way its own representative space. The bodies that take the lead in this policy must behave independently of the state, producing and disseminating the programs that society needs.

García Canclini (1987, p. 28) defines "*the political paradigms of cultural action in relation to the social agents that sustain them, to their ways of structuring the relationship between politics and culture, and to their conception of cultural development*". He lists them as follows:

Liberal patronage. - *The first form of modern promotion of culture, especially in literature and the arts, is patronage. The development of culture is not seen as a collective matter but as the result of individual relationships, it is a personal decision to finance certain cultural expenses and to choose to whom the money will be given, and it is also assumed that artistic and literary creation is an act of isolated individuals. Although this promotion of art sometimes takes into account the dissemination to a wide public, by subsidising biennials or publications, it is more to relocate the patronage action in the mass dimension*

of contemporary culture than a real attempt to respond to social demands (García Canclini, 1987, p. 28-29).

Patrimonial traditionalism. - This position has emerged especially in oligarchic states and right-wing nationalist movements. It defines the nation as a group of individuals united by natural ties, geographical space, race, and irrational ties, love of the same land, religion, without taking into account the social differences between the members of each nation. In Argentina, it was originally elaborated by figures such as Leopoldo Lugones and Julio Irazusta (both sympathisers of the first coup d'état in Argentina in 1930, which imposed the first military dictatorship of a clearly extreme right-wing nature) (García Canclini, 1987, p. 30-31).

Populist statism. - It is another conception of culture. Identity is not contained in race, nor in the past or in tradition. Identity is in the state. As a consequence of the process of independence or revolution, the state appears as the place where national values are condensed, the order that brings together the parts of society and regulates their conflicts. For this conception, the national resides in the state and not in the people, since the latter will be the addressee of the government's action, called upon to adhere to it, but not effectively recognized as the source and justification of these acts to the point of submitting them to its free approval or rectification (García Canclini, 1987, p. 34-35).

Neoconservative privatisation. - In the mid-1970s, the international economic crisis and the internal difficulties of the democratic governments were stifling developmentalist and socialist expectations. To face the crisis, the neoconservative currents reorganized the model of accumulation, eliminated inefficient areas of capital and sought a recovery of the rate of profit through the monopolistic concentration of production and its adaptation to transnational financial capital. At the same time, public spending on social services, including the financing of educational and cultural programs, and investments in scientific research are restricted, especially if they do not yield results that can be immediately used for technological development in the areas prioritized by monetarist policy.

The key objective of the neo-conservative doctrine in culture is to establish new ideological relations between classes and a new consensus to fill the half-empty space left by the crisis of the oligarchic projects of the populist and socialist projects of the 1960s and 1970s. To achieve this, the main resources are to transfer cultural initiative to private companies, to diminish that of the state and to control that of the popular sectors.

Authoritarian states apply more vigorously the monetarist proposal to reduce state support for public promotion of culture in favour of private appropriation. Disinterested in mass consensus, and having suspended or restricted political activity, they let private initiative replace the state, parties and popular organisations in the restructuring of everyday identity, systems of recognition, prestige and symbolic differentiation between classes.

Another consequence of authoritarian regimes, which contributes to the transnationalisation and privatisation of culture, is the suppression of the autonomy of the symbolic field. With the closing of the plural game in schools and publishing houses, in the press and on TV, in all instances of ideological elaboration and political mediation, national institutions lose their own cultural forms and the ability to represent social demands. This reduction of public spaces for debate is reinforced by the privatizing tendencies, dominant in everyday life, which re-articulate social existence around the home. The cultural field thus depoliticized, frozen under military or administrative control, yields its space to corporate reorganization.

The previous paradigms disappear. They are reordered according to the new process. The growing intervention of companies in the operation and orientation of cultural activities leads some of them to become patrons. The reduction of public funds and the demands of productivity imposed by monetarist technocracy in all areas, leads states to reduce unprofitable actions and events that are not self-financing and concentrates cultural policy on the promotion of large-scale spectacles of mass interest (García Canclini, 1987, p. 38-39).

Cultural democratisation. - This paradigm conceives cultural policy as a program of distribution and popularization of art, scientific knowledge and other forms of high culture. Its basic assumption is that better dissemination will correct inequalities in access to symbolic goods. We find the origin of this model in Latin America in the educational and artistic programs massively deployed in Mexico after the revolution.

It is suggested to permanently decentralize cultural services, to use mass media to disseminate art and to use didactic and animation resources in order to interest new audiences (García Canclini, 1987, p. 50-51).

Sociocultural Animation

There are descriptions of various authors to define Sociocultural Animation. In Sara de Miguel Badesa (1995):

Martin. A (1988): Sociocultural Animation is to encourage, give meaning, move, motivate, energize, accompany, communicate, help to grow. It is to contribute in some way to development, to empower, to train. It is what most resembles a process through which the community becomes the protagonist of its own development.

Simonot, M. (1974): Sociocultural Animation is a sector of social life, whose agents aim at a certain transformation of attitudes and interindividual and collective relationships, by an action of and on individuals, their attitudes, their interindividual and social relationships. This action is exercised through various activities with the help of a pedagogy based on non-directive and active methods.

UNESCO (1982): Sociocultural animation is the set of social practices that aim to stimulate initiative and participate in communities in the process of their own development and in the global dynamics of sociopolitical life in which they are integrated. (p. 46-47)

Sociocultural animation: "a set of social techniques aiming at promoting voluntary practices and activities towards the development of the quality of life (UNESCO).

The Argentinean Ezequiel Ander-Egg³, defines sociocultural animation as: "**A set of social techniques** that, based on a participatory pedagogy, aims to promote voluntary practices and activities that, with the active **participation** of people, are developed within a given **group** or community, and manifests itself in the different areas of the development of the quality of life" (1981, p. 77).

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Figura 1- Ezequiel Ander-Egg
Renowned Argentine pedagogue, sociologist, essayist and epistemologist
UNESCO Consultant (Cultural politics in Latin America)

³ **Ezequiel Ander-Egg** is an Argentine sociologist, political scientist, economist, planner and writer. He has an extensive bibliography of more than 150 books on social work, ecology, sociology, sociocultural animation, pedagogy, social research, among others.

For the *Programa Nacional Aprender Enseñando* in Argentina, there are three main conceptions of the Sociocultural Association according to the political-ideological purpose of the activities to be developed:

- conservative: the aim is a psychological manipulation of individuals and sociological manipulation of groups to ensure the maintenance of the established order, with the aim of making as little change as possible in the political, economic, social or cultural order.
- progressive: the emphasis here is on:
 - . preserving and disseminating cultural heritage
 - . to enable as many people as possible to have access to the enjoyment of cultural products and goods.
 - . to promote the creators of culture.
- revolutionary: the aim is to stimulate personal creation and enable each individual to develop personally, socially and culturally, in a context of joint participation that allows for collective awareness.

The revolutionary conceptions as developed in Latin America given the need for profound changes, due to the economic development.

The latter conception is the one that is being developed in Latin America, given the need for profound changes, due to the lesser economic development compared to other continents.

On 12 October 2017, the *1st International Meeting of Socio-Cultural Animation and Community Art* took place in Argentina, organised by RIA (Ibero-American Network of Socio-Cultural Animation and NODO Argentina) with the coordination of the students of the

chair of Therapeutic Pedagogical Resources of Artistic Education of the Special Education Department and the Directorate of Culture of the Municipality of Posadas (province of Misiones, Argentina).

The aim was to highlight the contributions of art in socio-cultural animation as a tool for transformation and participation. Several institutions took part with participatory proposals in music, painting, theatre and dance. The organisers affirmed that art: summons and organises collective practices, develops alliances, generates transformation, gives value to culture, educates and transforms through a liberating expression.

Shaping a multi-ethnic and multicultural country

The Argentine Republic, like all Latin American countries, is a multi-ethnic and multicultural country. The majority of the country's inhabitants are the result of an amalgam of peoples: the original inhabitants, the Spanish colonizers, the mestizos and the European immigrants who, coming from overseas between 1881 and 1914, arrived in these lands thanks to a broad and generous immigration law. They were mostly Italian and Spanish immigrants as well as others of Slavic (Ukrainian, Polish and Russian), French, German and Irish origin. This multicultural contribution brought direct and indirect consequences in the current cultural makeup, provoking multicultural changes through customs and language, which also influenced education, arts and crafts.

The Argentine writer Ernesto Sábato has reflected on "Argentine Culture" with these words: *"The primitive Spanish-American reality in this Cuenca del Plata has been fractured by immigration, and its inhabitants have become something dual, with all the dangers but also with all the advantages of this condition: by our European roots we link the interior of the nation with the enduring values of the Old World in an endearing way, by our condition as Americans, through the interior folklore and the old Castilian that*

unifies us, we link ourselves to the rest of the continent, feeling in some way the vocation of that Patria Grande imagined by San Martín and Bolívar" (Sábato, 1975, p. 17-18).

Argentina, like all of Latin America, is multicultural where the modern and the non-modern coexist and mix, both in its culture, traditions and economy.

Argentina, like all of Latin America, is multicultural where the modern and the non-modern coexist and mix, both in its culture, traditions and economy. This diversity has been recognized by the National Constitution in Article 20, which states that "*foreigners enjoy in the territory of the Nation all the civil rights of Argentine citizens, being able, among other acts, to freely exercise their religion, without being obliged to admit citizenship or to pay extraordinary, forced contributions*". The 1994 reform also gave them constitutional status through Article 75, paragraph 17, which recognizes their ethnic and cultural pre-existence, guarantees respect for their identity, bilingual and intercultural education, legal status for their communities, possession and ownership of the lands they traditionally occupy, provision of other suitable and sufficient lands, and ensures their participation in the management of matters affecting them, especially in matters of natural resources.

Cultural policies in the Argentine Republic

The 1960s is known as the prodigious decade, a time when society and politics changed forever thanks to important events such as the sexual revolution, women's liberation and the fight against racial discrimination.

The 1960s were characterized by great cultural activity, the creation of related movements and the articulation between the artistic and the social. In those years, a cultural institutionality took shape, not only in Argentina, but also in much of Latin America, inspired by the discourse of André Malraux⁴, who was Minister of Cultural Affairs in Charles De Gaulle's government. In Argentina, under the protection of the Ministry of Education, theatres, museums, conservatories and other smaller spaces where art and culture were generated. The greatest exponent of this cultural activity was centred on the Instituto Di Tella, which was a non-profit cultural research center founded in 1958. It was the "temple of the artistic avant-garde" and its premises on Florida Street led to the place being known as the "Manzana Loca" (Crazy Block). The Institute was a hotbed of talent and its members are known as the "Generation of Di Tella"; among those who participated were: Antonio Berni, Líbero Badíi, Luis Benedit, Julio Le Parc, Luis Felipe Noé, Antonio Seguí, Marta Minujín, among others.

In its beginnings it was home to avant-garde theater, music and painting. It was there that later established artists took their first steps. Their activity marked a new era in local art. Later, the centre was expanded to include all social sciences in order to support social research. The Institute was harshly opposed by the dictatorial government of Juan Carlos Onganía.

From the 1970s and 1980s in Latin America, priority was given to revaluing identities, taking as such ethnic identities, cultural disparities in the face of the cultural argument that understood them to be subordinate to Western symbolic values. This concept was clear in Latin America due to the mestizo component of its population; however, in Argentina, achieving this goal was highly undefined, as indigenous and mestizo cultures had been displaced by state and immigration policies.

⁴ **André Malraux** (1901-1976) French novelist and essayist, historian and statesman, who embodied the prototype of the committed writer. Minister of Cultural Affairs (1958-1969).

The ethnic and cultural diversity of Argentina's identity is made visible through the neglected cultures and ethnicities..

The ethnic and cultural diversity of Argentina's identity is made visible through the neglected cultures and ethnicities. In Argentina today, the disqualification of the migrant population from the interior of the country, particularly from provinces with indigenous roots in the north-west of the country, still persists. Racial prejudice has also become evident with the arrival of migrants from neighbouring countries, such as Bolivia, Paraguay and Peru. Furthermore, Argentina is once again becoming a recipient of migratory flows from diverse and remote origins in addition to the usual ones from neighbouring countries. We now have populations from Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe and the Balkans, social groups that reflect the impact of the economic and political transformations of

the globalized world. These social transformations encourage the production of cultural manifestations of greater symbolic density (Ana Wortman, 2005).

For Martín Hopenhays (2002), in Latin America and the Caribbean, the conflicts related to the processes of globalization stem historically from and are linked to *"the dialectic of the denial of the other"*, which dates back to the period of colonisation and evangelization and runs through the relationship between the Metropolis (Spain and Portugal) and Latin America and the Caribbean. It could be said that, according to the author, the denial of the other is the denial of multiculturalism, that is, the unilateral recognition of one culture - in the case of Argentina, the Spanish culture - as valid in the face of others that are denied legitimacy. Another manifestation of the denial of the other was the acculturation of indigenous and Afro-Latin American peoples, the denial of their own symbolic universe.

After ending a period dominated by authoritarianism (military dictatorship 1976-1983), Argentina prepared for the definitive arrival of democracy. The project of consolidating democracy implies a review of a country's history, activities, values and behaviours that led its citizens to accept policies that were self-destructive. When a country faces "momentous change", this implies a process of social, political and cultural change. This brings with it innumerable conflicts in which the role of the state is to guarantee the functioning of the rules of the democratic game, channelling and promoting participation. Democratic society implies dissent, shared rules of the game, participation and democratic subjects.

The cultural action of the State is not limited to the executions of a single ministry (Ministry of Culture), but of the management of institutions and bodies distributed in different ministerial areas. The *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity* (UNESCO, 2001), the *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* (UNESCO, 2005) and the *Declaration on Cultural Rights* (Fribourg Declaration, 1997) mention the aspects that should be respected to guarantee the fulfilment of cultural rights and in favour of democratization processes. Having established the affirmation of culture as a "human right", the role of the state in guaranteeing the participation and access of all sectors to cultural production and consumption is crucial (Loreti, 2007).

The diversity of jurisdictions (national, provincial, municipal)

The Argentine Republic has a continental area of almost 2,800,000 km² and the system of government is federal and as such, has a distribution of powers and faculties between the governments of the provinces, the autonomous government of the City of Buenos Aires, the municipal governments, and the national government. The existence of 23 provinces and as many municipal regimes, each with its own specific cultural administrative structure, represents a complex picture due to the unequal treatment with

which local governments have dealt with official cultural action. In addition, the Autonomous Government of the City of Buenos Aires plays a role in the field of cultural services which, due to its magnitude and socio-cultural repercussions, must be taken into account.

Argentina's cultural federalism is characterized by the work of the cultural bodies of the different provinces, in turn regrouped into regions, which make up the country's federal political system. The provincial governments and municipalities have various functions with respect to cultural policy and everything related to its administration.

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In 1971, the heads of the provincial cultural bodies met in the city of Salta and unanimously issued what became known as the Salta Cultural Declaration. It stated:

"That the area of culture is responsible for the research, preservation and promotion of the values that are the basis and definition of the nation [...] That the action of all official cultural bodies should be organised regionally in response to the need to integrate the Argentine community with balance, preserving the typical features that underpin its federal vocation" (Consejo Federal de Cultura, 2018)



Figure 2 - Centro Cultural Kirchner – Nuestros Museos, en la Noche de los Museos 2015, Buenos Aires
Author: Ministerio de Cultura de la Nación Argentina,
Photo: Carlos Furman / Centro Cultural Kirchner. Source: Wikimedia Commons

A few months later, a new meeting in the capital city of the province of Entre Ríos approved the Cultural Declaration of Paraná, by which, in addition to ratifying the federalist vocation of its members, they constituted a permanent assembly and set up a Federal Council of Cultural Action made up of representatives of all the provinces of the country. This precedent was the step immediately prior to the creation, in 1972, by National Law, of the **Federal Council for Cultural Coordination**. Its objectives were:

- promotion of culture in the region,
- planning of cultural activities,
- cooperation, exchange and circulation of cultural products between the provinces, and
- regionalization as a system capable of guiding and ensuring the integration of a federal country.

The Council assumes as an obligation of the National State, in accordance with the national constitution and international treaties signed and recognised by the country,

to safeguard cultural rights, the promotion of federalism and Latin American regional integration.

Cultural patronage

In several provinces there is a law for the Promotion of Cultural Activities, known generically as the Patronage Law, which consists of a tax incentive for those who contribute to the infrastructure of culture, the maintenance of museums and theaters,

The Patronage Law, which consists of a tax incentive for those who contribute to the infrastructure of culture, the maintenance of museums and theaters, and the construction of experimental centres to support cultural works.,

and the construction of experimental centres to support cultural works. These laws, with their different scopes and difficulties in their implementation, attempt to encourage, assist, stimulate and/or promote cultural and artistic expressions. The Patronage Law was born in Buenos Aires in 2006. In the country there are three jurisdictions with patronage laws in operation: the City of Buenos Aires, Chaco and La Rioja. Then there are many provinces that have passed laws but have not been able to apply them

due to some details in the drafting, including Catamarca, Tierra del Fuego, Santa Cruz and Tucumán.

The cultural projects that are covered by the different patronage laws must be non-profit and be related to research, training, dissemination, creation and production in the different areas of art and culture, such as:

- 1 - Audiovisual arts and digital art
- 2 - Dance
- 3 - Theater
- 4 - Circus, murga, mime and related arts
- 5 - Literature
- 6 - Visual arts
- 7 - Crafts and popular art
- 8 - Design
- 9 - Academic music
- 10 - Popular music
- 11 - Cultural heritage
- 12 - Publications, radio, television and Internet sites with artistic and cultural content.

In 2016, the Ministry of Culture of the Nation presented a national patronage bill, replicating to a certain extent the one that exists in the City of Buenos Aires with relative success. The aim of the project, as is the case in Brazil and Chile with notable prestige, is to inaugurate a direct and transparent way of financing cultural projects of social interest through private companies, which would be tax-deductible for their respective fiscal contributions. The evaluation of cultural projects will be the responsibility of a National Council for Cultural Development with political representation from the executive branch, the legislative branch, technical-artistic representation from the

In Argentina, the Patronage Law of the city of Buenos Aires was one of the most important cultural policies of recent years,

various disciplines, and jurisdictional representation from the provinces and the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires. To date, this initiative is awaiting its transformation into law.

In Argentina, the Patronage Law of the city of Buenos Aires was one of the most important cultural policies of recent years. Those who

support this initiative claim that it is a project of great importance because it establishes the creation of a legal framework to encourage investment in cultural projects, development programs, training and actions, as is the case in other parts of the world. At the same time, and in opposition, other sectors are of the opinion that it is an initiative aimed at large cultural enterprises, or that it will end up implying an immense effort for the owners of smaller-scale projects to obtain resources.

Opponents of this law claim that in Brazil, the so-called Rouanet law, based on patronage, has reinforced expressions of "high culture" (opera, ballet, classical music) to the detriment of popular manifestations, deepening regional imbalances and social inequalities, due to the concentration of capital in the area that forms the triangle of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Belo Horizonte. In Argentina, with large differences between poor provinces and rich families, this inequity in cultural production could occur. This could be overcome if the state, as a tax collector, decided to allocate funds to the promotion of artistic creation, assuming the leading role in the generation of culture. This would not prevent private capital from voluntarily participating in the financing of cultural projects without generating dependency among the actors.

Notwithstanding the discussions and differences that exist on the law of patronage, it would not be fair not to recognize that this instrument of support for cultural production has allowed the existence of organizations such as the Institute for the Protection and Promotion of the Non-Official Theatrical Activity of the City of Buenos Aires (PROTEATRO) and the PRODANZA Institute, which grants subsidies with the aim of promoting, encouraging and protecting the activity of non-official dance also in the City of Buenos Aires.

For a Federal Law on Cultures

From 2003 onwards, the national government began what it called the "cultural battle" as one of the guiding lines of its actions in the cultural field. In this sense, the Education Law was reformed (2006); the Cultural Information System of Argentina (SInCA) was founded (2006); the Cultural Industries Markets of Argentina (MICA) were promoted (2011), which allow representatives of different areas of artistic creation to meet in the same space to show their productions, buy, sell, participate in fairs, clinics or training; the Programa Puntos de Cultura (2011) was established with the aim of promoting popular and community culture; the new Music Law was approved (2012); the Ministry of Culture was created (2014); the Study of Cultural Consumption in Argentina (2013) was carried out, which produced documents on the consumption, tastes and cultural interests of Argentines.

In November 2014, a proposal for a preliminary draft of a **Federal Law on Cultures** was launched with the aim of drafting a bill in a participatory manner. To this end, the objective was set as

The draft on a Federal Law on Cultures was debated in 46 federal forums held in all the provinces of the country

"the elaboration of a draft law that defines cultural subjects as all people living in the national territory and in which all artists, technical-professionals, makers and cultural managers are defined by their status as cultural workers" (Estado argentino, 2018).

From December 2014 to April 2015, this draft bill was debated in 46 federal forums held in all the provinces of the country, organised by the Ministry of Culture, the Federal Council of Culture (where the highest authorities of each province participate) and the Front of Artists and Workers of Cultures based on thematic nuclei for the debate of the 21 points to define a Federal Law of Cultures. In these debates, cultural groups of various kinds, 24 national universities and citizens who wished to participate and/or had contributions to make took part. In this way, civil society

organisations participated by making proposals for draft legislation, based on their needs and interests, and in dialogue with the State.

In June 2017, the conclusions of the debates were presented to the National Congress, forming the basis of the first federal draft bill on culture. Among the most important points are the creation of two public observatories of cultural policies that would work together with national universities and the establishment by law that the budget for culture should not be less than one percent of the total national budget, as recommended by the United Nations and the regulation of the Federal Council of Culture. The draft bill does not yet have parliamentary status.

Conclusions. Education and Cultural Action in Argentinean museums

In the Argentine Republic, the political archetypes of Cultural Action in relation to the social agents that sustain it are very diverse in a multi-ethnic, multicultural country, with a vast territorial extension and very unbalanced socio-economic realities, to which must be added the lack of a state policy that transcends the various political changes that have occurred in the last fifty years.

It has already been mentioned that almost all museums in Argentina have an "educational department"; some add to this the name "cultural action". However, when asked about it, they do not specify what cultural action they develop because they identify it completely with museum education or, in some cases, equate it with cultural dissemination. Since the growth of the Committee for Education and Cultural Action in Argentina in 2008, nine national meetings have been held in different parts of the country, four of which focused on the training of museum educators. The last one, held in April 2018, took place in the town of Perito Moreno, a small town in the province of Santa Cruz, more than 2,100 km from Buenos Aires and 400 km from the nearest airport. It was attended by more than 100 people, which shows the importance and interest in the hierarchy of education in museums by the professionals who develop it.

In museums, the concept of education differs from education in schools, the latter being conceived as the methodical transfer of teachings through a government curriculum, while education in museums is identified by stimulating the senses and providing the right conditions for visitors to interpret the most important and precise aspects of the objects on display. It has been possible to establish that some museums differentiate between educational proposals concerning school visits and proposals aimed at guided visits for other audiences, although in many cases, using the same planned discourse without taking into account the questions posed by the visitor, their interests, their previous knowledge and their expectations.

Those museums that have an education and cultural action department diffusely define the latter as all those practices of dissemination of officially produced cultural policies that enable the participation of visitors in museum activities. Nor is there a difference between educational proposals and cultural action proposals within the museum.

In the absence of a museum law in Argentina to provide a framework for museum activity, it is the state, through the National Directorate of Museums under the National Ministry of Culture, which implements cultural policies in national museums, with a similar situation at the level of museums under provincial and municipal governments. The aim of this Directorate is to reevaluate the public dimension of museums and guarantee citizens access to culture and heritage, but it depends on the greater or lesser economic budget allocated for activities related to Cultural Action. This budget is often supported by the work of the associations of friends of museums that each body generally has and which are grouped at the national level in the Federación Argentina de Amigos de Museos (FADAM), a non-profit organization whose purpose is to enhance the value of cultural and natural heritage and to disseminate and promote its conservation.

It can be seen from the above that the context of Argentinean museums depends almost exclusively on the cultural policies established by the different territorial executive powers and is framed within a cultural democratisation that allows the inclusion and accessibility of audiences, but without them being able to get involved with the museum entity and be protagonists in the distribution of the activities to be carried out, which is closer to a cultural democracy and which would allow a true cultural action linking the community and its environment.

Culture is totally dynamic because societies are active entities, therefore, we should all collaborate and contribute to be able to elaborate, exercise and disseminate it.

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Summary

In order to address the strategy for a quick synthesis on the theme of cultural action in Argentina, we must take a historical approach, as well as consider the cultural policies implemented by the federal and provincial governments (twenty-three provinces and the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires). It is worth mentioning that Argentina does not have a national law to legislate on the organization of museums: their purpose, operation and objectives, although it has a National Museums Directorate, under the authority of the Cultural Heritage Secretariat of the Ministry of Culture of the Nation. The political paradigms of cultural action, in comparison with the social partners that support them, are very different in a multi-ethnic and multicultural country like Argentina.

We have a vast territory with very unbalanced socio-economic realities, and to this we must add, that there are no State policies that have survived the different political changes in the last fifty years. The definitive arrival of democracy in 1983, enabled cultural democratization at all levels of society, including museums.

The state continues to chart cultural policies that have changed according to the socio-economic situation of the country, following along the political lines of the governments that have come to power. The National Directorate of Museums, under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture of the Nation, diffuses the policies in the national museums with a similar situation existing at the level of provincial and municipal state museums. The purpose of this Directorate is to reassess the public dimension of museums and to guarantee citizens' access to culture and heritage, but this depends on the budget intended to carry out activities related to cultural action. This budget is assisted by the work of friends' associations. Each museum has one, they are grouped in the Federation of Friends of Museums (FADAM) which aims to promote the cultural and natural heritage and disseminate and promote its conservation.

The theme of cultural action in museums, beyond the policies developed by the State, could not be addressed from the bibliography consulted. Most of the museums in Argentina have a department of education, but the cultural action that they carry out, belongs in general to the activities carried out with the objective of attracting the public to the annual programming of their exhibitions.

The conception of culture is being transformed as "modernity" and "globalization" have arrived. Also, today in Argentina, access to cultural events is manifested through a television channel that was created by the State in 2007. It transmits diverse knowledge, educational, scientific, cultural, and defense of human and social rights at national and foreign levels. Networking has provided access to knowledge and innovative tools to schools, museums and the public in general.

To conclude the cultural action should be based on two principles:

- the cultural enrichment of a people lies in the growth of their culture, including all realities, from the production of phenomena to the reproduction and transformation of the social system.
- the cultural heritage is not part of a group but must be shared in the acceptance of multiculturalism.

Key words: culture, cultural policies, cultural democratization, cultural democracy, multiculturalism.

Cultural action-making in English Canada's museums: a historical overview 1840-2018

Anne-Marie Émond and João Pedro Pais Mendonça

Introduction

In the context of museums established in English Canada, we explore the concept of 'cultural action', a term employed by the International Committee for Education and Cultural Action (CECA) headed by the International Council of Museums (ICOM). In order to identify the concept-specific features of cultural action in English Canada's museums, our strategy is to take a historical perspective and examine museums' educational practices beginning in the 1840s, along with the cultural policies put in place by the federal and provincial governments. Concerning provincial policies, we choose to look at the province of Ontario as it is fairly representative (excluding Quebec) of all English-speaking provinces in Canada. Today, it is estimated that Ontario is home to 670 museums (Ontario Museum Association, 2016) of the approximately 2600 museums in Canada (Canadian Museum Association, 2015).

Since the term 'cultural action' is rarely used in Canadian English museum literature, it follows that in order to find if this concept resonates or not (in English Canada), we have to start with a definition of each word:

Cultural: "*relating to the habits, traditions, and beliefs of a society also relating to art*" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2018).

Action: "*the process of doing something, especially when dealing with a problem or difficulty*" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2018).

If in the concept, as used by CECA, both terms are united in their meaning, it also follows that we will unite the terms towards our analysis of cultural policies and museum's educational strategies in English Canada.

Museums as educational institutions: in tune with Canadian cultural policies

Examining the various cultural policies that have framed the aspirations of museums from the 1840s to the present day, helps to better understand the development of their educational strategies. In what follows, we present six historical periods that we have identified as milestones in the evolution of museums in English Canada. At the end of each historical period, we present a table which gathers, under seven headings, (Cultural policies objectives; Approach to culture; Museum approach; Museum educational purposes; Museum target audiences; Museum education; Museum cultural action) the determinant

factors from which we can establish the presence or not of cultural action within museums of English Canada.

Historical period from 1840 to 1900

The origins of the institutionalization of culture can be traced back to the establishment of major Canadian cultural institutions, such as the National Gallery in Ottawa (1880). As Saint-Pierre and Gattinger (2011) point out, this institutionalization movement will truly take off in the 20th century as we will see later in the article, with the increasing number of museums in Canada. Interestingly enough, these cultural institutions were often created through philanthropy and private patronage, supplemented by the aid of the State. The institutionalization of culture varies between provinces. The shaping of the country having taken place over time, geo-political particularities such as political agenda, natural resources exploitation and population settlement have accelerated or withheld the appearance of cultural institutions.

Concerning the establishment of provincial cultural policies, Ontario, like other provinces, recognizes the federal responsibility to promote the Canadian culture while leaving the province and its associative, philanthropic and municipal organizations deal with cultural policies within its own jurisdiction, and this can be observed as early as in 1867 (Saint-Pierre & Gattinger, 2011).

Museums are seen as centres for learning – educate by looking at objects – and for forming the visitors's taste.

This period could be viewed as the beginning of the development of Canadian museums as centres for learning where one expected to be educated by looking at objects and curiosities that focused on the past. Museums were seen as forming the visitors' tastes associated with the refinements of an advancing civilization:

The initiative of establishing a public museum was deemed to be important, as by the 1850s it was acknowledged that in Canada; "Public institutions, whether religious or secular, are alike, the common property of a country." [The Maple Leaf (September, 1852)] [...] The path to progress leading beyond the earlier pioneer phase of settlement was articulated; "It takes many streams flowing together, to fertilize a country; so individuals influence and individual energy are all required to carry on plans of public improvement [The Maple Leaf (May, 1853)] (Carter, 2000, p. 116).

It is interesting to note that in Ontario the "development of public museums as educational institutions began with the passage of the Common Schools Act of 1846 [...] These facilities were regarded as being important for the instruction and practice of teachers in science of education and the art of teaching" (Carter, 2000, p. 169).

The strategies used for learning in the museums of the time consisted in having visitors tour through the exhibits unguided, so displays had to be autodidactic. Museums were considered instruments of self-education with their object-centred displays (Neilson, 2000). This period is centered around the museum's mission of educating in the perspective of 'schooling'.

Cultural policies objectives	Building a civilized country
Approach to culture	Top-down; Voice of authority
Museum approach	Object-centered; Collections and curiosities; Focused on the past
Museum educational purposes	Educating visitors' taste; Information provider
Museum target audiences	Adults; Teachers and school children
Museum education	Strategies: Unguided; Self-education mostly for adults and school children with their teachers. 'Schooling'
Museum cultural action	None

Table 1 - Early museum educational initiatives from the 1840s to 1900

Historical period 1900 to 1950

Carter, in his historical research on museums as centres for learning quotes the words of David Murray, a Scottish academic who in 1904 had just completed a survey of museums worldwide, including Canada's museums. His comments summarize the situation at the beginning of the 20th century:

In general sense a museum is a popular educator. It provides recreation and instruction for all classes and for all ages. Its doors are open to all alike, and each visitor gets profit or pleasure by viewing its gallery. The modern museum however has more definite aims. A museum has now become a recognized and necessary instrument of research; it plays an important part in university and technical instruction, and it should be adopted as an aid in elementary and secondary education. (as cited in Carter, 2000, p. 257)

The same year, B.E. Walker of the Canadian Institute, gave an allocution and called for each province, each city with a certain prominence, to constitute its own museum for the people (Carter, 2000). Around the same period, in Ontario, was the creation of historical museums run by Historical Societies, and the establishment of the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) in 1912. That is to say that between 1900 and 1930 the number of permanent museums in Canada more than doubled (Carter, 2000). These, through their collections, were at the source of the development "of interpretation and education programmes which could be utilized by visitors of all ages" (Carter, 2000, p. 261). The museums were institutions of public learning for school children and their teachers, as well as the citizens of the whole community. We might say that during this period, we are witnessing the emergence of cultural policies that calls for museums to be accessible to all citizens. We might wonder if, during this period, we are not seeing the first sparks of cultural democratization – a concept that will be at the core of cultural policies later in the 1950s.



Picture 1 - Corythosaurus Intermedius,
Royal Ontario Museum, June 1933.
Source of image: City of Toronto archives,
series 71, s0071_it9774. Author : Alfred Pearson.

In that context, during the first half of the 20th century, strategies used to develop a museum as a popular educator consisted in building collections that were not just mere curiosities but demonstrated educational values addressed to all, from school children to university researchers. It was also a time where collaborations were created between schools and museums in Canada and saw the creation of outreach programs for school children (Carter, 2000). For example, at the federal level, the National Gallery developed during that period an educational program that was radio broadcast nationwide, accompanied by reproductions of artworks from the collection and distributed to schools throughout the country for artistic education (Émond, 2000). Also, in some museums, like the ROM for instance, by 1919 public guided tours, lectures for adults and story-hours for children were organized separately from school programs (Carter, 2000).

Museums as popular educators:
educational value of the collections
for all visitors, collaboration with
schools and universities, outreach
programs.

These are just a few examples of new educational strategies put in place by museums in the hope to educate as wide a public as possible to the 'good' artistic taste. We are at the beginning of the development of educational programs adapted to a variety of publics where visitors received systematically object-centred instruction provided by the museum and its collection.

Cultural policies objectives	Emergence of cultural democratization
Approach to culture	Top-down; Voice of authority
Museum approach	Object-centered; Collections for education and research; Focused on the past
Museum educational purposes	Popular education; Good taste; Information provider
Museum target audiences	Teachers and school children; Adults; Citizens of the whole community
Museum education	Strategies: Guided tours for schools; School programs and development of outreach programs for schools. Beginning of interpretation and education programs such as public guided tours, lectures for adults and story-hours for children; 'Schooling'
Museum cultural action	None

Table 2 - The development of the museum as a popular educator from 1900 to 1950

Historical period 1950 to 1970

The post-war cultural agenda in Canada has been largely defined by Ottawa and by the elaboration of a national cultural policy. The most important influence in defining a Canadian cultural policy discourse in 1949-1951 was the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (RCNDALS), better known as the Massey Commission. The Commission investigated the overall state of culture in Canada and dominated the Canadian cultural landscape for many decades even up to this day (Baeker, 2002a). The Massey Commission defines culture in relation to education: "Culture is that part of education which enriches the mind and refines the taste. It is the development of the intelligence through the arts, letters and sciences" (RCNDALS, 1951, p. 7). As a whole, this definition puts forth the 'civilizing' impact of the arts. From this perspective on culture, Baeker (2000a) claims that the Commission:

[...] introduced a cultural policy discourse, dominated by a "two-tier" cultural system. The upper-tier consisted of a state-subsidized, Eurocentric "civilizing" or "high" arts system, usually linked to lofty goals of national identity and cultural sovereignty. The lower-tier consisted of various forms of "popular" or "ethnic" culture. These were either community-based or existed in more commercial forms and were operated either in the marketplace or as a voluntary activity. (p. 5)

Further on, Baeker (2000b) in light of the commission's perspective concluded that the discourse on cultural policy proposed, resulted in a way that certain art forms and institutions controlled "the cultural policy agenda, over and above the interests and needs of newer cultural groups and an increasingly diverse public" (p. 187). The impetus for Canadian governments intervening in culture is one broadly based on a humanist paradigm. The

purpose being the transmission and protection of values, historically upheld, as underpinning its core foundation (Saint-Pierre & Gattinger, 2011).



Picture 2 – The Massey Commission (detail). From left to light:
Norman Mackenzie, president, University of British Columbia;
Vincent Massey, president of the Commission and chancellor, Toronto University.
Georges Henri Lévesque, professor of sociology, Université Laval.
Hilda Neatby, professor of history, University of Saskatchewan.
Source of image: Division des archives de l'Université Laval – P151/D/5/5,4
Fonds Georges-Henri Lévesque. Author : unknown

In the Canadian context, following the Massey Commission, the focus of cultural policies was on raising standards of artistic excellence and as Zuzanek (1987) indicates in her research, this is done in the hope of bringing Canadian artistic expression up to international standards (as cited in Baeker, 1999). It is thus from the years 1950-1960, that the idea of the democratization of culture became a key concept in cultural policies. It should be understood that this dominant idea in post-war Europe and Canada at the time, focused on the “*civilising value of the arts*” (Matarasso & Landry, 1999, p. 13) and refers to ‘high culture’ deemed worthy of being made accessible to as many people as possible through the initiative of the State (Baeker, 2002b; Matarasso & Landry, 1999).

In this context of the democratization of culture, until the late 1960s, Canada had no official national museum policy: “*By mid-century, many Canadian museums had been established and had grown into dynamic institutions, but this largely reflected the dedication of private citizens, rather than of governments at any level. In official thinking, there was no significant museum policy*” (Canada’s National Museums, 2013, p. 1). In 1968, a year after Canada’s celebrations of the Centennial of the Confederation, was the enactment of the *National Museums of Canada Act* creating the *National Museums of Canada Corporation* (NMC) with its headquarters in Ottawa. The NMC was a crown corporation empowered to run the four national museums: National Gallery of Canada, Museum of Man (Canadian Museum of Civilization now the Canadian Museum of History), Museum of Nature (now the Canadian Museum of Nature), Science and Technology Museum (now the Canadian Science and Technology Museum – in 2018, Canada counts two more national museums with the addition of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21. Each museum was given separate status but reported to a common board of trustees and a common secretariat, which assumed responsibility for implementing different programs (Carter,

2000). Cultural policy development is then dominated by a centralist approach and consequently the federal government is primarily concerned supporting national museums (Beaker, 1999).

This vision of cultural policies was not viewed possible in the pre-war period due to the geographical vastness of the Canadian territory. In the post-war, the outlook is quite the opposite. With the report of the Massey Commission, this situation is entrenched with the expansion of the role of the federal government and of the national museums. The Massey Commission considers that *“An adequate system of national museums, Canadian could make a striking contribution to the development of our national life. [...] We think it right to recommend strongly an adequate and coherent policy on the establishment and maintenance of national museums”* (RCNDALS, 1951, p. 319). However, the Massey Commission reported that the national and local museums were still in an *“regrettable situation”* (p. 99) and noted that there had been little improvement since the findings made in the 1932 study of the state of museums in Canada funded by the Carnegie

Corporation and produced by Miers and Markham. In the Commission’s position, the national museums had a central role in helping other smaller institutions across the country (Carter, 2000). The Commission considered museums as *“instruments of education”* (p. 6) and would expect for them to develop this important component.

In the 1950s, museums are considered as ‘instruments of education’.

During the years that followed the Massey Commission, museums were then considered, ‘instruments of education’. In the Commission’s Report, education was defined as *“[...] the progressive development of the individual in all his faculties, physical and intellectual, aesthetic and moral”* (p. 6). The Commission also suggested that education can be achieved through life experience, *“formal education in schools and universities, and general non-academic education through books, periodicals, radio, films, museums, art galleries, lectures and study groups”* (p. 6) which were all considered, ‘instruments of education’. Museums were then perceived as places to learn during schooling but also later, for lifelong learning. This was an important element for the Massey Commission as centralist cultural policies were to be put in place at the time by the federal government and in this context, museums were to play an important role in the promotion of Canadian national identity.

In Ontario, the *Report of the Royal Commission on Education* (1950) recommended that museums be partners with the schools so as to *“help children to increase their power to think, express views effectively and promote learning as a continuing process”* (Carter, 2000, p. 296). A few years later, in 1957, ten years after its creation, the Canadian Museums Association (CMA) hired an American museological team to investigate the Canadian museums and they confirmed, in their report, that museums across the country had *“common objectives of collecting and preserving objects and interpreting these collections to the public”* (Carter, 2000, p. 296).

We are still in a ‘top-down’ approach to ‘high culture’ but with the preoccupation to reach as many people as possible. Education in a museum context was to be considered pleasurable and a source of knowledge delivered differently from the schools (RCNDALS, 1951). Museums were instruments in the democratization of culture promoting accessibility to artistic excellence through guided tours, educational programs for children and adults and for the community in the form of study groups, lectures, film projections, television programs with a particular interest of interpreting the past through tangible objects (Carter, 2000).

Cultural policies objectives	Cultural democratization
Approach to culture	Top-down; Voice of authority
Museum approach	Object-centered; Collections for education and research; Focused on the past
Museum educational purposes	Popular education; Good taste; Information provider
Museum target audiences	Teachers and school children; Adults; Citizens of the whole community
Museum education	Strategies: School programs and continued development of outreach programs for schools; Interpretation and educational programs: public guided tours, lectures for adults and story-hours for children; film projections and television shows for children and adults 'Schooling'
Museum cultural action	None

Table 3 - Museums as instruments of education from 1950 to 1970

Historical period 1970 to 1980

As Zuzanek (1987) mentions, it is in the 1970s, that we can find evidence of the concept of cultural democracy on the part of the Canadian government (as cited in Baeker, 1999), a concept that emerged in European cultural policy debates at the same period in reaction to the idea of cultural democratization. Cultural democracy, contrary to the notion of cultural democratization, values the different forms of cultural expression and encourages the effective participation of communities (Baeker, 1999). It calls for expressions and practices outside of the mainstream canon (Baeker, 2002a; Matarasso & Landry, 1999). In other words, the democratization of culture is seen as a 'top-down' elitist homogenizing approach to culture while the concept of cultural democracy is seen as a 'bottom-up' approach (Baeker, 2002a; Matarasso & Landry, 1999). In 1972, Gerard Pelletier, then Secretary of State and the minister responsible for culture in the Trudeau government announced a National Museum Policy. The two main goals of the National Museum Policy were democratization and decentralization, aimed at increasing access to cultural activity for all tax payers and putting forth strategies to make collections available to all, even in the most remote regions of the country. But the concept of decentralization is not simply geographic as Baeker (1999) explains: *"UNESCO also calls for greater power to be placed in the hands of communities with shared identities based on gender, race, ethnicity, country of origin, religion and sexual orientation, among others"* (p. 15). The establishment of the National Museum Policy recognized the government as now the *"contemporary patron of the arts"* a role traditionally played by the church or wealthy patrons (Carter, 2000, p. 300). For Carter (2000): *"The intent of these innovative policies*

Democratization of culture and cultural democracy are emerging.

was, in part, to help enhance the educative role of museums in Ontario and across Canada. They enhanced the growth of the educational mandate of museums through the focused development of increased outreach activities” (p. 300). It is interesting to note that Pelletier, in his orientations, was strongly influenced at the time by European cultural policy, especially the views of French Minister of Culture André Malraux.

In parallel, in Ontario, the first government initiative to develop cultural guidelines came in 1974, under the government of Bill Davis, where the first ministry dedicated to culture, the Ministry of Culture and Recreation was created. Almost all organizations and programs in the field of culture are then transferred from the Ministry of Education to this new ministry. There is also a new understanding of culture that reflects relatively recent demographic and political changes in the province's history, including increasing ethno-cultural diversity and increased recognition of its francophone population (Gattinger, Saint-Pierre, Couture Gagnon, Autissier, Mulcahy & Thuriot, 2011). So, in recognition of the importance given to the Canadian multiculturalism (Official Policy on Multiculturalism, adopted by the federal government in 1971), the Ontario government was increasingly orienting its cultural policy on both the democratization of culture and on cultural democracy. On the one part, the Ontario government was gearing towards cultural policies that favour accessibility and equality and on the second part, inclusion and equity but always with a preoccupation to value excellence (Gattinger et al., 2011).

Concerning schools, during this period, museums were elaborating curriculum-related programming and working towards new educational strategies. These were gradually being transformed from passive educational activities to ones that encourage more participation on the part of visitors. Museums, progressively were working on incorporating, in their educational practice, educational theories, discovery learning and new methods of museum interpretation (Carter, 2000). More emphasis was given on the involvement of visitors and museums were realizing the potential of developing such activities for their publics. Instead of the traditional lectures or 'follow the guide' type tours, museums were engaging their visitors in the discovery of their collection.

Hence during the 1970s, innovative changes were taking place in Canadian and Ontario museums. While pursuing with the idea of bringing 'high culture' to all across the country, a special attention was given to reaching out to ethno-cultural groups in the context of the multiculturalism federal policies. This is a problem that museums have had to deal

'Cultural actions': when the museum needs to create a context where accessibility, equality, inclusion and equity are recognized values that are not fulfilled, actions must be taken.

with in the context of the federal and provincial policies of the day. Museums had to act to understand the needs of ethno-cultural groups in their communities in order to make the museum accessible to all. We consider that when the museum needs to create a context where accessibility, equality, inclusion and equity are recognized values that are not fulfilled, actions must be taken. In our article, we identify these actions as 'cultural actions' articulated by specific

museum educational strategies. It was then, during this historic period, that English Canada's museums explored the possibility of cultural actions within their educational mission but without, however, naming them as such.

Cultural policies objectives	Cultural democratization; Cultural democracy
Approach to culture	Top-down and bottom-up; Voice of authority shared partially with multiple viewpoints
Museum approach	Object-centred; Collections for education and research; Focused on the past and present
Museum educational purposes	Engagement discovery; Information provider
Museum target audiences	Adding to previously mentioned publics; Building on new publics; Ethno-cultural groups
Museum education	Strategies: Guided tours, activities and workshops for schools; Increased outreach programs for schools. More participatory guided tours and workshops for children and adults.
Museum cultural action	Cultural action awareness with the hope to eventually establish concrete strategies in the optic of accessibility, equality, inclusion and equity was a new preoccupation to be considered by museums

Table 4 - Museum education for all citizens from 1970 to 1980

Historical period 1980 to 1990

By the early 1980s, in the face of economic recession and despite the importance accorded to equity proclaimed in the report of the *Applebaum-Hébert Federal Cultural Policy Review* (1982), the first review of Canadian cultural institutions and federal cultural policy after the Massey Commission Report of 1951, “*cultural democracy had largely disappeared from the policy discourse*” (Baeker, 1999, p. 24). Baeker, in his research cites Zuzanek (1987) who identifies the now preoccupation of the federal government concerning cultural policies:

[...] *The focus of the discussion in the sphere of cultural policy has shifted from “participatory” activity to “managerial” strategies: from democratization of the arts audiences to the study of economic impacts: from self-expression and subcultures to “universal” cultural values and cultural heritage [...].* (as cited in Baeker, 1999, p. 25)

Post-war activities have reduced Europe’s influence in many spheres. Most notably its cultural avant-garde is beginning to be overshadowed by American economic expansion which included and transformed its cultural manifestations into the realm of cultural production. Begins a period in the 1980s which further instrumentalizes culture as an economic activity. We are also seeing the professionalization of the cultural sector with the establishment of laws on the status of artists, but it is interesting to note that these will only see the day in 2007 in Ontario.

In the 1980s, culture – and thus museums – becomes instrumentalized as an economic activity.

In 1986, Minister Marcel Masse initiated the Task Force on National Museums whose report issued by this committee recommended the dismantling of the National Museums of Canada Corporation and a new *National Museum Act* that was created in 1990. From this moment on, the four federal museums became autonomous agencies under the responsibility of the Ministry of Communications. The federal government's commitment to the museum policy was aiming to guide museums into the 21st century as centres for learning (Carter, 2000).

Within museum development in Canada, the 1981 passage of the *Community Museum Policy for Ontario*, is considered a marker moment. It followed from this policy that if provincial funding was to be allowed, criteria regarding museum standards, most notably quality, were conditions that had to be met. This policy stating higher standards prompted, in a sense, the formation of professionals in the field of museology (Baeker, 1999). To be effective, museums had to establish criteria of excellence in their ways of operating. This was an important event that propelled the development of new educational strategies grounded in practice and theory. Educators writing about their practice and research made way to the elaboration of special programs to reach “*audiences of all ages, interests and capabilities, and serve as a resource for the entire community*” (Carter, 2000, p. 303). It was the beginning of educational services connecting with different museum's

Educational services are tailor made for a wide range of audiences and their specific needs.

sectors to provide visitors with a wider range of experiences. This transformation was taking place in a difficult economic period in Canada, with the result that museums and their programs needed to perform well in order to survive. To do so, educational activities were tailored for different publics and their specific needs or interests. As schools

were concerned, teachers and museum educators would design specific activities that would correspond to the curriculum being taught, both putting their respective expertise to good use.

Museums, in order to be relevant institutions in the 21st century, had to apply cultural policies aimed at reaching a wider audience. For museums in English Canada, we could identify the late 1980s as a period of promoting ‘cultural action’ because institutions needed to act to achieve the goals of accessibility, equality, inclusion and equity. This period is also a balancing act for, if actions were needed, their realization were progressively subjected to the pressures of economic agendas.

Cultural policies objectives	Managerial; Economic impacts and democratization of culture
Approach to culture	Top-down and bottom-up; voice of authority shared with multiple viewpoints
Museum approach	Object and audience centered for education and research; Focused on the past, present and future
Museum educational purposes	Engagement discovery; Knowledge facilitator
Museum target audiences	Adding to previously mentioned publics; Building on new publics; Diversity
Museum education	Strategies: Guided tours, activities, workshops and outreach programs for schools; Development of specific programs for specific visitors' needs
Museum cultural action	Strategies: Early development of activities for communities in order to favour connections with different publics

Table 5 - Museum education towards the 21st century: from 1980 to 1990

Historical period from 1990 to present

In the nineties, museums were even more so experiencing pressure to adjust to rapid changes in the Canadian population. Demographics and questions regarding visibility of cultural diversity reflected a doxastic progression within mainstream media. As Carter (2000) reports in his research, since the 1990s museums have become progressively more than just institutions that conserves and collects objects. Museums are involved in “*education and community outreach*” (p. 310). They are “*defined less in terms of collections and more in terms of social positioning [...]*” (p. 310). As an example, in 1991 a task force on museums and first peoples, represented by the Canadian Museums Association and the Assembly of First Nations, laid the ground work for collaboration between both entities to favour relevant inclusion. Later, in 2005 Canada accepted the *Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions* adopted by UNESCO. In 2017, the new *Canadian Creative Canada Policy Framework* presented museums as institutions that play a:

crucial role in preserving, interpreting and promoting Canada’s culture and strengthening [...] democracy. [...] [Museums are viewed as engaging] Canadians and international audiences in civic dialogue and debate as well as sharing knowledge, while connecting audiences to content about their country and their region. [...] Museums are also digital content creators in their own right, by providing cross-platform access to virtual exhibitions, interactive tools and online programming. By promoting user-generated content alongside museum content, they help Canadians to be both critics and creators of digital culture. (Canadian Government, 2017, p. 23)

Canada's latest cultural policy, concerning museums, is in continuation of the past, encouraging Canadians to tell 'their stories' nationally and internationally while promoting a Canadian identity putting an emphasis on digital content. What is to be understood from Mélanie Joly, at that time Minister of Canadian Heritage, is that museums need to pursue their mandate while prioritizing the development of their digital contributions to the cultural field. The Canadian Museum Association commented that, overall, "*the policy for cultural industries does not significantly impact museums...*" (CMA, 2017).

Locally, in 2016, the Ontario government presented its first *Culture Strategy* as to give all Ontario's citizens the opportunity to experience arts and culture and to celebrate the province's diverse voices (Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (MTCS), 2016). The government's document titled *The Ontario Culture Strategy: Telling our stories, growing our economy*, illustrates adequately the content of the policy, which centered around six principles: "*Creativity and innovation; Quality of life and economic development; Diversity and inclusion; Respect for Indigenous peoples; collaboration and partnerships and Public value and accountability*" (p. 13). These are articulated around four goals:

- Goal 1: promote cultural engagement and inclusion;
- Goal 2: strengthen culture in communities;
- Goal 3: fuel the creative economy, and
- Goal 4: promote the value of the arts throughout government (MTCS, 2016).

As we can see, great emphasis is put on economy, diversity and inclusion and calls upon schools and museums to participate in the dissemination of culture.

For museums these new challenges have broaden their responsibilities as they now have to consider economic, social, environmental and cultural sustainability (MTCS, 2018) through their educational strategies. In this perspective, educational programmes must be designed to meet the needs of the greatest number of citizens and help develop a sense of belonging that will favour a long-term relationship with the museum. Douglas Worts and members of The Working Group on Museums and Sustainable Communities created a Critical Assessment Framework in order to help museums evaluate their cultural impact in communities. As a culture and sustainability specialist and former interpretive planner at the Art Gallery of Ontario, he personally hopes "*that museums increasingly will maximize their potential to be culturally relevant by being much more responsive to the needs and realities of their communities and mindful of the impact (or lack of impact) that their work has on those communities*" (Worts, 2006, p. 47).

In times of change, where museums wish to be active participants in the life of their communities with all the economic, social and environmental responsibilities that this entails, the CMA (2016) is calling for new museum policy as it was promised in 2006 by the federal government.

In the last decade, visitors' experiences are more than ever paramount to museums.

The most important is the visitors' experience. The museum changes from a provider into a facilitator of knowledge.

The museum's role is gradually changing from a provider to a facilitator of knowledge. Besides the guided tours and activities such as workshops for schools, museums are now prompted to create educational programs tailored for specific needs and in collaboration with targeted publics using all the technological tools available and in a multi-disciplinary fashion. Examples of these new educational

programs can be seen at the National Gallery of Canada (NGC) with the *SPARK!* tours tailored for individuals living with dementia and their caregivers and done in collaboration

with the Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County. Talking about technology, we can give as an example the Distance Learning program at the NGC which offers students from across Canada free webinars. In light of such programs, museums are beginning to act out by adapting their internal operations to better reflect and embody change. These programs are part of the continuation of the development of museum education where the democratization of culture is at the forefront of the proposed strategies. But besides those educational strategies, we can find others that seem to take into account, not only the democratization of culture but also cultural democracy in the formulation of their activities and go beyond the traditional conceptions of museum education. As an example, we can make reference to ROM Youth Cabinet (YC):

It is a culturally diverse and integrated group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth between the ages of 16-20 years old from Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area. The YC is facilitated by an Indigenous young professional, and uses an Indigenous framework and a for-youth-by-youth philosophy to provide members with the tools they need to build leadership skills, explore their community, and tell their stories. Each year, members collaborate on a culminating youth-centred and ROM-focused project that cultivates the members' communication, leadership, and technical skills". (ROM, 2018)

These educational strategies seem to correspond to a possible English Canadian vision of cultural action as they were created in order to respond to citizens' needs modeled around the concepts of the democratization of culture and of cultural democracy. We believe that cultural action take form when seeking the pulse of specific communities and getting citizens involved in the process, similarly as what was proposed by Worts (2006). Concretely, cultural action should lead to shared responsibilities between museum actors and community groups in matters of planning exhibitions, overseeing collections (Lammers & Harvey, 2015) and putting in place educational strategies responding to cultural action.

Cultural policies objectives	In continuation with 1980-1990; Re-emergence of cultural democracy
Approach to culture	Top-down and bottom-up; voice of authority shared with multiple viewpoints; Sustainability
Museum approach	Collection and audience focused; Gearing towards developing community participants
Museum educational purposes	Knowledge facilitator, Gearing towards social responsibility and civic engagement
Museum target audiences	Adding to previously mentioned publics; Building on new publics; Diversity and equity
Museum education	Strategies: Guided tours, activities, workshops and outreach programs for schools; Multi-disciplinary; using all possible technological tools available
Museum cultural action	Strategies: Development of specific programs tailored for specific needs in collaboration with targeted publics of different communities

Table 6 - Museum education and cultural diversity: from 1990 to present

Conclusion: cultural action in English Canada's museums

As shown in this historical overview, cultural policies have framed the development of museum education throughout different periods up to this day. We have seen museum's educational mission being centred first on 'schooling' to progressively broaden up through their development strategies aimed not only at schools but also at a larger public. From basic educational programs (guided and unguided visits, outreach programs for schools, lesson plans for teachers and training session including recent developments of web-based instructions), the museum's offer has evolved to include activities tailored to different audiences (guided visits, classes and workshops, lectures, demonstrations, artistic presentations, films projections, audio and recently multi-media tours and digital content). These different offers illustrate the evolution of museum education over time.

From our analysis, museums in English Canada began in the late 1980s to develop the concept of 'cultural action' embedded in 'museum education programs' but did not feel the need to create a particular category as actions only followed the recommendations made by cultural policies. During this period, we can clearly identify a shift in educational strategies relating to programs to be implemented beyond schools and the general public but specifically in response to specific cultural needs that were not previously being considered. Museums were increasingly feeling pressure to adjust rapidly to changes in the Canadian population. Demographics and questions regarding visibility of cultural diversity was at the forefront of political discourse. This is to say that activities created in cooperation with local ethno-cultural groups and the First peoples became a necessity. The creation of partnerships between museums and diverse communities was and is still to this day considered a necessity to accomplish. Recently, in the context of Ontario's new cultural strategy, museums are urged to change to become community spaces for public education and to establish educational strategies so as to promote knowledge-sharing with diverse communities through constant dialogue.

We suggest that English Canada's museums' cultural action is presently framed around five key ideas, which are: **accessibility, equality, inclusion, equity and sustainability** (economic, social and environmental). These key ideas appear to be at the core of the factors used in our analysis.

The concept of cultural action is likely to surface in English Canada's museums when:

- *the cultural policies objectives* would be centered around the democratization of culture and cultural democracy in a specific economic context;
- *the approach to culture* would be considered to be both top-down and bottom-up with the museum's voice being one of authority but shared with multiple viewpoints coming from communities and gearing towards sustainability in order to be relevant in society;
- *the museum approach* would be built around the collection and audiences, always engaged towards developing community participants;
- *the museum educational purposes* would be framed around the museum being a knowledge facilitator and being socially responsible and conscious of its civic role;
- *the museum target audiences* would continue to be built towards the inclusion of new publics to achieve diversity and equity.

This is to say that the concept-specific features of cultural action in English Canada's museums could be summarized as:

All the actions taken by museums in an educational perspective to fulfill cultural public needs outside the school system. The particularities that best define the concept, relates to the diversity of educational strategies that could be put in place to respond efficiently to the identified cultural needs of different communities at a given time and place.

In conclusion, through our analysis, we view the concept of cultural action in the context of English Canada's museums as one that calls for a constant dialogue between the institution and communities, that is, to support everyone's implications and break away from the two-tier cultural system of the past. Cultural action corresponds to specific tailored programs created by museums as solutions to identified needs or problems. In recent years, the educational strategies framed by the concept of cultural action are targeted towards new publics from a point of view of equity and for building a sustainable museum's educational mission, one that is relevant to today's society. Nevertheless, one can only wonder if it would not be more efficient to categorize the different educational strategies in order to better inform the professionals working in this field on the concepts behind their educational activities. This could foster an open discussion on the part of professionals that could provoke outbreaks of innovative educational strategies in the scope of better accomplishing their educational objectives.

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Summary

In order to identify the concept-specific features of cultural action in English Canada's museums, our strategy is to take a historical perspective and examine museum's educational practices beginning in the 1840s to the present day, along with the cultural policies put in place by the federal and provincial (Ontario) governments. Since the term 'cultural action' is rarely used in Canadian English museum literature it follows that in order to find if this concept resonates or not (in English Canada), we have to start with a definition of each word:

Cultural: *"relating to the habits, traditions, and beliefs of a society also relating to art"* (Cambridge Dictionary, 2018).

Action: *"the process of doing something, especially when dealing with a problem or difficulty"* (Cambridge Dictionary, 2018).

By unifying the definition of the two terms, as a concept, our analyses circumscribe the end of the 1980s as the beginning of the development of cultural action. This concept, integrated in museum education, was in response to the cultural policies of the time. During this period, we can clearly identify a shift in educational strategies relating to programs to be implemented beyond schools and the general publics but specifically in response to changes in the Canadian population. Demographics and questions regarding visibility of cultural diversity was at the forefront of political discourse.

We suggest that English Canada's museums' cultural action is presently framed around five key ideas, that is: accessibility, equality, inclusion, equity and sustainability (economic, social and environmental). These key ideas are the factors used in our analyses.

The concept of cultural action is likely to surface in English Canada's museums when:

- *the cultural policies objectives would be centered around the democratization of culture and cultural democracy in a specific economic context;*
- *the approach to culture would be considered to be both top-down and bottom-up with the museum's voice being one of authority but shared with multiple viewpoints coming from communities and gearing towards sustainability in order to be relevant in society;*
- *the museum approach would be built around the collection and audiences, always engaged towards developing community participants;*
- *the museum educational purposes would be framed around the museum being a knowledge facilitator and being socially responsible and conscious of its civic role;*
- *the museum target audiences would continue to be built towards the inclusion of new publics to achieve diversity and equity.*

From our analyses, it seems that the concept of cultural action, in English Canada's museums, corresponds to those specific tailored programs created by museums as solutions to those identified needs or problems. In recent years, the educational strategies framed by the concept of cultural action are targeted towards new publics from a point of view of equity and for building a sustainable museum's educational mission, one that is relevant to today's society.

Keywords: museums, cultural action, cultural policies, museum education, English Canada

Education, cultural action, mediation. Three concepts, three groups of actors, three silos in the Quebec landscape

Colette Dufresne-Tassé

This article, like some others in this issue of *ICOM Education*, responds to the wish of the International Committee for Education and Cultural Action (CECA) of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) to study the texts published to date on cultural action in each of the three official languages of ICOM. Given the abundance of publications in French, the task had to be divided, and only Quebec publications will be presented here, i.e. those written by Quebecers on the Quebec situation.

Cultural action and its texts

The texts surveyed offer a broad vision of cultural action, which encompasses cultural policies, cultural development, democratisation and cultural democracy, as well as mediation or animation (Midy, 2002; Paquin, 2015). These numerous texts have been classified into three categories, presented in turn below:

1. the State cultural policies;
2. the museum directors' position and the data of researchers who scrutinize museum production;
3. cultural action according to a group of specialists and professionals in cultural mediation.

A separate treatment of each category is justified, since curiously enough, none of them establishes a relationship with the discourse of the others; hence the impression of silos isolated from each other. Another introductory remark: except for specialists in cultural mediation, definitions are rather sparse, so that one sometimes has to wait to obtain them. Fortunately, the definitions of these specialists are consistent with the positions taken by the other two sets of actors.

1. State cultural policies: three successive versions 1978, 1992, 2017

For Quebecers who write about cultural action, it stems from the 1948 *Universal Charter of Human Rights*, specifically the section on the right to culture (Midy, 2002). Its beginnings are nebulous: should we place them in the 1960s or the 1970s? One is spontaneously tempted to locate them at the same time as the creation of a Ministry of Cultural Affairs (1961). But Minister Lapalme, who was heading the new ministry, resigns because he feels condemned to inaction for lack of funds. However, at the same time, a

series of studies and reports are published that, some fifteen years later, would provide Minister Laurin with the information necessary for the elaboration of the first Quebec policy of cultural action and development. Published in 1978, this policy will be followed by two others, one made public in 1992, the other in 2017.

Spirit of cultural development-action policies

To understand the spirit of the policies and the meaning attributed to the expression "cultural action", it is important to remember that Quebec is a vast but sparsely populated territory, with a dozen or so cities, including Quebec City and Montreal, these cities playing the role of economic and cultural centres. In the 1960s, there were few museums and theatres. Except in the universities and among a few regional elites, cultural life in the sense of "high culture" was not very developed. So everything had to be done, and it is realistic to use the expression "cultural development" whenever one thinks of "cultural action". However, the term continues to be used, even in 1992 and 2017, when the context has changed. Why? The main reason seems to be the Quebec linguistic situation. Eight million people live there, most of whom speak French in an America where 28 million Canadians and 325 million Americans speak mostly English. Despite their dynamism, Francophones have far fewer resources and means than the 350 million or so Anglophones. One must therefore be vigilant and make progress, so that cultural action always takes the form of cultural development, even after major improvements.

However, due to space constraints, only the most salient features and their evolution will be recalled, followed by a short analysis.

First policy (1978)

In his text entitled *La politique du développement culturel*, Minister Camille Laurin examines the notion of culture and its importance, considers the diversity of social groups that inhabit Quebec, and then establishes the relationship between culture on the one hand and economy, education, social and regional development on the other.

The notion of culture and its importance

The notion of culture adopted by the Minister constitutes the very foundation of his policy and will be taken up as such in the two following ones. It can therefore be considered as the basis of the State's cultural development action, a basis that would have lasted for some forty years.

For Laurin, culture is

A set of ways of living that meet the main needs of a community. A community communicates its imprint on what makes up its life, whether it be its houses, the nuances of its language, the subtlety of its laws and jurisprudence, the genius of its painting or its moral or religious discourse... Cultures are thus characterised by objects, institutions, productions... (1978, p. 43).

Culture is doubly important: on the one hand, it is an asset that gives "full meaning to the life of local men and women [...] the means to live better and to develop according to their tastes and talents" (1978, p. 4). On the other hand, culture is necessary for Quebec to "find its own model of development, its own mix of old and new cultural elements, through which it will recognize itself as being itself" (1978, p. 5).



Illustration 1 - Camille Laurin, Montreal
 Minister of State of Cultural Development in Quebec from 1977 to 1980 & Minister of Education
 from 1980 to 1984.
 Sculptor: Léonard Simard,
 Foto: Jean Gagnon, fuente : Wikimedia Commons

Guiding principles

The policy itself is organised around the following seven principles:

1. Cultural development aims to preserve the French language, support the arts and letters, artists and creators, and protect the heritage. It affects the world of education and work as well as leisure and consumption.
2. Every citizen, regardless of the region in which he or she lives, must have access to all cultural goods and appropriate them in order to develop and become a creator.
3. On the other hand, every citizen must contribute to the development of a living culture.
4. Schools and libraries should be agents of development wherever they are located. Cultural, economic, social and regional development must be dynamically coordinated, as social development is highly dependent on economic development and cannot be satisfactory without adequate cultural development.
6. Research must provide the data necessary for the planning and development of programmes that facilitate access to and production of culture for all. It should also allow for the harmonisation of these programmes with the social and economic development ones.
7. International relations must foster the exchange of expertise, the sharing of successful experiences, and the promotion of the Quebec cultural production abroad.

Summary

In short, Quebec's first cultural policy of action and development is strongly imbued with a humanist philosophy and pursues an intense quest for identity. Finally, without naming them, it emphasizes the democratisation of culture and the means of promoting it, without

however neglecting what is known today as cultural democracy. It is therefore a policy of cultural action, characterized by an important developmental component.

Second policy (1992)

In the second policy entitled *La politique culturelle du Québec. Notre culture, Notre avenir*, culture must continue to be based on education and must have a profound impact on workplaces, leisure and consumption. And, as before, it encompasses the arts, literature and heritage. But in 1992, Minister Liza Frulla-Hébert was concerned about the omnipresence of the Anglo-Saxon production in Quebec, while local creation was having difficulty breaking through abroad. This concern is reflected in the three axes of her policy: 1) to affirm Quebec's cultural identity; 2) to support the arts and creators; and 3) to ensure access and participation of citizens in cultural life.

Policy areas and their content

1) Affirming Quebec's cultural identity involves :

- a. The reinforcement of French language teaching in schools as well as the introduction of a cultural component in history and philosophy courses, the use of French in everyday life, at work and by scientists;
- b. The enhancement of cultural heritage, especially through a network of libraries and museums, the latter being the main guardians and the most powerful disseminators of heritage to all;
- c. Openness to the international French-language production as a complement to the Quebec production and as a counterweight to the American production present everywhere in Quebec;
- d. The dissemination of Quebec productions in return for openness to foreign French-language productions and as a means of ensuring Quebec's influence abroad.

2) Supporting creators and creation in all its forms through:

- a. Improving the living conditions of creators;
- b. The strengthening of organisations that bring together creators, artists and technicians in the performing, literary, visual or interdisciplinary arts;
- c. Supporting cultural industries in the book, record, entertainment and craft sectors.

3) Helping the citizens access and participation to cultural life through :

- a. The decentralisation of the State interventions through partnership with municipalities;
- b. The increased accessibility of the regions to the productions of the large cities, and conversely, a specific contribution of each region to the artistic life of Quebec as a whole;
- c. The participation of everyone in artistic or cultural activities, such as amateur theatre, choral singing or crafts;
- d. The volunteering in arts and cultural organisations and training of volunteers to improve the effectiveness of their work.

Summary

What we have just read is both similar to and different from what has been seen previously. As in the previous policy, there is a marked concern to preserve the French language, but in 1992 it acquired a new role. It was much more than a vehicle for thought or an

instrument of daily communication; it is now the pivot of reciprocal exchanges with the countries of the Francophonie. As a result, Quebec finds itself successfully entering the international arena, and cultural action extending beyond the territory for which the policy was designed.

As before, the dynamism of cultural life is largely based on the activity of artists and creators. However, two new actors are now associated with them: cultural organisations and industries.

Just as in the 1978 policy, the so-called cultural democratisation is at the heart of the 1992 policy. However, a new agent has appeared, a network of museums considered not only as guardians of the heritage, but also as its first and most powerful disseminator.

Moreover, thanks to the support of partnership agreements signed with municipalities¹, just like individuals, the regions have gone from being mere beneficiaries to producers of culture, and they are invited to enrich both popular and "high culture". In other words, cultural democracy has gained ground.

On balance, while the basis of the 1992 policy is the same as that of the 1978 policy, its proposals are more detailed and ambitious.

Third Policy (2017)

At the time of writing, a draft policy entitled *Partout la culture. Politique québécoise de la culture* was available rather than the text adopted by the Conseil des ministres. However, like previous policies, this draft contains a position on culture and its importance, as well as the orientation of the policy, detailed according to several axes. This orientation is deeply marked by Minister Luc Fortin's interest in the economic profitability of culture.

The axes of the policy and their clarification

The Minister articulates his policy according to the following four axes: 1) promoting individual and collective fulfilment; 2) creating an environment favourable to creation as well as to cultural production and dissemination of both; 3) energising the relationship between culture and territory; 4) using culture and communications as factors of economic development.

- 1) Promoting individual and collective development includes the following sub-objectives:
 - a. Intensifying the use of French as a language of daily use and the francization of immigrants;
 - b. Emphasising the importance of culture in schools, especially in programmes for young children and adults;
 - c. Supporting cultural interventions by agents that facilitate social inclusion and intergenerational dialogue;
 - d. Increasing the contribution of voluntary work and sponsorship to cultural development.
- 2) Creating an environment favourable to cultural creation and production; intensifying their dissemination by the following means
 - a. Supporting the diversification of high quality artistic or cultural production;

¹ In 2011, these agreements will involve 154 municipalities representing over 85% of the population of Quebec. They will allow them to go beyond their traditional areas of intervention (libraries and heritage) and to use culture as a factor in economic and social development (Grandmont, 2004, 2011; Lafortune, 2012).

- b. Facilitating Aboriginal² and Anglophone artistic and cultural expression and dissemination; highlighting their contribution to the vitality of Quebec culture;
 - c. Improving the socio-economic status and training of artists and cultural workers;
 - d. Increasing Quebec's influence in international organizations;
 - e. Insisting on the inclusion of cultural exceptions in international trade agreements;
 - f. Maintaining the efforts that have made Quebec a leader in multimedia, video games, artificial intelligence and the integration of culture in sustainable development.
- 3) Boosting the culture-territory relationship by doing the following:
- a. Establishing quality cultural institutions in each region;
 - b. Enhancing the heritage of each region because it contributes to the collective memory, to the creation of businesses and specialised jobs, but also because it is an important tourist attraction;
 - c. Innovating in the conservation and enhancement of regional heritage, which means encouraging new partnerships and uses.
- 4) Using culture and communications as a factor in economic development in the following ways:
- a. Creating the conditions for the development of cultural entrepreneurship ;
 - b. Promoting the sharing of knowledge and expertise between cultural organisations;
 - c. Encouraging collaboration between cultural enterprises and the business or research community;
 - d. Supporting the efforts to promote Quebec cultural production on the international market.

Analysis

This third policy is faithful to many of the orientations of the first two, sometimes reinforcing them, sometimes weakening their scope.

Reinforcement

The link between culture and the school system is not only reaffirmed, it is extended. Indeed, the school, which supports culture for schoolchildren, also becomes a support for culture for young children and adults.

Whereas previously, cultural groups living in Quebec were not differentiated, and were simply referred to as cultural diversity, Aboriginal people and Anglophones are now singled out for special attention.

While in 1978 and 1992 one was fighting for the internationalisation of Quebec's political role and its cultural production, in 2017 this internationalisation seems to be sufficiently advanced for the Minister to just supporting it.

Weakening

Museums that were previously considered privileged institutions for the conservation and dissemination of heritage are now being ignored in favour of "innovative means".

The conception of culture, its importance, the major role of artists and creators persist, as does the attachment to the French language, democratisation and cultural democracy. But new actors, cultural organisations and industries, are overshadowing them in the concerns of the State because of their proven or hoped-for economic profitability.

² The term Aboriginal refers to the first Amerindian and Inuit occupants of the Quebec territory (Arseneault and Desbiens, 2015).

While previous policies emphasized the originality of Quebec production, the third policy stresses the importance of its quality. Does the Minister want to favour "high culture" or simply better craftsmanship? He does not specify.

Issues arising from Quebec's cultural development policies

The analysis of the three policies highlights sets of constants and changes that raise the following question. Are the phenomena identified specific to Quebec or are they found in certain other countries, or even, with a few details, in all of them? And if trends are emerging, do they result from the action of similar forces present in the countries themselves or from the power of the current globalisation movement?

Moreover, the very structure of Quebec's policies also raises multiple questions, the most obvious seeming to be these:

- a. Do all cultural policies tend to move from identifying fundamental values and principles to drafting measures, and do these measures tend to be more and more numerous and precise?
- b. Does all state cultural policy have a major developmental component?
- c. How can we explain the recent sidelining of museums as institutions for the conservation and dissemination of heritage? Is this sidelining found in other countries? Is it due to the desire to preserve new types of heritage that museums are not qualified to preserve, or simply to ignoring the museum intervention potential?
- d. Is the decrease in heritage conservation efforts parallel with an increasing support of the contemporary artistic production? Is this change in investment linked to the economic benefits generated by the current production?
- e. Does cultural action always aim to go beyond the territory of one country? If so, where? The rest of the world or only neighbouring countries?
- f. What is the diplomatic function of cultural action? Does this function play an important role in determining the general orientations of a country's cultural policy?

2. The position of museum directors and data from researchers

The texts found on cultural action as practised by museums are produced exclusively by institution directors or by researchers who empirically study the offerings of some Quebec 400 institutions³. These texts are few in number (Lemay-Perreault and Paquin, 2017; Paquin and Lemay-Perreault, 2017), but they are clear and eloquent. They trace the beginnings and evolution of cultural action in the museum environment, and then provide access to the positions of institution directors and researchers.

The beginnings and evolution of cultural action in museums

In the museum world, one only begin to talk about cultural action around 1970 (Allard, Naurais and Cadieux, 2000; Côté, Chagnon, Macias-Valadez and Fourcade, 2016), and its importance grows in parallel with that of education in museums (Allard, Naurais and Cadieux, 2000), more specifically, with the proportion of museums that have an education department⁴ (Allard, Naurais and Cadieux, 2000; Forest, 2008).

³ In 2016, the Institut de la statistique du Québec counted 417 museums.

Cultural action according to the directors of the institutions

Museum directors do not define cultural action, because they equate it entirely with museum education. As one will see later, researchers do.

Education-cultural-action, an all-embracing concept

Education-cultural-action provides the keys to access the beautiful, the good and the true, whatever they may be, and to finding satisfaction in them. More precisely, it offers the knowledge necessary to understand the world, its history, its aspirations, its discoveries, but also its conflicts, and the work of the creators who transform it. It enables us to enjoy all that. In so doing, education fosters intellectual autonomy, rigorous thinking, reflection and, more broadly, the development and fulfilment of the individual, who is thus able to create in turn and to play a full role as a citizen in a complex society (Arpin, 2002).

Requirements

In order to fulfil its educational function properly, the museum must act as a learning institution that analyses, dissects and distinguishes the essential in the dizzying noise of information that has been accumulating for centuries. It can only do this by collaborating with other cultural or educational actors. With them, it participates in the great enterprise of elaborating and disseminating knowledge that began in prehistory (Museums of Civilization, 2013). The enterprise is immense, and its success is subject to two conditions: first, a flawless coherence between collection and exhibition, between knowledge and means of dissemination. Secondly, there must be almost constant innovation in order to adapt accurate and rigorous information to the characteristics of the region in which the museum is located; more specifically, to adjust this information to all the audiences served in the diversity of their origins, their legitimate expectations, their modes of access to knowledge and their mediation needs, because any visit to the museum must be a total and optimal experience in which knowledge, reflection and enchantment overlap (Musées de la civilisation, 2013).



The Musée de la Civilisation, Quebec City,
and its ephemeral vegetable garden (2008)
Photographer: Stéphanie Wintzerith

⁴ Most education services were established between 1970 and 1992.

Critical analysis

A brief review of the preceding paragraphs is convincing: for Quebec museum directors, education encompasses cultural action and its underlying concepts of democratization, cultural democracy and mediation to such an extent that education is in fact education-cultural-action. This often-forgotten feature of museum education is nevertheless crucial. It means that museum directors take the cultural component seriously, that is, the free, non-compulsory component of the educational function of society. And it implies that they leave to the school (and to the university) the dissemination and appropriation of the knowledge and know-how that are compulsory because they are absolutely necessary for the proper functioning of the citizen in his society and for the technician from whom quality specialised services are expected (mechanics, pastry cooks, notaries, etc.). It goes without saying that this knowledge and know-how must be acquired and retained. School (and university) is therefore the place par excellence for learning.

The situation is quite different in the museum, for the knowledge discovered there may never be used; indeed, it is usually too vague. As it is, it simply settles somewhere in the visitor's personal universe, and when, by a happy chance, it becomes clearer, it enriches that universe and contributes to what is known as the visitor's psychological development. In the museum, therefore, learning is only secondary. It is more a matter of discovery and play in the strongest sense of the term.

What does it mean to play with objects? It means treating them for the intellectual and/or emotional benefit and pleasure they provide:

- looking at objects, considering them, exploring them;
- finding pleasure in it;
- using them to imagine ancient or exotic worlds, and living in them for as long as a visit lasts;
- starting with them to understand, or more precisely, to cobble together all kinds of relationships and explain what is seen or imagined;
- reflecting, i.e. entering one's own world, letting it unfold, considering its difficult as well as its pleasant aspects;
- allowing oneself to be immersed in the activity and in the satisfaction or joy that comes from it.

In short, by choosing a museum education that is part of the free and cultural dimension of the society's educational function, Quebec Museum directors are moving considerably away from the museum education-learning model favoured in many Western institutions.

Cultural action according to researchers

Researchers interested in cultural action investigate the museum offer intended for the entire Quebec population. More specifically, they attempt to distinguish the cultural offer from the educational offer of these institutions in order to analyse it and provide an accurate picture.

A problematic definition

In order to carry out their surveys, the researchers subscribe to the following definition of cultural action: activities which, while maintaining a link with the institution's mission, are

not linked to its exhibitions or are not part of its regular programmes (Allard, Naurais and Cadieux, 2000; Forest, 2008). They consider lectures, colloquia, concerts and films as such, but when confronting these activities with their definition, they realise that the latter is unacceptable, as it does not allow a distinction to be made between cultural and educational activities (Allard, Naurais and Cadieux, 2000; Côté, Chagnon, Macias-Valadez and Fourcade, 2016). Indeed, a lecture can be part of a cycle devoted to an artistic movement, or it can directly explore the subject of an exhibition; a film can be part of a set of projections with no direct connection to an exhibition or, on the contrary, be introduced between two parts of the exhibition to explore a subject that objects would not succeed in presenting convincingly. The type of activity therefore does not determine whether it is cultural or educational.

In search of an alternative definition

As we have seen above, learning in the museum is usually incidental and secondary. However, sometimes the museum takes the same position as the school and aims directly at learning for its visitors. Two typical cases are common: 1) the museum collaborates with the school, so that its proposals are focused on specific learning; 2) it consciously offers key knowledge because it aims to provide access to a body of specialised knowledge, or it tries to increase the skills of its visitors to deal with the heritage it possesses so that they can appropriate it with greater profit and pleasure.

Consequently, on the one side, one could call cultural action those museum interventions (exhibitions, programmes, websites, etc.) whose immediate aim is to produce as much meaning as possible and to contribute to the psychological development of the visitor, with learning remaining secondary and incidental. On the other side, one could call educational the interventions directly focused on learning. It would therefore be the intention, the aim, or if one prefers, the attitude adopted by the museum towards learning, which would determine whether there is cultural or educational action, the means itself giving rise to one or the other.

3. Cultural action according to a group of academic specialists and cultural mediation professionals

In Quebec, cultural mediation is a profession, a real specialty that has its own university training programs and publications. These publications are numerous⁵ and invaluable, as they provide a clear understanding of how cultural action is structured, as well as definitions that were previously missing and, of course, abundant and detailed information on mediation itself.

Cultural action and its structuring

Cultural action encompasses cultural policies, cultural development, democratisation and cultural democracy, as well as mediation, also called cultural animation (Midy, 2002). This set of concepts are articulated as follows:

⁵ Ten Cahiers, published between 2002 and 2011, as well as a collection of texts, published in 2012; see their titles among the references inserted at the end of this text.

The State, through its cultural policies, [is] the source [of cultural action and offers] resources. Cultural development is its goal and purpose, cultural democratisation and democracy are its main modalities [...], while animation (or mediation) is its pedagogy and methodology. (Midy, 2002, p. 77-78).

Some definitions

In their texts, politicians and museum directors use the words democratization and cultural democracy, as well as mediation, without defining them. Fortunately, this gap is filled here in a manner consistent with what was said so far. These definitions read as follows.

Cultural democratisation is the sharing of 'learned', 'cultivated' or, if one prefers, 'high' culture with the greatest number of 'excluded' people (Midy, 2002). More precisely, *"it is the access of the greatest possible number to legitimate artistic works and the transmission of aesthetic values, as defined by a certain history of art."* (Lafortune, 2012, p. XI)

Cultural democracy, on the other hand, *"is the speaking out, the participation, the engagement in a creative process."* (Lafortune, 2012, p. 13) In other words, it is *"the enhancement of works and ways of life linked to the expression of popular cultures that are not only traditional, but mixed, emerging, and stemming from urban cosmopolitanism, sometimes in opposition to the dominant cultural models"*. (Lafortune, 2012, p. 13)

The multiple roles of cultural action

By clarifying the articulation of the notions encompassed in cultural action and their meaning, academic specialists in cultural mediation make it possible to grasp its complexity, the variety of its effects and, consequently, its roles. The following seven appear to be the most common (Midy, 2002; Lafortune, 2012):

1. Cultural action as cultural development (this is the position taken in the cultural policies seen above);
2. Cultural action as political action when it promotes, for example, regional development or urban revitalisation;
3. Cultural action as social action, when it leads, among other things, to the improvement of the situation of disadvantaged groups;
4. Cultural action as educational action if it leads to the development and fulfilment of people (this is explained in the texts of museum directors);
5. Cultural action as entertainment, whenever it serves only to amuse; this is often the aim of the production of cultural industries;
6. Cultural action as a source of economic development (the third cultural policy attaches great importance to this role);
7. Cultural action as an instrument of diplomacy and international intervention, e.g. promotion of national cultural production abroad.

And, of course, cultural action can play many roles at the same time.

Cultural mediation

Cultural mediation specialists do not limit themselves to the previous clarification exercise. In fact, for them, it is only a prerequisite for understanding mediation. They examine the main political, social and cultural phenomena in which professionals intervene, in particular: the diversity of Quebec regions, community movements, immigration, tourism or engaged, social and community art. From all this production, given the limited space allotted to this text, one will retain only : a definition of mediation, the main mediators intervention contexts, the general situation of mediation in Quebec, and finally, the questions and fears identified by the professionals and specialists.

Cultural mediation, a definition

Mediation is "*a planned intervention aimed at developing the expressive dimension of culture; on the one hand, by enhancing cultural competencies and participation and, on the other hand, by stimulating creativity in different environments: institutional, communitarian, artistic, mediatic of leisure and culture*" (Lafortune, 2007, p. 24).

Different modalities of intervention and aspirations

Specialists distinguish between two modalities of intervention depending on whether the work is carried out in cultural institutions or local communities.

In institutions, mediators are involved in the creation of *conditions for a fruitful encounter between the world of artistic creation and the sensitivity of the public. Through dissemination, information and publishing work [...], cultural mediators carry out tasks aimed at bringing audiences closer, learning, and developing community links* (Lafortune 2012, p. 43).

In local communities,

mediators [...] aim to integrate the voice of citizens into artistic approaches developed for making them actors in cultural development, or at least in their own lives. In relation to communities, companies and socio-cultural institutions (schools, hospitals, prisons, etc.), they develop programmes based on participatory events. [When it comes to] socioculturally excluded populations, they strive to integrate elements of popular culture into cultural prescription approaches or to transform the public into partners (Lafortune 2012, p. 43-44).

The general context of the practice of cultural mediation

After examining the Franco-French literature on cultural mediation and the situation he can observe here, Bélanger (p. 27) characterizes the Quebec context as follows:

In Quebec, mediation is being thought of, financed and practised in a situation of cultural decentralisation, of urban and regional revitalisation which is increasingly based on culture; it is developing in the context of a marked interest in the problems of social inclusion [...] [This] places cultural mediation at the heart of several types of development and problem-solving.

Questions and fears⁶

The main question retained by cultural mediators concerns the effects of their interventions. They wonder how to identify them, i.e. what means to create for avoiding

⁶ This very limited account is based on a text by Lafortune (2012). For a detailed discussion, see that text.

the trap of a purely accounting evaluation and to precisely identify all the effects of an intervention or a series of them.

Firstly, mediators believe that they can divert artistic creation from the pursuit of its own values and thus cause the abandonment or oblivion of difficult works that are the result of patient and thorough research. On the other hand, mediation also risks promoting works of poor value. Finally, by "delegitimising" the works presented by institutions, mediators risk weakening their image and their efforts to democratise culture.

Secondly, mediators consider that they may contribute to the adoption by the working classes of mass culture productions, which are dominated, as we know, by strongly mercantile interests. They also fear that their interventions with the upper economic categories without advanced cultural training may produce the same perverse effect, i.e. transforming these affluent people into privileged clients of the cultural industries.

Perspectives

One has just been presented with three positions on cultural action, three positions with no links between them, three silos well isolated from each other.

Fears and questions

The fears of perverse effects expressed by mediation specialists should be remembered, as well as the questions that arose in the course of the analyses presented above. Both remind us how many subtleties and pitfalls of cultural action are still unknown and how many aspects should be investigated. Other important contributions of the texts consulted include the articulation of the series of concepts that structure this universe, the potential roles of cultural action, and a definition of the latter that is better suited to what is done in museums than the definitions used until now.

Structuring the field of cultural action

Paraphrasing Midy's text (2002), the field of cultural action could be articulated as follows: the aim of this action is cultural development. Within a country, the State makes its conception of development explicit through its cultural policy. It achieves its objectives by carrying out or commissioning democratisation or cultural democracy interventions carried out by means of mediation techniques with groups or individuals.

The roles of cultural action

The roles attributed to cultural action or, equivalently, the expectations placed on its interventions, are many and varied: individual development or fulfilment, regional development or urban revitalisation, improvement of the situation of socially disadvantaged groups, entertainment, economic development, cultural diplomacy and

⁷ Due to the lack of time to study them, two types of texts were neglected: doctoral theses registered in the portal of the INRS (Institut national de la recherche scientifique) and the cultural policy texts of some 150 Quebec municipalities. Does this omission risk change the observed isolation? Probably not. Indeed, the subjects of the two theses, in one case, cultural action and the revitalization of an urban neighbourhood (Leclerc, 2015), in the other, the cultural industry of the comedy show in Quebec (Paré, 2015), do not suggest that they deal with the links between government cultural policy and museums or mediation professionals. As for municipal policies, they were drafted as part of the project to decentralize government interventions in its 1992 policy. Their conformity with the State's policy is a given, as it was necessary to obtain the funds devoted by the Government of Quebec to culture.

the promotion of national cultural production abroad. It should also be noted that several of these effects can be achieved by the same intervention.

A definition of museum cultural action

Finally, museum cultural action could be defined as an intervention whose immediate aim is to produce as much meaning as possible in the visitor and which contributes to the visitor's fulfilment, that is to say, to his psychological development, learning being only secondary and incidental. This definition, which clearly relegates the latter to the background, seems particularly relevant when one considers the museum's main intervention for all its audiences, the exhibition. In fact, the exhibition hardly encourages learning. Indeed, it does not systematically support the repetition of the knowledge discovered, a necessary condition for its retention and, *ultimately*, for learning. Nor does it allow visitors to check the accuracy of the ideas they develop from what they observe or read, another requirement for learning. Hence the relevance of proposing discovery and "play" as characteristic activities of a visit since they do not require repetition or immediate verification as is the case with learning.

It may be objected that 'play' may be a mere hobby. But in museums, to 'play' is to work on a discovery, i.e. a production of meaning that is often still crude or vague; it is to mesh it with something that seems clear: it is to strip it of dross; it is then to cobble together a link with something that is already known so that it settles into the visitor's personal universe and contributes to his development as desired by the humanist philosophers.

Unfortunately, the process just described, as well as the 'game' repeated thousands of times a day by visitors, and even the characteristics of the exhibition that promote it, are still largely unknown to us.

In short, on top of raising questions for future investigations, the review of publications on the Quebec situation has made it possible to outline a coherent integration of the various dimensions of cultural action, to clarify its roles and to offer a definition of museum cultural action that is more relevant than the definitions known to date. It remains to be seen whether these achievements can be generalised.

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Summary

The following text presents the main Québec actors' publications on cultural action: the State, the museums' directors, the researchers who survey the museums' cultural production, the specialists and professionals who deal with mediation. Curiously enough, none of these relates to the discourse of the others, which, however does not generate cacophony. On the contrary the statements of some remarkably complement the others' statements. So much so that the analysis of what all of them wrote makes it possible, among other things, to clarify two major aspects of cultural action: its components and their articulation, as well as the roles that cultural action can play. This analysis also makes it possible to develop a relevant definition of museum cultural action.

Cultural action includes: The State policy, which aims at cultural development in all its forms. Cultural democratization and democracy are its modalities. As for mediation, it is the technique or the means used to achieve the interventions of democratization and democracy.

The roles attributed to cultural action are many and varied: psychological and cultural development of individuals, regional development, urban revitalization, improvement of the problematic situation experienced by socially disadvantaged groups, entertainment, economic development, cultural diplomacy and international promotion of national cultural production.

As for museum cultural action, one could advantageously define it as an intervention whose immediate aim is to have the visitor produce meaning as abundantly as possible because it contributes to her/his psychological development, learning being only secondary and fortuitous. This definition has the advantage of easily separating the museum's cultural and educational productions, the latter aiming directly at learning. Consequently, it is not the type of production - exhibition, film, workshop, conference, etc. - that determines whether a production is of the cultural or educational type, but the intention, the position that the museum takes with regard to learning.

Keywords: cultural action, education, mediation, learning, museums

Synthesis

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Synthesis of the five previous texts

The pooling of the five articles that we just read enabled their authors to identify the strengths, weaknesses and inconsistencies of five different concepts of cultural action. In the synthesis that follows, they have selected what seemed to them to be strengths and they offer an alternative to difficulties that they detected. Their very brief presentation looks at six aspects of cultural action and some implications and ends, as expected, in a series of questions and suggestions.

Cultural action seen from six of its aspects

1. Cultural action as an intervention for value enhancement

Cultural action is an intervention to enhance the value of cultural phenomena. The museum carries it out in such a way as to lead to a true discovery, that is, the expansion of the visitor's personal universe.

2. Enhanced content

The value-enhanced phenomenon may belong to what is called "high culture" or "learned culture", such as the work of a scholar or an artist of world renown. But it may also belong to popular culture, as is the case with Westerns, or it can even be an activity that is specific to the environment in which the museum is located. This, for instance, would be the case with specialised technicians responsible for transporting "containers" in a large port or the lives of women who take care of children as a source of income.

Such a conception of value enhancement implies that all the strata of society can see their culture enhanced and conversely, that all the strata are exposed to the cultural phenomenon highlighted by the museum. Because of this, the distinction between "high" and "low" culture, fundamental to democratisation and cultural democracy movements, loses its relevance considerably. Another implication: finally, it is society, or more specifically the "community", which decides the value of a cultural phenomenon.

3. The choice of value-enhanced content

The phenomena selected by a museum depend on its mission, which may be giving the public access to the good, beautiful or authentic, and the cultural enrichment that their knowledge can represent for individuals and their environment.

More specifically, with regard to individuals, the museum wants them to feel fulfilled and tries to nurture their permeability to the unknown, or if we prefer, their openness to the “other”, whether it is a society which disappeared many centuries ago or just a close neighbour. By this fact, the museum contributes to improving people’s capacity to play their roles as best they can with their families, colleagues at work and members of the society in which they live.

And with regard to the environment that surrounds it, the museum contributes to making it as harmonious as possible to give everyone the means to fulfil their needs and pursue their aspirations.

4. The design, organisation and presentation of value-enhanced content

To develop its cultural offering (exhibition, program, website, etc.), the museum reviews all the existing knowledge on the subject that it selects, critiques it and produces its very own synthesis. So, we can consider the museum to be an institution that is constantly searching. The synthesis which it offers the visitor is as rigorous as the process enabling it; it is organized and presented so that it can be absorbed easily, profitably and pleasurably.

5. Presentation methods

Museums use many different means of diffusion: exhibitions, various programmes, outreach programmes outside museums’ walls or digital content, for example. They fit as well into a “top-down”, “bottom-up” or even “co-constructive” approach.

6. Cultural action and museum education

Cultural action as understood here is so all-encompassing that we may ask what place education has in it. To situate them both, education defined in the strict sense must be distinguished from education in the larger sense. In the strict sense, education consists of making children and adults acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to enjoy the advantages that belonging to a society brings and being productive in general or as highly qualified technicians, which architects, mechanics, notaries, doctors, etc. are considered in Western societies. In brief, it is education based on learning. The museum practises education understood in this way when it works directly to make its visitors acquire key (or structured) knowledge, which is going to give them access to further specialised knowledge. It also practises this when it targets the acquisition of skills enabling visitors to take the maximum advantage of its offering, for instance, by sharpening their ability to “view” or ask questions about objects and trying to increase their capacity to experience aesthetic or intellectual pleasure. Finally, it engages in education in the strict sense when in response to the request of a school, it develops and offers programs focusing on specific learning.

Furthermore, education considered in the larger sense corresponds to any museum production used freely with a view to encourage personal growth. Learning is, strictly speaking, sought neither by the museum nor its visitors. It is incidental. So, the two parties seek to create optimal meaning which is as broad as possible. This is what happens, for instance, when visiting exhibitions, participating in a lecture or viewing a museum website. And this characterises cultural action interventions in a museum.

This distinction gives rise to two implications:

- a) The cultural action interventions of a Western Museum outnumber by far its strictly educational interventions;
- b) It is not the means – exhibition, program, etc. – which determines if a museum intervention is strictly speaking education or cultural action. It is the position taken by the museum with regard to learning. In brief, whether it is seeking it specifically or not.

Some implications

This way of seeing the cultural action of museums¹ and its modalities, that is, democratisation, cultural democracy and mediation, has many implications, but the main ones seem to be the following:

1. People belonging to the environment where the museum is located² can also see the value of “their culture” enhanced and even participate to its valorisation, rather than be confronted to a culture which is more or less foreign to them.
2. A cultured person is not someone who looks for “high culture” offerings, but someone who chooses something that suits his/her needs and tastes from a varied offering.
3. Due to its openness to enhancing the value of local phenomena, the museum is vulnerable to lobby group interventions. When they are excessive, it protects itself from their demands by relying on a specific and detailed mission statement, a deep attachment to the use of its collections as well as on a group of professionals who are rigorously trained to have sharp critical sense.
4. Presenting both local and foreign cultural phenomena equally well, the museum and its cultural action easily become an economically viable tourist attraction and above all – we forget it too easily – a tool for cultural diplomacy, that is, an element to gain renown and recognition from other countries for prestige and other benefits.
5. What we read about museums subscribing to the important values of the times or their expression of lofty ambitions, is an ideal to which its concrete achievements sometimes have very little resemblance. This gap is due to various reasons such as:
 - a) the need to speak the “language of the times” if the museum wants to be seen as a central institution in its environment;
 - b) the limitations of its collections and the lack of human, material or financial resources;
 - c) the inability of the environment itself to gain access to the museum’s offering.This is a situation that we frequently observe, for instance, in territories which are home to recent immigrants who have yet to master the language(s) of the host country. The museum will find itself powerless only temporarily if it collaborates with institutions, organisations or associations that intervene to mitigate, if not resolve, the problem.

¹ The State also practises cultural action through its cultural policy.

² In the case of museums which are both national and international, like the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico, the Montreal Botanical Garden, the Tokyo National Museum, the Prado or the Louvre, these institutions use their collections to enhance the value of phenomena of worldwide interest. So, this value enhancement may be the source of discoveries for both foreigners and the country’s inhabitants who can learn about unknown aspects of their own culture.

A series of questions

Team meetings raised a few questions which do not appear in the previous articles. The following is a short list of questions which seemed to be the most important ones.

- What do various ICOM member countries call what we refer to as “cultural action”? Has the vocabulary used in these countries evolved over time?
- If we suggest a variety of definitions for cultural action, does this variety come from different underlying theoretical or ideological currents or rather from different situations in which it is practised?
- In each country, what does the idea of cultural action consist of? Does it include cultural policies, cultural development, democratisation, cultural democracy and mediation at the same time?
- Does the multiethnicity and multiculturalism now observed in many countries influence the way in which cultural action is practised?
- If we now stress the fact that museums should be concerned about multiethnicity and multiculturalism, is it because of the magnitude of current migratory movements or because as an institution, the museum has earned an important place in our societies?
- How does a museum take into account in its cultural action the multiethnicity that characterises the region in which it is located and the multicultural policy of this region?
- Does multiculturalism have to encompass the religious aspect of different ethnicities or cultural groups who live in a region?
- What place does the value enhancement of objects occupy in relation to other heritage aspects, such as ways of doing things, customs or festivals?
- Is it accurate to say that the more centralised a country’s administration, the more its cultural policy influences the cultural action of its museums?

Suggestions

Two suggestions, in fact. The first, which goes without saying, is to complete the work started with the five articles presented here and determine how to go forward. The second targets the visitor’s fulfilment mentioned again and again as one of the ends of cultural action.

Even if individual fulfilment has been studied for a long time by many specialists, a concept adapted to the situation of people participating in programme or visiting an exhibition does not seem to have been developed. This raises a question about the contribution of this participation to the psychological development of a visitor. And underlying this question is how the meaning created by visitors and their learning contribute to their fulfilment. The answer to these questions is crucial because it is a central aspect of the work of professionals in education and cultural action. It should, like cultural action, be the subject of a synthesis of publications on the topic.

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