Contentious Heritages and Arts: A Critical Companion

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Part 1
Settings

A critical companion: on contentious heritages and the arts, democracy and reflexive Europeanisation

Marion Hamm and Klaus Schönberger

Heritage institutions are increasingly calling upon artists to publicly work with the contents of archives, museums or libraries as part of a drive to activate their holdings, which are often considered a significant part of a nation's heritage. Besides boosting visitor numbers, there is an expectation that artists can do something that social workers, educators, curators, or researchers cannot. At the same time, the European commission's Horizon 2020 research framework called for projects on how creative work with heritage can lead to more reflexive societies by providing new visions and policies vis-à-vis the multiple crises Europe has been facing over the last decade. This book is one result of such a EU-funded project. It would be presumptuous to claim that collaborations between heritage providers, artists, and academics would be able to solve the multiple European crises on the economic, environmental, social, cultural and political level. However, as editors, we hope that this book demonstrates how such trans-disciplinary collaborations can open up new, and sometimes less entrenched perspectives onto conflict in the present through the looking glass of the past, and how taking stock of taken-for-granted heritage inventories can challenge our views on the legitimacy of contemporary power-relations. While describing and analysing successful hands-on practices on-the-ground, this book also outlines some of the pitfalls of trans-disciplinary collaborations and analyses strategies of how to deal with them [-> Co-Production Art & Ethnography] [-> Creative Co-Production]

We begin this introduction with (1) some editorial notes to show how the format of this critical companion evolved from a multi-located and multi-lingual research journey; followed by (2) an outline of TRACES as a research platform for creative and co-productive work. We then move on to a discussion of two instances of the European crisis that were central for the TRACES research process, and especially for the editorial work (3): A crisis of legitimacy in the transmission of Cultural Heritage, and the crisis of democracy in Europe (1)

Editorial notes: From peer-to-peer conversations to a critical companion

This book offers an insight into an explorative journey of transmitting[1], or better, engaging with, contentious cultural heritages with the arts [-> Relations]. Over three years, more than fifty artists, curators, academics and heritage workers from different disciplines and institutions explored possibilities to publicly engage with heritage across disciplines and institutions. The shared platform was TRACES[2], a large research project funded under the European commission's Horizon 2020 framework programme. It was led by Klaus Schönberger and coordinated at the Institute for Cultural Analysis at the University of Klagenfurt/ Celovec. This practical exploration was organised in several small teams spread across cities, landscapes and regions in Europe and beyond, and traced a wide variety of heritages. Although the TRACES practical exploration was not held together by one single theme, the material and immaterial heritages we engaged in shared a notion of potential or manifest unease, they were not 'comfortable'. To the contrary, they were, in some way or other, connected to highly contentious configurations, such as nationalism, colonialism or antisemitism [-> Making heritage contentious]. The teams consciously approached these notions of contentiousness in their respective settings in different ways [-> Contentious Collections] The journey involved, first, a practical exercise, involving fieldwork and archival research, workshops, and exhibitions. Second, it involved public dissemination of all activities via social and traditional media, publications, conferences as well as a dedicated online platform[3]. This was organised by a dedicated team at the Politecnico of Milano (POLIMI). Third, we continuously reflected about the implications of our trans-disciplinary approach, and the various ways of representing and learning about contentious heritage.

This book emerged out of the experiences, practices and reflections of this journey. As a companion, it does not offer ready-made instructions. It is neither a toolbox nor a manual, provides no how-to's or tutorials. Instead, the book seeks to accompany and invigorate peer-to-peer conversations amongst those who are, like the authors and their colleagues, critically engaging with contentious heritage in their respective fields. It addresses colleagues who are working with heritage through art, scholarship, as heritage providers or as part of citizen engagement. During the TRACES research journey, as editors, researchers and citizens, we experienced a widening of our horizons and changes in our perspectives through the ongoing peer-to-peer conversations amongst very different teams. Many of our co-TRACERS say the same, although the shared research process was not an easy one at times. We hope to continue the conversation by sharing the descriptions, reflections and analyses in this companion. This may provoke objections, challenge existing practices or inspire new ones. Overall, we hope to

stimulate other colleagues' reflections upon their own, situated practices, encourage experimentation with unusual forms of activities and to contribute to new concepts on how to act critically and responsibly in the field of heritage. An analysis of the dyamics on the highly regulated research platform of a large Horizon 2020 would extend the scope of this book. However, a short overview of the project may help readers to choose their own paths through the varied contributions.

TRACES research identified and developed strategies of making conflicts and differences in Europe negotiable. Artists, social and cultural scientists and heritage institutions teamed up to harness the dialogical and pluri-vocal potential of artistic practices by co-producing public heritage interfaces. Exemplary and critical case studies were situated in the border regions of the Alps-Adriatic [-> Popular and artistic Practices]; in places where recent conflict continues to impact on politics such as Northern Ireland [-> Transforming Long Kesh/Maze] and Carinthia [-> Signage dispute] or where past struggles and traumata are lingering on (vernacular holocaust art in Poland [-> Awkward objects], a disused Synagogue in Romania [->Absence as Heritage]); in museums and archives built to strengthen national, (post-)colonial and Western 'identities', such as the Weltmuseum Frankfurt [-> Action research], collections of human remains in the natural and ethnographic museums in Vienna and Edinburgh) [-> Dead images]), a collection in Rome on the Italian colonial heritage in Libya [-> Bel Suol d'Amore];in post-communist Slovenia with a study on artist's role in past and present nation-building endeavours [-> Casting of Death],and in the London neighbourhood of Brixton [-> Taking the B], where interrelated black, white and brown heritages are threatened by gentrification.

Five of these case studies were supported by artistic, ethnographic, pedagogic and theoretical expertise. They were set up along specified parameters to test and further develop the model of *creative co-production*, conceived by Tal Adler with the intention to pursue sustainable and significant change in heritage institutions as well as the wider society [-> Creative co-production]. The *creative co-productions* (CCPs) were based on a critique of institutional critique, an artistic approach to radically challenge cultural institutions which has been at the centre of a long controversy in the art-world [-> Becoming contentious].

Hence, TRACES developed practical and theoretically grounded modes of engaging with Europe's contentious heritages in critical and self-reflexive ways to be re-produced and further developed in the future.

The remaining three case studies had the remit to conduct basic research according to the researcher's fields of expertise. They engaged in other forms of co-production with artists, heritage providers, audiences and citizens, such as more classical artist-ethnographer collaborations [-> Serendipity], action research [Transition points] [-> Enquiring] [-> Invisible Threads], reflexive engaged ethnography [-> In Schwebe] [-> Taking the B] and the co-creative productions in collaboration with the project *Performing* Reality at Klagenfurt Untiversity [-> Other Land].

How do the models and practices developed in the TRACES teams relate to the claim to support more reflexive societies in a crisis ridden Europe? In the remaining part of this introduction, we will discuss the implication of creative and co-productive heritage work in the wider contexts of cultural heritage and democracy.

Cultural heritages and the arts

Europe's past and present is marked by conflict and difference as much as it is marked by rich and diverse cultural heritages. This Companion claims that Europe will be a combination, concurrence or convergence of many, sometimes contradictory voices, or it will not be at all. Its dynamic heritage holds the key to a reconfiguration of European imagination. Thus, we claim that acknowledging the contentious aspects of European heritage is crucial. We envisage a new European imagination as a space where interaction between different, sometimes contradictory, perspectives and experiences of past and present learn to interact. By engaging with these proactively and collectively, heritage-work may become performative in the sense of speech-act theory (Austin 1962; Butler 2010).

Heritage is an important vehicle in producing imaginations of Europe. It is constantly being constructed and reconstructed, according to different contemporary needs in different local and regional settings, and from different positions. Performativity relates to this productive character of heritage work. Besides examining and re-producing already existing understandings of difficult pasts, performative heritage crucially aims to re-configure existing regimes of knowledge by developing new, interactive, and creative practices. Crucially, this process must be collective, so that different actors, or stakeholders, can insert their often conflicting positions into the debate.

The classic master narrative of European heritage was built from ‘the centre’: technical and architectural achievements found in large cities; language, knowledge and customs as signifiers of a nation; art and science as expressions of the rise of the middle class. Multiple perspectives, languages, and ideas have long been considered as the outcome of ‘exceptional’. Migration- and borderland experiences, for instance, for a long time, of marginal interest for the mainstream. Post-modernism, globalisation, the awareness of migration flows and economic crises have refocused attention to the margins for a better understanding of today’s dynamic European setting. With Römhild (2009), we argue that contemporary europeanisation needs to take the cue from the margins to identify innovative heritage practices. Reflexivity, i.e., social formats of re-assessing and challenging seemingly given normalities, is a crucial dimension in feeding a new European imagination.

As the postcolonial de-centering of cultural heritage proceeded, we observed that museums and heritage sites began to involve artists, art collectives (Enwezor: 2007), art-based researchers and art-based heritage educators in their attempts to communicate cultural heritage in more reflexive and more open ways (Mörsch: 2004). As Elena Stylianou (2013) has shown, this trend developed from an increasingly suspicious attitude towards official narratives of History with a capital H, and, connected to this, towards cultural heritage. Critiquing concepts of a “faultless” and “unambiguous” approach to the past (Stylianou 2013: 7), or, in our case, heritage, was crucial in this debate. Poststructuralist theory analysed the museum as a technology of the Western gaze, which defined the ‘others’ who were looked at as ‘objects’ to the dominant, and actively gazing Western ‘subject.

These theories intended to inscribe varied and different perspectives onto the past into western forms of representation, and thereby to re-narrate history in new ways (Stylianou 2013: 7, referencing Phillips 2007). Critical reviews suggested that traditional museological systems of classification were, in fact, to be understood as systems of order defined by the Western colonial gaze. Curators wishing to change the status quo took these debates very seriously. They turned to artists in order to tackle those problematic aspects of transmitting contentious cultural heritages which would have been ignored by the “museum orthodoxy”. It would be up to the artists, to re-define which (hi-)stories would be narrated in the museum, and in which way.

Based on this observation, we interpret the evocation of the artist on the part of heritage providers through a perceived specific artist positioning: They are less grounded in the hierarchical structures of the respective institutions, and, overall, artists are seen as experts in developing critical methodologies and thinking against the grain. Arts-based interventions into the process of heritage transmission within institutions are serving the production of knowledge other than that which is prescribed in dominant discourses. They are expected to develop new questions, and, probably also as a projection screen for an institutional desire to engage with postcolonial critique, develop new practices and thus 'heal' the wounds left by colonialism. We argue that it is precisely a potential for haziness, or vagueness inherent in the arts, which triggered these projections on artistic practice. While this quality encourages openness for new perspectives, it also allows institutions to avoid a clear and unambiguous position [-> Co-Production].

In the debates on transmission and definition of cultural heritage, art appears to function as an "empty signifier" (Laclau 1996, 36). As such, art is a signifier without a signified. While this quality can help in unifying a diversity of positions, it also means that art, as an empty sign without a specific and defined point of reference, is not capable to sharpen political conflicts

In the debates on transmission and definition of cultural heritage, art appears to function as an "empty signifier" (Laclau 1996: 36). As such, art is a signifier without a signified. While this quality can help in unifying a diversity of positions, it also means that art, as an empty sign without a specific and defined point of reference, is not capable to sharpen political conflicts and discourses. Against this background, we fear that 'the arts', in this process, will be increasingly reduced to a mere fig-leaf in the practice of museological and cultural transmission or educational work [-> artistic upgrade] [-> Becoming contentious]. The inclusion of artists in transmission processes certainly has effects. However, are these effects conductive to opening up new perspectives and re-evaluate entrenched positions? Or do they, to the contrary, soften and mitigate radical critique? How these questions are answered will, of course, depend on the specificity of each situation. It is important to carefully assess the moment, and the economic and discursive changes under which 'Art' is evoked, and to analyse the projections and desires connected to this evocation [-> artistic upgrade]. The stories and analyses in this companion demonstrate how the arts have contributed to dis- and re-articulations of conflicts over contentious cultural heritage [-> Signage dispute in Carinthis]; and how a focus on contentiousness can give rise to critical reflection even in

seemingly non-controversial manifestations of heritage. It goes without saying that we are not interested in diluting or gloss over important critiques by means of creativity. Neither do we argue for a resolution of conflicts that are articulated with cultural heritages. Rather, our concern is to make conflicts performed on the cultural terrain productive for the democratic process. Because the crisis of the idea of Europe is not just a crisis over heritage, but also a crisis of the European democracies.

Democracy

When focussing on cultural heritage, we often lose sight of the political dimension of the European crisis. However, a decade of crises has brought up numerous conflicts, which are often negotiated as problems of cultural identity. In this discourse, culture is de-historisised or objectified, it is seen as a 'thing' or a container rather than an ever-evolving and plurivocal process. When culture is essentialised and devoid of historicity, then 'identity' then becomes a prison in which we are held captive without any hope of escape. Culturalised conflicts are articulated with imaginations of nature, normality, common sense and other ineluctable a prioris. Conflicts over heritage are particularly charged. In contrast, this companion wants to make productive such cultural conflicts, or rather, the more complex socio-political contradictions they are articulated with. The aim is to develop a new European imagination where conflict is possible, but which also allows for negotiation. If the crisis of Europe is a crisis of democracy, then the core of the European project will be affected. In this case, it is useless, even wrong, to evoke a seemingly essential European identity, which is itself nothing more, but also nothing less than a product of practiced and performed imagination.
What unites people in and beyond Europe, we argue, should be a democratic political imagination, where different and contradictory ideas and interests can be negotiated.
[-> Agonistic perspective]. Following the concept of reflexive Europeanization [-> Reflexive Europeanisation], such a new imagination of Europe would be part of a democratic process, rather than a culturalising and essentialising closure. When conflicts are articulated with cultural heritage, they are particularly apt to legitimise exclusion and violence. We pose that the challenge we are facing is to create pluralistic democratic spaces, where conflicts of interest can take a political form, rather than being expressed as culturalised matters of faith. In this challenge, the ambiguity of art is on our side. For it is precisely this ambiguity and haziness that allows for a widening of perspective and new angles of view and thus contributes to set fixed understandings and views into motion. In this sense, it is important to

re-politicize these conflicts over cultural heritage and to regard opposing views and interests as possibilities that exist side by side.

Credits

In some ways, this research journey resembled with its ups and downs and a hot editorial phase at the end resembles a road movie. At the end of a movie, credits are in order. As editors, we thank everyone who made this companion possible. Our thanks go first and foremost to the nearly thirty authors who engaged with this companion over the last year through conceptual meetings, and often multiple drafts, despite tight time schedules in their respective projects. You made the editing process inspiring and rewarding. Special thanks go to Nora Landkammer and Karin Schneider for co-editing part 5 of this book. Melanie Proksch was a our research assistant throughout. We thank her especially for her fun- and reliable support in editing this book. We would also like to thank our colleagues from the TRACES 'core.team', with whom we developed the idea for the TRACES project and without whose commitment there would be no project and therefore no companion: Tal Adler , Karin Schneider, Anna Szöke and Gisela Hagmair, who also managed us all with great care in this mommoth project. The POLIMI team expertly run the TRACES dissemination machine and added greatly to our conversations. Thank you, Luca Bassu, Cristina Colombo, Francesca Lanz and Jacoppo Leveratto. Last, but not least, we would like to thank our graphic design team Keppler + Jung for their patience and ingenuity.

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[1] For a critique of the term "transmission" from an pedagogic perspective see Landkammer/ Schneider in part 5 (Un-)Learning Contentious Heritages" of this volume

[2] The research project *TRACES – Transmitting contentious cultural heritage with the arts: From intervention to co-production* was funded within the European commission's Horizon 2020 framework program, section reflexive societies. It runs from 2016-2019.

[3] See the TRACES project homepage http://www.traces.polimi.it (accessed 22.2.2019).

Project: Absence as Heritage
Site: Mediaș, Transylvania (Romania)
Institutions: Hosman Durabil
Team: Răzvan Anton, Julie Dawson, Alexandra Toma
Backgrounds: History, finance, visual arts

Absence as heritage: Examining Jewish legacies in Mediaș, Transylvania

Răzvan Anton, Julie Dawson, and Alexandra Toma

The southern Transylvanian town of Mediaș sits in the wide, green, vineyard-rimmed valley of the Târnava River and is the historic home of one of the larger Transylvanian Saxon communities. However, like almost everywhere in Transylvania, the population was always mixed – Hungarians, Romanians, Jews, Roma, and even Armenians settled in and moved through the villages and towns of the Târnava valley. The 20th century brought monumental shifts in the social landscape, almost entire population groups emigrated, including the Saxons and the Jews. The Hungarian population has dwindled and the Romanian increased, not least due to population transfers under communism. Still, while stewards of the Saxon and Hungarian churches remain present and the built heritage of the Saxon fortified churches has come to be considered a national treasure, Jewish sites and spaces are seldom noticed and rarely maintained. The Mediaș synagogue and its surrounding buildings were gradually abandoned, if not on paper, then in deed. Though subject to violence and antisemitic legislation during World War II, the community was spared mass deportation. Nevertheless, the vast majority of Jews were eager to leave when given the opportunity and during the 1950s and 1960s most of the community emigrated. Today, within the cityscape Jewish spaces appear deserted or invisible, in collective memory the Jewish role in local history is neglected, downplayed, or simply ignored.

The objective of the *Absence as Heritage* project was to explore the built heritage of the synagogue and local Jewish spaces and the documentary heritage of the archives, library, and

other community objects. Together, we developed participatory art projects and exhibition materials, in this manner working to encourage the local population to engage with its Jewish history and heritage. Our primary work was carried out during three summer residencies from 2016 to 2018. Each two-months residency period concluded with a public exhibition and accompanying event, which included workshops, tours of the synagogue and/or archives and library, and concerts of Yiddish song or *hazanuth* (cantorial music).

The exhibition material was developed over the course of the summer residencies and stemmed primarily from our own archive and library. We focused on micro-historical perspectives, personal narratives, and exploring methods of visually representing documentary sources and/or written and spoken narratives. We strove to incorporate participatory elements in the exhibitions and emphasised the intimate and the personal. During these residencies, researcher, artist, and site administrator were in constant dialogue with one another, working side by side daily, with the boundaries of responsibilities often blurred. Though in principle the researcher oversaw text and narrative development of the exhibitions, the artist developed design strategies and visual images, and the administrator saw to the day-to-day minutiae of site operations and event organisation, in practice all three parties worked in all of these areas at various moments. The discovery of one was taken up by another; impressions and experiences were exchanged while drinking coffee on the terrace and ideas further developed over dinners and wine on our balconies at home; the resulting exhibition materials are true collaborations with all parties involved at some point in all stages of the development. Beyond the concluding exhibitions, workshops using archival images and sun-printing were held mid-summer with groups ranging from under-privileged children from a neighbouring village to Romanian art students and German university students. Besides the official TRACES events, in the course of the project, the Casa de lângă Sinagogă (House by the Synagogue) has become a meeting point for diverse groups of people within Mediaș and hosts an array of cultural events throughout the year, such as film viewings, concerts, and local craft fairs.

The summer of 2016 concluded with the exhibition *Fading Studies* by Răzvan Anton of works based on archival images from the Jewish archives of Mediaș and Cluj, sun-printed in the

courtyard, as well as the interactive multi-media installation *Mediaș Jewish Jukebox* (created with musician Benjamin Fox-Rosen) combining archival images with audio and video recordings of secular sheet music found in the synagogue.

The summer 2017 residencies ended with the opening of the exhibition *Liminal Portraits: Stories from the Margins* which combined a community narrative from World War II, recorded by the daughter of the community butcher, with sun-prints created by Anton. The sun-prints focused on doodles and notes made in the margins of community prayer books.
Finally, the joint-residency period of 2018 saw the creation of an oral histories exhibition *"... but we brought it back…": Objects, Paths, Stories* which included the series of sun-printed pieces created by Anton from images in the archives, library, and tapestries collection, over the three years.

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Verdery, Katherine (1983), Transylvanian Villagers: Three Centuries of Political, Economic, and Ethnic Change, 1700-1980. Berkeley: University of California Press

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Project: Awkward Objects of Genocide
Site: Krakow (Poland), extending to 26 museum and institutional archives across Poland and Germany (Berlin); private collections and 7 artists' archives.
Institutions: Research Center for Memory Cultures (RCMC), Faculty of Polish Studies, Jagiellonian University (PL), Ethnographic Museum in Krakow (MEK), Concordia University (CA). Partners for accompanying events: POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews and CRICOTEKA (Tadeusz Kantor's Museum for Performative Arts).
Team:
Erica Lehrer (Concordia), Roma Sendyka (Jagiellonian University, RCMC, project director), Wojciech Wilczyk (artist), Magdalena Zych (MEK).
Collaborators: Barbara Kożuch (MEK); Natalia Giemza, Katarzyna Grzybowska, Karina Jarzyńska, Maria Kobielska, Karolina Koprowska, Jakub Muchowski, Sylwia Papier, Kinga Siewior, Aleksandra Szczepan, Klaudia Węgrzyn (RCMC); Uta Karrer (DE), Lucyna Leś (Krakow); Amudena Rutkowska (Warsaw), Monika Bielak (design).
Backgrounds: cultural anthropology, visual culture, photography, ethnology, curating, museum studies, literary studies, critical theory

Awkward Objects of Genocide. The Holocaust and Vernacular Arts in and beyond Polish Ethnographic Museums[1]

Erica Lehrer, Roma Sendyka, Magdalena Zych, and Wojciech Wilczyk

Eastern Europe witnessed 14 million deaths in a period of little more than a decade between 1933 and 1945. The local impact of such widespread and wanton killing as it reverberated in towns, villages, and communities over the subsequent decades is only just beginning to be considered, prompted by new scholarly attention in Poland and globally to the *dispersed Holocaust*, the proliferation of smaller ghettoes and camps, and the excruciatingly intimate relations of betrayal, killing, expropriation, and rescue, particularly outside of large urban centres, in the countryside (Snyder 2010, Megargee and Dean 2009).
Many communities produce artistic responses to traumatic events, but Holocaust scholarship's new Eastward and grassroots turns (e.g. Desbois 2007, 2009, Gross 2001,

Grabowski 2013) have yet to attend seriously to vernacular *arts of witness*. In the field of Holocaust artistic production in Poland, local, 'naïve' artists were a prolific, unacknowledged group attempting to represent the events they witnessed. Their works, however, remain scattered in folk museum collections, often awkwardly categorized due to disciplinary taxonomies that treat so-called folk art as timeless rather than historical, and the reluctance of curators to touch on uncomfortable subjects.

The objects themselves are uncanny: at times deeply moving, at others grotesque, they can also be disturbing for the ways they upend accepted roles of victim, perpetrator, and bystander; impose Catholic idioms on Jewish suffering as well as for the erroneous mythologies that may be projected onto them as memorial objects in the present. Through a survey of Polish ethnographic museums (as well as other Polish and German public and private collections), we aimed at identifying the scope of this phenomenon, historicizing it and interpreting the works we found. Our objective was to explore this genre of artwork, inquiring into its strategies of representing the Holocaust, its ability to commemorate the traumatic past, and its capacity to witness or deny the facts of this past violence. Photography and exhibition served as tools for our research and interpretation.

The exhibition *Terribly Close: Polish Vernacular Artists Face the Holocaust* introduced a selection of the works we found. CCP2 took more than 4000 photos of 424 art objects from 26 archives. Among these, we identified 63 works, created between 1948 and 2017, as depicting murder of the Jews in the II World War. The curatorial team chose 17 works to present in the exhibition. We interpreted these sculptures and paintings as complex documents born of various impulses: co-created by artists, collectors, ethnographers, curators, and ideologues. Wojciech Wilczyk's accompanying photographic series *Blow-ups* (2016-2018) drew attention to the perspectives of bystanders. Wilczyk brought gallery visitors' gazes in line with those of the original artists, as they looked towards the victims and perpetrators. In dialogue with the original artworks, his series completed the exhibition.

The ultimate goal of the project was to re-frame and draw new attention to this fascinating, under-recognized category of object, to broaden what we understand as 'Holocaust art' and 'Holocaust aesthetics', to expand the field of Holocaust memory studies to include a range of

non-elitist 'bystander' perspectives, and to challenge traditional approaches to folk art and ethnographic museology more broadly.

Our project is in dialogue with larger debates about difficult heritage and contentious heritage, and the productive possibilities for curating difficult knowledge that challenge received ideas about and relationships to violent histories. It seeks to support the development of pluralist identities that simultaneously embrace legacies of victimhood, perpetration, and other positions of witness.

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[1] Fragments of this text were previously published in *Anthropology News*, February 27, 2017, as well as in *Traces*, Volume 1, No. 1, September 2016, pages 6–7.

Project: Casting of Death
Site: Ljubljana (Slovenia), extending to archives and collections across the country
Institutions: Domestic Research Society (DRS)* in collaboration with the National and University Library (NUK), Museum of Modern Art (MG), Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana (MGML), Institute of Contemporary History (ICH)
Team: Jani Pirnat, Alenka Pirman, Damijan Kracina (DRS), Marijan Rupert (NUK), Marko Jenko (MG), Janez Polajnar (MGML), Andrej Pančur (ICH), documentalist Maruša Kocjančič, and ethnographer Blaž Bajič; with participation of the academic sculptor and death mask-maker Viktor Gojkovič and volunteers from the Red Cross Ljubljana.
Backgrounds: Fine, visual and (neo)conceptual arts, art history, history, comparative literature, anthropology, digital humanities, curating

Casting of Death: Death masks in Slovenian public collections

Domestic Research Society*

The practice of death mask casting was in fashion predominantly in the 19th and 20th centuries for the purpose of building national identities through public veneration of exceptional men. Casts of distinguished deceased artists, scientists, politicians, or industrialists show that the technique was used for the reproduction of political and social elites. It also served for the affirmation of their superiority over marginalised, rebellious, 'deviant' or seen as inferior socio-political groups: Jenko (1989) points to casts of the guillotined traitors of the French Revolution, Bajič (2018) directs attention to casts of men such as criminals, Slaves, or terrorists.
At the DRS, we have been intrigued by death masks for a long time. What struck us the most was the pivotal role of the artist in the endeavours of nation building, both as a service provider and as an object of veneration. Our core research question was self-critical: Has the role of a fine artist changed or can it still be traced in the activities of a contemporary visual artist?
Casting of Death was the first systematic research on the topic of death masks in Slovenia. We contacted 127 public cultural institutions throughout the country. We collected data on 106 death masks and published them online in the *Casting of Death* database, developed by the ICH that

will maintain it also in the future. The death masks in the Slovenian public collections belong to the distinguished group only and date from 1770 until 1998.

DRS acted as a producer and facilitator in heritage-making. Over the course of the project, we developed a set of internal, semi-public and public working situations. Internally, we held interdisciplinary working sessions, collected data and visited depots, small memorial exhibitions, and private collections on fieldtrips, conducted organised field research on contemporary casting practices, and held topical workshops. Since the very beginning of the research, we designed and produced a series of open platforms to address the public. A dedicated blog served as the co-production's publishing and dissemination tool, an open access online database catalogues the death masks found, a public press conference turned into a vibrant debate, and a research exhibition generated further information and extended our knowledge, but also raised new questions. These public situations were based on conventional formats, but were structured and used in an open manner. Rather than presenting scientific results or artistic works, they constituted the research itself. Each enabled communication with different audiences and opened up different avenues to contextualise the death masks. We consciously avoided a representational type of event, such as a museum or art exhibition with a clear-cut taxonomy. In this way, we succeeded in involving museum curators, librarians, journalists, academic and contemporary art audiences as well as the general public.

Our research on death masks was an investigation into the politics of the artist's role in society. It showed that the death masks, dormant in Slovenian heritage institutions, belong predominantly to artists. The face of a distinguished deceased artist, a cultural saint (Dović 2016), was cast by another artist, a respected and trusted master of the craft, and is now researched by us, the artists/anthropologists. Our research has revived public attention for the practice of death mask-casting and showed that this allegedly anachronistic technique is still alive. More importantly, it exposed the uncanny concatenation of death, artistic genius, craft, and the nation. The Domestic Research Society acknowledges the danger of potential recuperation of such a candid research. Is our reviving of this practice in fact contributing to the national cult of the present?

* The Domestic Research Society (DRS) was established in 2004 in Ljubljana (Slovenia) by Damijan Kracina, Alenka Pirman, and Jani Pirnat. The artistic and curatorial collective is

involved in collaborative and interdisciplinary research that enables the development of innovative approaches in contemporary art by addressing and involving a broader audience.

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Project: Dead Images: Facing the history, ethics and politics of European skull collections
Sites: Edinburgh, Berlin and Vienna
Institutions: Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh, Natural History Museum of Vienna, Humboldt University of Berlin
Team: Tal Adler, Linda Fibiger, John Harries, Joan Smith, Anna Szöke and Maria Teschler-Nicola, with Ola Wojtkiewicz, Callum Fisher, Hayley Whittingham and Aglaja Kempinski.
Backgrounds: Visual arts, art history, physical anthropology, social and cultural anthropology, bioarchaeology.

Dead Images: Facing the history, ethics and politics of European skull collections

Tal Adler and John Harries

Dead Images is an artistic exploration of the complex and contentious legacy of collections of human skulls that reside in public institutions in Europe. These assemblages were created during the 19th and early 20th centuries, when scientists sought to elaborate ideas of human difference through the comparative study of crania. Some skulls were taken close to home, but others were looted from battlefield sites or the graves of indigenous peoples, taken without consent and in violation of local beliefs concerning the sanctity of the dead and the reverence for ancestors. The *Dead Images* project is and was a collaborative undertaking exploring this legacy through the medium of a public exhibition and associated events.

This exploration began with an encounter in 2009 between artist Tal Adler and a display of more than 8,000 skulls, arranged on shelves in a corridor of the Natural History Museum of Vienna. This display is part of a much larger collection of the remains of over 40,000 individuals held at the museum. Intrigued and distressed by this display, Tal worked with the staff at the museum to take a high-resolution, multi-perspective panoramic photograph of the skull cabinet, which was of a kind and quality that would allow it to be printed at a 1:1 ratio.

The questions were if, how, and where to print and exhibit this photograph, a question that was resolved in partnership between our various institutions which led to the hosting of the Dead Images exhibition at the Edinburgh College of Art. But this was not simply a technical or even a curatorial question, but a cultural, political, and finally ethical one. The photograph was our medium and our problem. In working towards printing and bringing this photograph to the public, we began by asking questions of ourselves: who are we to show a photograph and to invite the public to gaze upon the bones of others as an artistic or scientific spectacle? And, in extending such an invitation, to what degree are we complicit in the very techniques of appropriation and objectification which we seek to critique?

These ethical anxieties were brought into focus by Tal's encounter with another collection, accessed through doors embedded within the skull cabinet. Behind those doors is the photographic archive of the anthropology department of the Natural History Museum of Vienna. In this archive of over 50,000 photographs are images of colonial peoples, prisoners of war, and Holocaust victims exposed before the camera and through the objectifying lens of the photographic apparatus, made into research specimens. As with the skull collection, this archive is a reminder that contemporary Europe is haunted by histories of violence and violation which reside within our public institutions, even as they are withheld from view and so from our collective consciousness. This collection also called, and calls, into question the role of photography in addressing these histories, for the very terms of this address, the medium and media we work with, is embedded within the histories we wish to expose to critical reflection.

Our ambition for the *Dead Images* project was, then, not to resolve these anxieties or answer these questions. It was, rather, to create such a public space, where people could feel, think about, talk about, and respond to the difficult and complex legacy of forms of scientific enquiry which were often (but not always) predicated on the violence and violation of the subject of that enquiry. We sought to design a place of gathering, in which multiple perspectives and voices could be heard and come into conversation in an atmosphere of contemplation and critical reflection around the image of the skull collection, and a realisation of the problematic history of photography as a technology of objectification.

We did so by installing a series of videos, to be seen before encountering the panoramic photograph of the skull cabinet. These were based on a series of interviews by Tal with various people in which they were invited to speak to their thoughts, feelings, and concerns relating to the keeping of human remains in public institutions in Europe. They spoke from various perspectives: some as indigenous academics, authors and curators concerned with the whereabouts and well-being of their ancestors, some as physical anthropologists and curators of anthropological collections who were concerned with the value of these collections and with the question of how best to manage the difficult histories of their constitution. All these voices, speaking besides, with, and sometimes across each other, could be heard in the exhibition. We also gathered people together to talk, think, and reflect in a conference, in learning events, and in our information lounge [-> Individual Story].

So *Dead Images* was conceived through multiple perspectives, acquired through years of discussions and interviews. The list of people whose words and ideas shaped this work is extensive and beyond description. But amongst these are the dead. The ancestors to some. How do we name them? How do we recognise them as participants who also have something to say and who hold us, the living, to account? In creating *Dead Images* as a forum, an agora, which allowed for different people with different perspectives to gather and speak, we did not seek to create oppositions or antagonisms between the various ways of knowing, recognising and respecting the dead. Rather we sought to enable an attentiveness to these different perspectives and to the presence of ancestors amongst us.

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Project: Transforming Long Kesh/Maze
Site: Belfast (Northern Ireland)
Institutions: Ulster University
Team: Martin Krenn and Aisling O'Beirn (artists) in collaboration with Laura McAtackney (archaeologist)
Participants: David Stitt, The Andy Tyrie Interpretive Centre, The Eileen Hickey Irish Republican History Museum, The Roddy McCorley Society Museum, Simon Bridge, Phil Holland, The 50+ Group, private collections and individuals.
Supported by: PS² Gallery, Belfast, British Council and Féile an Phobail
Backgrounds: Visual arts, dialogical art practice, collaborative social sculpture, archaeology

Transforming Long Kesh/Maze – Participatory artistic research and collaboration

Martin Krenn and Aisling O'Beirn

Transforming Long Kesh/Maze is a collaborative social sculpture by artists Martin Krenn and Aisling O'Beirn, exploring the future of the Maze/Long Kesh prison site beyond its current state of limbo. The majority of people imprisoned as a result of the conflict in Northern Ireland were held in this former prison, located about 20 minutes from Belfast. (fig.1) Long Kesh/Maze has both a physical presence and conceptual importance. Indecision about its future at government level says much about the political climate of the 'post-conflict' society [-> Contentious Collections] in Northern Ireland. Given this, we are interested in how one can think beyond the site's legacy and to its future. In considering the former prison as a dispersed presence, we reference archaeologist Laura McAtackney's concept of the 'distributed self' from her study "An Archaeology of the Troubles" (McAtackney 2014, 244-265). McAtackney also helped us to make contacts to people with first-hand experience of the prison.

Having made contacts, we worked over a period of two years with individuals and groups, such as ex-prisoners, former visitors, ex-prison staff and community museums from across

the political spectrum [-> Fragile trust]. We specifically developed three principal dialogical methods, namely: *restaging* (including repairing), *reappropriation* and *retelling*. These methods helped us to enter into dialogue with participants on a very personal level. We searched for individual narratives to avoid the reiteration of previously *rehearsed* and ideologically overdetermined narratives about the prison [-> Dialogical photography].

With participants, we worked to photographically *restage* prison objects (primarily artwork and crafted objects made in the prison, but also other artefacts salvaged from the prison), which they made, own, or are 'caretaking' for the future [-> Restaging the object]. (fig. 2) Participants played an active role in image making. Each object was placed in a mobile photo studio and a draft of an accompanying statement, outlining the participant's personal relationship to the object, was recorded. The *naming process* was spontaneous as participants were also asked to title and date the respective artefact, for a label made on site with a portable labelling machine. The label was placed within the image frame, before photographing the object. Thus, naming became as integral to the restaging process as the object itself.

The next method, *reappropriation*, addresses lost objects and images and points to the temporal nature of remaining prison artefacts as well as time limits on first-hand testimony. The artists employed materials and methods traditionally used in making prison art to create new artefacts echoing participant testimonies.

The third method, *retelling* was based on a two-year collaboration with the *50+ Group* of women who meet weekly under the umbrella of Tar Anall, an organisation dedicated to the welfare of republican ex-prisoners and their families. The women were politically active beyond visiting republican prisoners. We photographed their extensive private collections and the group made new objects with us. They employed methods traditionally used for prison art, as a way to testify to their experience of visits, thus *retelling* an 'other' story of *Long Kesh/Maze* from their unique female visitor perspective. These *retold* objects that they created with us, along with the *reappropriated* objects we created in response to participant testimonies and the *restaged* photographs of existing prison artefacts were all publicly exhibited. (fig. 3)

The exhibition *Dispersed Presence*, encompassing the restaged photograph along with the new objects, took place at PS² Belfast (2018). (fig. 5) In the same year, we produced postcards of the photographs and testimonies designed for public venues, such as libraries and community centres. These formed a touring exhibition, which was shown as part of 'Peace and Beyond Fringe Arts', an arts event accompanying the British Council organised 'Peace and Beyond' conference in Belfast, marking the 20th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement. (fig. 4) They were also exhibited as part of 'Féile an Phobail'(tr. 'Festival of the People'), Europe's largest community festival which is in its 30th year. Each year the festival coincides with the anniversary of 'Internment Without Trial', a controversial measure introduced by the British Government in 1971 which saw thousands of people interned without charge or trial. The festival was established in West Belfast in 1988 to celebrate the community, by opening up participation in and engagement with the arts (2018) against a backdrop of ongoing media coverage focusing on the conflict. This project, with its various strands, aims to open up discourse regarding the former prison without dwelling on already known or rehearsed narratives.

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Project: Bel Suol d'Amore – The Scattered Colonial Body
Site: Rome (including work with museum staff, and Libyan Italian colonial settlers)
Institutions: Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico L. Pigorini (part of Museo delle Civiltà)
Team: Leone Contini (artist), Arnd Schneider (anthropologist); collaborative partners at the Museum: Loretta Paderni, Rossana di Lella
Backgrounds: Visual arts, anthropology, art-anthropology collaborations, curating; Italian diasporas

Bel Suol d'Amore: Research on subjective terrain

Leone Contini

The research frame of Bel suol d'amore – The Scattered Colonial Body, is stretched in space and time: from Tarhuna and Tripoli (in Libya) to Florence and Rome, from the early 30s to nowadays. The trigger of this project was the unexpected discovery of a former colonial museum in Rome (fig. 2), whose 'body' got dispersed in different locations, and the accidental encounter with the Italian-Libyan community in Rome. But its backstory is the resettlement of my great-grandparents from Sicily to Libya in the 30s, where my mother was born in 1948 (fig. 1).

The presence of Arnd Schneider, professor of anthropology at the University of Oslo, gave strength and continuity to our research, defining the institutional frame of the fieldwork but also creating non-institutional occasions of meetings with the Italian Libyans in Rome. Our interaction worked on a very daily level: the co-creation of a common discourse via the constant dialogic interaction shaped both our research to the same extent as it shaped the tangible forms of the material outcome: the final exhibition. Interaction with the museum Pigorini was complex despite its full institutional and scientific support. Whilst a core of museum staff were very supportive, some other scientific and technical staff perceived our presence as an intrusion. I often experienced this attitude while working with Italian public (but not only) institutions. I think that my hybrid and inter-disciplinary profile potentially contributes to intensifying such hostility, my role being perceived as not clear and easily misunderstood. My anthropologist research partner contributed to re-sewing the working frame in such occasions.

Our fieldwork intersected with very private aspects of my live, such as my family relations and archives in Florence, but mainly articulated with various locations in the city of Rome: museums (in most cases their storage areas, corridors or offices), private homes and gathering areas for the meetings of the Italian-Libyans based in the Italian capital, a Jewish-Tripolitan restaurant and an Arabic-Libyan one. I chased the remains of the extinguished African museum and the ghost of Italian colonialism on a very heterogeneous terrain: with some of its inhabitants, I experienced affinity, with many others mutual distance.

The research process was complex and often put me in unbearable positions: the fact that I descend from Italian colonizers made my presence on the field non-neutral, for example regarding my relationship with the Italian-Libyans community: I was somehow potentially considered as part of their community, despite my family narrations concerning Libya were often antithetic to theirs ones. I especially felt uncomfortable with un-reflexive and nostalgic understanding of the role played by the Italians in the former colony. At the same time their stories were familiar to me, able to evocate intense memories of my grandparents and great grandparents. My investigation about couscous recipes dangerously reduced our distance (fig. 3) , together with the fact that I empathized with those among them who experienced deportation and painful experiences of displacement and racist exclusion (being often Southern Italians and generically perceived as Africans) once they landed in Italy, after their expulsion by Gaddafi in 1969-1970. The production of the exhibition became the occasion to represent this contradictory complexity without giving up my critical perspective - in other terms it strategically helped me to gain back my distance, and my agency.

The ambition of the whole project is to dismantle the ideological apparatus of colonialism, driving it out from inside the western gaze, while fully acknowledging its incongruent dimensions and intrinsic complexity.

Reference

Contini, Leone/ Arnd Schneider (2017), Bel Suol d'Amore – The Scattered Colonial Body. Exhibition. Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico 'Luigi. Pigorini'. Rome, 25 June – 9 July

2017. Online: http://www.traces.polimi.it/2017/06/19/bel-suol-damore-the-scattered-colonial-body (accessed: 13.1.2019)

Project: Action Research in education at Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt

Site: Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt

Institutions: Education Department, Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt (WKM); Institute for Art Education, Zurich University of the Arts. Consultation and contributions: KARFI collective, Bildungsstätte Anne Frank, Frankfurt Postkolonial

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Backgrounds: Museum education, formal education, visual arts, history, postcolonial studies, cultural anthropology, mediation, social pedagogy, cultural studies

Action research in education at Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt

Nora Landkammer, Karin Schneider and Stephanie Endter

The education department at Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt, headed by Stephanie Endter, collaborated with Nora Landkammer and Karin Schneider from the Institute for Art Education at Zurich University of the Arts in an action research on and within the museum's public programs January 2017 to June 2018. The main question was: How can the colonial heritage of the museum be addressed through encounters with visitors and participants? What does a postcolonial approach mean for the context of museum education in an ethnographic museum?

Taking an Action Research approach meant that the museum educators researched their own practice and developed a reflective perspective towards it. They created an action research circle as they conducted methodological experiments or developed new programmes, reflected on the outcomes, and translated their findings back into practice. These experiments included new ways of introducing critical discussions in classical guided tours (see Endter in this volume) [-> Invisible Threads], working on methodological repertoires in order to lead controversial discussions with visitors, developing participatory approaches to knowledge regarding objects in

the collections, or designing new workshop formats (Landkammer and Schneider in this volume: Transition Points, Enquiring) [-> Transition Points] [-> Enquiring].

Our research methods included participatory observation of workshops and guided tours, interviews with curators, and intensive collective analysis sessions of the observation minutes and memos taken by the person who conducted the workshop/tour and by members of the research team who accompanied the workshop as observer. A major part of the collective research took place in joint sessions that provided the context for the development of the research questions, decisions relating to the research set up, analysis of observation minutes and development of hypotheses which led to new questions and new experiments being put into practice and subsequently leading to the interpretation and development of reflexive texts.

Conducting research on one's own practice is a challenging process. Daily work at the museum's education department already calls for a high level of preparation and engagement, and, therefore, adding a research layer to this is extremely time- and energy consuming. If research is to contribute on how to deal with contentious heritages in education, and aims to develop educational approaches that allow for dissent and make space for working on conflict, it is crucial that the research is self-reflexive, and scrutinizes the blind spots and pitfalls of one's own educational practice. Such space for sensitive questioning is not usually a part of everyday educational work. Our action research created a working frame that allowed for reflection in this specific context. Reflecting on educational practice in a museum with an ethnographic collection includes creating awareness of one's own involvement in racist and colonial thinking patterns. Consultations and guest contributions helped us to get ourselves into the picture.
We consulted initiatives and professionals who have developed methods and reflections in the context of racism, post-colonialism and critical whiteness inside and outside institutions. Deborah Krieg from the *Bildungsstätte Anne Frank* offered an insight into their working approach and methods in the field of their educational work with teachers and students concerning racism, anti-semitism, and other forms of exclusion. The group *Frankfurt Postcolonial* provided a guided tour for the team and met some of the educators from the Weltkulturen Museum for the purpose of critical reflections on their approach. Some of the main phases of the research process were accompanied by KARFI (Nadine Golly and Laura Digoh-

Ersoy), a collective of Black educators/researchers who provided supervision regarding racism and critical diversity development in institutions and projects.

The action research process resulted in a collection of reflexive texts and resources for educators who work in ethnographic museums (Schneider/ Landkammer/ Endter 2018). It includes reflective, analytical texts on educational approaches to colonial collections, as well as practice-based resources such as work sheets, lists of references to relevant projects, and the working principles we developed out of our action research. We hope that these resources provide inspiration for educators in similar museums who are pursuing a critical, post-colonial approach in their own educational work.

References

Endter, Stephanie / Nora Landkammer / Karin Schneider (eds.) (2018), The Museum as a Site of Unlearning: Materials and Reflections on Museum Education at the Weltkulturen Museum. TRACES journal #06. Online: http://www.traces.polimi.it/2018/10/08/issue-06-the-museum-as-a-site-of-unlearning/ (accessed 28.01.2019)

Project: Performing Heritage
Site: Rural Alps-Adriatic Region (Carinthia, AT and Friuli, IT) and Brixton, an urban neighourhood in London (UK)
Institutions: Institute of Cultural Analysis at Alpen-Adria Universität Klagenfurt/ Celovec (AAU); University Cultural Centre Klagenfurt (UNIKUM). With Cultural Association La Cort Daj Gjats (Dordolla), Teatr Trotamora & Zora (Šentjakob v Rožu, Carinthia), Museum Moderne Kunst Klagenfurt (MMKK). In London: Design Activism Research Hub (DARH, London College of Communication), Friends of Carnegie Library, Campaign Graphic Design Collective Propagate.
Team: Marion Hamm, Klaus Schönberger, Melanie Proksch (AAU); Emil Krištof, Niki Meixner, Gerhard Pilgram (UNIKUM). Supported by Ute Holfelder (AAU, Performing Reality), citizens of Dordolla (Friuli), Petra Kohlenpratt.
Backgrounds: Anthropology/ European ethnology, ethnography, history, fine and visual arts & music

Performing Heritage: Popular and artistic practices in contentious settings

Marion Hamm, Klaus Schönberger

For heritage to become relevant, it needs to be publicly considered and enacted, or *performed* [-> Performance]. Heritage performances occur in museums or archives, in popular culture and everyday life. How can the relationship between these fields be imagined? Can heritage work, done by citizens, artists or activists, challenge entrenched positions? Which practices are they using? How is heritage performed and made meaningful through popular practices?

We studied heritage performances in rural and urban research sites. The rural research sites are situated in the Alps Adriatic area that connects Carinthia (AT), Friuli (IT) and the North-Western part of Slovenia. We worked with the curators and artists from UNIKUM; the university cultural centre in Klagenfurt / Celovec, who have been conducting popular/ artistic heritage work in the region since 1986. UNIKUM's practice is relevant in the political field of Carinthia. In their artistic and curatorial practice, they *disarticulate* Carinthian heritage from the Carinthian

dispositive [-> Other Land], which locks controversial versions of the past in strictly entrenched positions. Instead, they *rearticulate* it with a border- and language-crossing cosmopolity which is open to the world. To do so, they draw on familiar popular practices such as hiking and music, turning them into art with the help of a large international network of artists, artisans, musicians, poets and craftspeople.

The urban research site is the London neighbourhood of Brixton, where brutal urban renewal is bringing up much memory of a popular cultural heritage which is about to be destroyed. We worked with civic campaigns which seek to protect existing social housing as well as social infrastructure such as public libraries. Seemingly consensual local heritage was inserted into an ongoing social struggle: it was made contentious. Creative practices were crucial in this endeavor, as shown, for instance, in the public rendition of the 1904 opening of the local Carnegie library as a protest against its imminent closure. We brought together people from local campaigns with our collaborators from the Graphic design collective *Propagate*, to work on visual representations of the respective struggles.

References

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Part 2

Approaching contentious heritages

Contentious Collections, Contentious Heritage. Risks and Potentials of Opening Europe's Memory Bank

Sharon Macdonald

Across Europe, the storage spaces of museums and other archival institutions are filled with numerous collections – objects and documents gathered up in earlier times according to the scientific ideas, museum ambitions and opportunities of the day, as well as resulting from the inclinations and even whims of particular curators. This is a vast corpus of cultural heritage – some of it well known but much that is poorly documented and even forgotten. It constitutes, in effect, a memory bank – but one that is itself often overlooked or only half remembered. Its vaults contain collections not just of material culture but of the world-views, political imaginaries, scientific practices, hopes, dreams and nightmares with which its stored objects were entangled. Another way of seeing these numerous collections is as a sedimented layer of memory upon which Europe is built. This layer is made up not only of official memory and heritage – that laid down in conscious awareness of Europe- or nation- building. Rather, additionally, and indeed to an even greater extent, it is the result of more heterogeneous and untidy collecting practices. As such, this heritage includes traces of other – maybe counter- and contentious – histories and claims. Even if rarely given much attention, this memory layer has, in various and sometimes hard to determine ways, shaped contemporary Europe.

Excavating and bringing such heritage to light can provide a fuller understanding of this shaping, as well as highlighting possible sources of commonality for Europe or of fissures that divide. Some might argue, in psychoanalytic vein, that contemporary self-understanding is only achievable through processes of reflexive excavation and bringing to the surface of what has been forgotten. But even if we do not go along with this historically and culturally specific medicalised presumption, there is surely little doubt that knowing more about the complexities of the past – those that go beyond tidier official histories – can help with grasping current historically-rooted tensions and disputes. Opening the semi-forgotten memory bank reveals that there were more pasts – more positions, perspectives and voices – involved in Europe's

making than is sometimes acknowledged. This in itself can potentially offer support for arguing for more capacious and heterogeneous understanding of Europe – or Europes – today. In addition, opening the memory bank – and sifting through the layers of sedimented memory – can illuminate processes by which certain pasts came to be discarded and forgotten. This too can provide important material with which to reflexively understand not only the background to different positions within Europe today but also the kinds of processes that may be currently underway and similarly in need of addressing.

The search for traces of memory and the excavation of the past can, however, be unsettling and risky. You never know what you will find. Certain memories and pasts may have been marginalised or buried because of their potential for causing pain or disruption. This is difficult heritage that can unsettle rather than support positive contemporary self-identifications, and that may kindle social grievances and divisions (Macdonald 2009). It is contentious heritage, in that even to address it – to bring it out of the deep vaults of the memory bank – risks provoking anxiety, disagreement and dispute. What might the revelation of such heritage do?

The TRACES project, as has already been explained in this volume, seeks to explore the question of contentious heritage in Europe, and to do so especially through the format of *creative co-productions* (Adler, this volume; Adler 2018). These involve taking a case of a heritage that is regarded by those involved with it – often its main custodians – as somehow risky to bring out of the vault. Working together, cultural institutions (who are the usual custodians), researchers and artists develop approaches for conveying this heritage to the public, making their own struggles to do so, as well as what they actually achieve, the subject of research. In other words, the creative co-productions– and other parts of TRACES – are involved in actively exploring, through designed forms of public transmission, what the revelation of contentious heritage might do, and what questions and possibilities it raises.

The workpackage *Contentious Collections: Research on Material Culture of Difficult Cultural Heritage,* brings together some of that experience and insight as it relates in particular to questions of contentious collections. In this present contribution, then, I draw on cases from TRACES to discuss the following. First, what do we mean by

contentious heritage? My commentary above implies a particular sense, which I expand upon further, while also discussing related terms and their methodological implications. Second, I address some of the challenges that museums and related cultural institutions may face in trying to transmit contentious collections to the public. Third, I reflect upon what is productive or counter-productive in such acts of opening Europe's problematic memory vaults.

What do we mean by 'contentious heritage'?

At the outset of TRACES, we did not explicitly define what we meant by contentious heritage.[1] Rather, we positioned it within statements about a crisis of identities and values within Europe, writing: 'Social and political conflicts within and between European states are acted out on the field of culture, including heritage institutions and practice. This leads to a continuous and ubiquitous confrontation with European histories, values and conflicts' (TRACES 2015: 2). Our implicit understanding, then, took 'contentious' to mean involving confrontation and conflict. That is, it regarded 'contentious heritage' as involving acknowledged and active differences of position leading to problematic friction. In effect, then, our working definition of contentious heritage at the outset of the project was something like: 'heritage that is subject to open and unresolved conflicts from players who are differently situated socially and politically'. This usefully drew us to attend to social and political dimensions of conflict over culture. As the research progressed, however, it became evident that we needed to further reflect upon the term in light of other terminology – why were we using 'contentious' rather than other terms already in use, or, indeed, others that might be? Moreover, as we considered the cases with which we were dealing, we also realized that not all of what we wanted to address could be covered by this definition. Such reflection, discussion and subsequent refining of 'contentious cultural heritage' – even if we do not yet all fully agree on it – is an outcome of the research project.

As the research has progressed, it has brought to light three primary ways in which our original understanding of contentious heritage is either inadequate or methodologically problematic. The first of these is that what we have been dealing with is not necessarily openly contested in the public domain. On the contrary, as my introduction above maintains, there are good reasons to be interested in heritage that has been largely ignored or forgotten; and this was in fact the situation of most of the

cases that we had chosen for attention. Indeed, of the five cases that *Contentious Collections* focused on, it was only the topic of the transformation of Long Kesh/Maze prison in Northern Ireland that was subject to significant public debate and conflict at the time that the research began [-> Restaging the Object]. This is not to say that the others were uncontentious: on the contrary, they were all part of broader heritage conflicts, even if this was not publically focused specifically upon them. Moreover, some had been sites of contention at particular moments for parts of their collections, while not being subject as a whole to sustained public contention. This was notably the case for the skull collection in the Vienna Natural History Museum (see Adler/ Harries: Dead Images, in this volume) [–> *Dead Images*] in the lead-up to and removal of NS-era skulls and more recent (including ongoing) claims for the repatriation of some skulls, such as Maori. Important though consideration of such contentiousness is to our project, however, it also became increasingly clear during the research undertaken for all of the creative co-productions that it was not just the already opened-up contentions that mattered but also the latent ones.

This relates to a second, more methodological, question, namely over our role in defining a particular heritage as 'contentious'. As Alenka Pirman prompted us to reflect upon, were we not as researchers sometimes labeling matters as 'contentious' that were not necessarily seen that way by others concerned – such as the museums or archives holding particular collections? Her question stemmed directly from her experience in *Casting of Death,* entailing research on Slovenian death masks, about which there had been no public debate – indeed, scant interest – before the onset of the research [-> Casting of Death]. In effect, her question raised that of whether in our research we were taking 'contentiousness' primarily as a category deployed for analytic purposes by researchers rather than expecting to find those involved perceiving what we might regard to be contentious. As she also pointed out, our project's identification of certain collections as 'contentious' could lead – as it did in one case of the death masks – to their custodians refusing to grant access to them because of the problematic status that the label conferred. Moreover, Alenka's question could be seen to lead to another that was important for our research to ask: namely, that of whether, if a heritage was not already in contention, it should be unearthed and presented as such.

The third issue concerned our initial emphasis on social and political conflict. Such forms of contention have undoubtedly been central to our project but as we mentioned briefly in our initial project outline, and as our research showed further, there are other reasons why heritage might be contentious. Death and forms of harm to the human body are a feature of many, in some ways all, of our creative co-production cases, and this has raised the question of whether or not it is right to show dead or maimed bodies, or parts or images of them. Likewise, some of the sculptures in *Awkward Objects of Genocide* [–> Awkward Objects] raise the question of whether showing acts of killing or degrading other human beings is permissible – and, if so, in what circumstances and with which provisos (questions that have, of course, been addressed in extensive debates in relation to violence and suffering, e.g. Sontag 2003; Chouliavaki and Blaagaard 2013). Certainly, the specific histories – be they of colonialism or the Troubles in Northern Ireland – cannot be readily separated from the traces of memory of harm, killing and death, but at the same time there are more general and phenomenological issues concerning the representation of death, harm and killing to a wider public. In order to give attention to these questions, then, we needed to understand 'contentious' not only in terms of social and political conflict, important though this is.

In the introduction to this article, I used 'contentious heritage' to refer to heritage over which there is concern that its public showing may generate anxiety, disagreement and dispute. This use allows for the incorporation of a wide range of forms of contention, including those surrounding death and harm, which are sometimes, indeed, more affective and less easy to articulate in words. It also allows for consideration of heritage that is not already subject to public dispute. Moreover, it does not assume that the public showing will *necessarily* generate anxiety, disagreement and dispute. Certain modes of transmitting it may circumvent this (perhaps problematically). The point, however, is that there is a sense in which opening these particular vaults of the memory bank is thought by at least some involved (and maybe especially its custodians) to risk stirring up something unwelcome – pasts that might potentially cause dispute and conflict in Europe today. In other words, contentious heritage refers to heritage that is actually in contention or that has the potential to be so. As Roma Sendyka has pointed out (personal communication) the term 'contentious' is etymologically connected to the term

'tendere', meaning to stretch; and we might, therefore, productively think of contentious heritage as 'radically stretching the debate'.

Some other terms

Ideas of 'contested' or 'conflicted' history and heritage are used widely in the academic literature, with reference to Europe and elsewhere (e.g. Brandstetter 2010; Dann, Graham and Seaton 2001; Hodgkin and Radstone 2003; Silverman 2010). There is also a subfield of 'post-conflict heritage' research, concerned explicitly with situations of war and its aftermath (e.g. De Jong and Rowlands 2008; Winter 2007). These differ from our use of 'contentious', however, in that they only index pasts that are already subject to dispute. The term 'negative heritage' is also sometimes used in this way (e.g. Rico 2008) but can be more broadly understood (e.g. Meskell 2002) to refer to heritage that in some way disturbs rather than affirms. While it does not necessarily need to be understood as part of a strong binary with 'positive heritage' it seems to be less inviting of a gradient of degrees by comparison with the term 'contentious' – and, moreover, contentiousness is not necessarily negative.

Jon Tunbridge and Gregory Ashford's term 'dissonant heritage' (1996) has also been much used and allows for the possibility that 'dissonance' may be 'latent' rather than 'active'. However, the term risks losing analytic traction due to being extremely broadly defined (they say that all heritage is dissonant). 'Dissonance' can refer to a relatively mild sense of discomfort – as well as much more serious conflict – and thus to numerous different phenomena, ranging from atrocity to alternative approaches to tourism advertising. Although they claim that the reason for heritage dissonance is fundamentally that it 'belongs to someone and logically, therefore, not to someone else' (p.21), the range of cases that they cover seems not to bear this out. Moreover, while 'ownership' is often a crucial issue it is not necessarily so, and their formulation works with a model of the past as a limited resource, a position that has been criticized by Michael Rothberg in his arguments for thinking about memory as multidirectional (2009).

'Dark heritage' is a further term that has been deployed, initially within discussion of 'dark tourism', to refer in effect to the heritage that might be the focus of tourism to

sites of death, suffering and the macabre – and indeed, more specifically, to argue for this as 'an intimation of post-modernity' (Lennon and Foley 2000: 11). As such, its emphasis, in its original use at least, is particularly oriented towards visiting and the 'commodification of anxiety' (ibid.: 12), and less towards issues of contentiousness, as in our project, though it has come to be used more widely, often rather loosely, as Stone (2013) points out. Such broad use can allow for addressing a wide range of areas, including active and more subterranean disagreements, as shown well in Laura McAtackney's (2014; 2019 forthcoming) work on the Long Kesh/Maze Prison in Northern Ireland [-> Transforming Long Kesh/Maze].

In the introduction, I also briefly mentioned 'difficult heritage' – a term that I and others have used elsewhere. Logan and Reeves (2009) do not give a definition but use it in quite a broad way to index 'places of pain and shame'. My own use was formulated more specifically to refer to pasts 'recognized as meaningful in the present but that [are] also contested and awkward for public reconciliation with a positive, self-affirming contemporary identity' (2009: 1). My concern was especially to investigate a turn towards public addressing of such histories – a move that I saw as a significant shift away from a tendency, especially in national histories, to focus on 'feel-good' heritage. Difficult heritage or pasts, by contrast, 'threaten... to break through into the present in disruptive ways, opening up social divisions, perhaps by playing into imagined, even nightmarish, futures' (ibid.). Clearly, this has significant relevance for much of the work in TRACES but its scope is more specific than that which we seek to examine under the label of 'contentious heritage'.

This is not a comprehensive account of terms related to that of 'contentious heritage' but it serves, I hope, to make evident that they mostly do somewhat different analytical work, even though clarifying distinctions between them is not easy due to them not always being precisely demarcated.[2] That they have some important differences in their application and analytical capacities means that we need to use them in careful combination in some of our investigations. The term 'contentious' is, however, well suited as our primary orienting term here due to it being neither delimited to that already in contest, nor so broad as to apply to almost anything. It enables us to focus on what might give rise to anxiety and disagreement, as well as to that which actually does so. This is especially important for our project's concern

with identifying what are or might be the areas for disagreement or dispute in relation to bringing collections – and their contentious affordances – into engagement with the public.

Relatively detailed accounts of challenges faced by TRACES projects to transmit contentious heritage to the public are given elsewhere in this volume. Here, I look more generally at the concerns about such public transmission that museums and related cultural institutions might have. My aim is not to provide a comprehensive account but, rather, to highlight some of the main areas of struggle. I divide these into: collections location; who are we speaking as and for?; and, who are we speaking to and how – and what might happen?

Collections location

Collections are to be found in many locations within Europe, not all of them institutional. Although our own focus began primarily with those in cultural institutions – the Ethnographic Museum in Krakow, museums, libraries and archives in Slovenia, and the Natural History Museum in Vienna – our research also took us beyond these. This included the incorporation of *Absence of Heritage* [–> Absence as Heritage] as the objects found in the abandoned synagogue in Mediaş, Romania, became assembled into a collection;[3] and the *Transforming Long Kesh/Maze* Prison project found itself engaging private collections and collections in community museums, and itself created a kind of collection in the form of photographs of selected objects with custodian participants [–> Transforming Long Kesh/Maze]. In addition, however, research on the more museum-focused cases also moved beyond the initial institutional locations as researchers followed particular kinds of objects, and discovered them too in more private and personal collections. This itself helped to highlight the different conditions and possibilities of how objects are treated and also transacted, depending on where they are held. Such contrasts are a background, then, to my focus below on collections within museums and other related institutions that have a duty to some form of public education. These may face specific challenges of their institutional and political setting – though some of the points made will relate to contentious collections elsewhere too.

Although, as a substantial literature (some of which is mentioned above) shows, displaying dark, difficult or contentious heritage has become far from unusual, it nevertheless often remains problematic for established cultural heritage institutions. The reasons for this are various but include the following. First, to do so may be seen as somehow running against the institution's main remit – in relation to either its subject-focus or its public mission. One 'awkwardness' about the vernacular Holocaust art works in the Krakow Ethnographic Museum is that they are not conventional examples of 'folk art', even if this is the classification within which they were collected. The vast collection of human skulls – and accompanying anthropological photography collection – in the Vienna Museum of Natural History is no longer seen as part of a scientific endeavor that the Museum wishes to foreground for the public. Likewise, the Slovenian death masks – which are often scattered between various collections (see Pirnat, this volume) [-> Shooting in the field] – are not regarded as a phenomenon or topic that is at the forefront of the areas on which museums wish to focus today.

Most museums operate within tight constraints of funding and space, and they may rely on attracting paying visitors for income. These factors can undoubtedly also contribute to them being reluctant to tackle contentious collections that they fear may fail to generate interest or even produce distaste and keep visitors away. If commercial sponsorship is needed for temporary exhibitions, topics involving death or trauma are extremely difficult to finance. A further institutional inhibition may be the lack of good knowledge about the collections. This may well be especially lacking for such collections, which may well have been neglected due to their awkwardness and/or lack of fit with prevailing directions of scientific, curatorial or public interest, as well as possible institutional assumptions that they would be unlikely to be shown in the future. (Here we might note that one very important dimension of TRACES is that it has helped both to contribute to and support that expertise and the public transmission of such heritage.)

Institutions inevitably operate within political contexts, which to various extents influence the topics selected or the ways in which they are shown. The existing literature includes documented examples of substantial political intervention.[4] Our own creative co-production work has shown how political intervention can operate in

a range of ways, not all of which are necessarily substantial but which may be relatively subtle, including curators having absorbed a 'feel' for likely political response – and then either choosing to confront this or, probably more often, to avoid doing so. Yet such contexts do not remain static. Indeed, all of our creative co-productions experienced changing political contexts, though not always in the same directions. On the one hand, all work within a European context in which there has been a groundswell for many years now towards tackling contentious topics, such as colonialism, the Holocaust and the socialist past, albeit to varied extents in different countries and with respect to different topics. Such tackling may be done for a range of reasons, including, to address public interest, that other institutions are doing so, or that 'confessing' to past perpetration has become an established representational mode (Macdonald 2016a). On the other, however, over the course of our research we saw changes in the political landscape – especially a widespread move to the political right and far-right – that might run counter to the increased willingness to give public representation to countries' own difficult heritage. In Poland, for example, the Law and Justice Party, which came to power again in 2015, has intervened in the representation of the country in the new Museum of World War II in Gdansk (Machcewicz 2018). In negotiations over Brexit, the border between the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland is a major sticking point, even risking a return to the border problems that were part of the Troubles. This is part of the changed context of *Transforming Long Kesh*, a project that deals with the heritage of the prison in which some of those involved in the Troubles were incarcerated [-> Restaging the object].

Institutional and political location may set a wide range of inhibitions to tackling contentious collections. They might, of course, also provide the impetus to do so, as when museums or other cultural institutions examine their own histories and roles – and when nations too, perhaps as they consider their 'Europeanness', likewise engage in self-reflection (see Römhild, this volume) [-> Europeanisation].

Who are we speaking as and for?

Institutional notions about their 'voice' are also at the root of another reason why curators may find contentious collections especially challenging to deal with. As such collections generally involve very alternative – and even conflicting – interests and

perspectives from different 'communities of implication' (see Lehrer in this volume) [-> Communities of implication], curators need to decide whose perspectives to transmit to the public and in effect of having to adjudicate between them (even if this is only through the space or format that they accord each). They may also face difficulties over whether and how they convey the perspectives of those with whom they disagree, as in the case of reprehensible views for example. How should they tackle such issues as curators?

TRACES projects have provided many examples of such struggles. Curators of the Vienna skull collection, for example, may themselves be natural scientists whose own work has been conducted in very different frameworks than that of, say, Maori representatives who have approached the Museum for the return of their ancestors. As a natural history museum, is it the natural scientific view that they should be presenting? But is there such a unified view anyhow? As the collaborative work of creative co-production showed, not only were there different perspectives amongst museum scientists (mainly physical anthropologists) – and indeed other staff – at the beginning of the project, there was also change as the project progressed. This included some of the physical anthropologists finding their own earlier positions problematic. The approach towards public transmission was to highlight the multiplicity of perspectives from many communities of implication, including those sometimes called 'source communities' or 'heritage communities', such as Maori, whose perspectives had not been previously formally included in the Natural History Museum. In addition, however, it included perspectives from what members of the team found to be problematic views, such as of a skull collector [-> Individual story]. In *Awkward Objects of Genocide*, [-> Awkward objects] curators have struggled over a wide range of problems raised by the artworks in the 'folk art' collections, including those showing images of the perpetration of violence (Lehrer and Sendyka 2019 forthcoming). Our other creative co-productions, the abandoned synagogue project [–> Absence as Heritage], the Slovenian death masks [–> Casting of Death], and the project to transform Long Kesh/the Maze Prison [–> Transforming Long Kesh/Maze Prison], have all also, in different ways, had to negotiate issues of whose voices and perspectives they include, and the implicit 'standpoint' of their representations (be they exhibitions or even the supposedly 'neutral' form of databases).
Looking across all of the cases of contentious collections in our study, it is notable

that they have all opted – albeit in diverse ways – to try to include a range of positions. None has chosen a supposedly 'objective' representation that does not even raise the question of 'who speaks?'. Furthermore, all have also paid attention to – and included in their public transmissions – perspectives and voices that were heretofore relatively absent from the public domain, what Martin Krenn and Aisling O'Beirn (2019 forthcoming) refer to as 'lesser-known narratives' [-> Restaging the Object]. Moreover, they have not restricted themselves to clear-cut positions but have often embraced the more complex and ambiguous ones. In *Absence as Heritage*, to take one, striking, example, in an exhibition in the former synagogue they told a narrative by a Jewish contemporary witness in which the actions of a German army commander saved local Jews. Such turning of traditional narratives 'on their head', as Julie Dawson put it in describing this case, needs much thought, especially when it points to perpetration or complicity by other groups (in this case, Romanian Iron Guardists) that is not already part of local memory (see Dawson in this volume) [-> Burlocks]. Other contentious collections projects, especially *Awkward Objects of Genocide*, have faced this too [-> Awkward objects]. More generally, such 'upending' or other forms of disturbing or complexifying the usual stories can cause nervousness amongst curators because of its apparent contradiction of some museological tenets – held especially by long- established public museums – that visitors need to be presented with clear and unambiguous knowledge. In addition, telling stories that depart from popular narratives can be especially challenging. As we have found in the TRACES project, the input of artists can be extremely helpful here as they are often accustomed to working with complexity and ambiguity, as well as skilled in forms of public engagement that are not so based in mechanical ideas of knowledge transmission typical of more traditional museum educational models.

Who are we speaking to and how – and what might happen?

Such concerns about 'the public' or 'visitors' are often high on the agenda for museum curators in deciding what to exhibit and how. In the case of contentious topics, this looms especially large. It does so because of a range of fears about possible interpretations of what is displayed, as well as anxiety about what might happen both to visitors (e.g. leaving them unable to process what they have encountered) as well as to the institution and staff (e.g. criticism and job losses). Such

fears have not only made museums often reluctant to tackle contentious collections but can also shape how they deal with them.
As has been shown in previous research, and in this project too, curators imagine future visitors as they make an exhibition and they may also invoke 'the public' in order to legitimate certain (non-) actions. In response to this, it is important to point out that neither the term 'visitors' nor 'the public' should be taken to mean that all of those connoted by the terms hold the same view or will have the same wishes or appetite for, say, engaging with complex topics. Moreover, the past or current public or visitorship is not necessarily identical with that in the future. Recognizing this potential diversity, however, does not mean – as is sometimes inferred – that there is no point thinking about how something might be received as it is likely to be so various and individualized anyhow. On the contrary, it makes it especially important to think about the *range* of likely reception, including of potential audiences who do not currently visit.

One aspect of creative co-production has been to reflect upon the different kinds of actual and potential publics – including by expanding this beyond those of the existing institution. This has sometimes entailed rethinking how 'contention' is itself approached by institutions. Rather than seeing it as something from which visitors need to be 'protected', TRACES encourages a position in which contention can be a productive mode of engaging them (see Landkammer/Schneider – Conflict learning, in this volume) [-> Conflict learning]. Thus contentious collections, which may have been kept out of public view for many years, are positioned not so much as burdens but as valuable resources for such work.

From the various experiences of the creative co-production projects considered here, the following are some of the more specific concerns that institutions may hold in relation to visitors and publics. First, there are the concerns already mentioned above about how visitors might encounter – and potentially misunderstand – the complex information and presentation that is likely to be required for contentious collections. One challenge for the explanation of contention is how to represent a range of, sometimes highly diverse, 'positions' – ideally without doing so in the form of 'sides'. Doing so can create space for visitors to formulate their own standpoints. It also risks, however, that they may just pick up on one or more of the positions, thus

potentially leaving them only with partial stories, maybe even ones that run against the intended grain.

A second concern that collections staff sometimes articulate is that visitors may simply not be interested – either in the topic or in the kind of engagement necessary for grasping the complexities of contention. Or, perhaps, they are interested in a way that curators might find problematic. In relation to the death masks [–> Casting of Death] for example, a press conference held eight months before the planned exhibition showed considerable media interest in 'death masks as objects', especially in relation to 'particular masks and the depicted personalities', to such an extent that the co-production team were concerned that would be 'such an attraction that they'd "steal the show"' (Pirman, personal communication). The team did not, however, want to 'reduce' their focus to being just on the masks of certain famous persons, but wanted instead to show it as a wider phenomenon – and therefore as containing multiple historical links and positions. To this end, they specifically decided not to show masks from public collections in their exhibition [–> Artistic Upgrade].

Another concern amongst collections staff was over whether visitors might be left emotionally troubled by the contentious topics being conveyed or objects shown in ways that they felt were either inappropriate for their institution or that would be somehow unproductive. All of the collections studied contained objects that related to histories of violence or oppression – though in a wide range of ways, with it being more central in many and more indirect in others (even within particular collections). In the case of the death masks, for example, some were of political figures who had played roles in past oppression but the majority of masks were of artists without direct links to violent historical acts. How far to convey those emotionally troubling pasts – including how much wider context to give – and in what ways was, thus, a question for all of the forms of transmission being developed. In some cases, such as some of the vernacular Holocaust art, the objects themselves directly depicted violence but decisions still needed to be made about what wider information to give about the Holocaust. In most other cases too, decisions needed to be made about what historical information to convey – about, for example, the events that led to the abandoning of the synagogue in Mediaș, or to reprehensible collecting practices involved in some of the skull collecting.

The skulls also raised further concerns over the ethics of their use and display. How to deal with what are usually called 'human remains' has become a major issue for museums, with various protocols having been developed or being in the making (as well as a good deal of unreflective practice continuing) (e.g. Gazi 2014; Förster and Frundt 2017). Addressing the ethical and emotional issues of a collection of actual body parts of formerly living humans was a key aspect of *Dead Images* [-> Individual story] [-> Shock]. These issues were in some ways intensified given that the body parts were skulls, due to skulls' manifestation of individual personhood, partly effected by their apparent ability to look. Moreover, skulls are also subject to a wide range of sometimes very diverse cultural and affective responses, including taboo and avoidance, religious veneration, and popular cultural joking and macabre festivity, all of which meant that the affective range of visitor response might be especially broad.

Finding ways to negotiate through these multiple concerns and the range of possible visitor – and not-yet-visitor – responses has been a major task of the work to publicly transmit contentious collections. So too has thinking about possible institutional and media responses. Doing so has required drawing on a wide range of intellectual resources and expertise, including that of curators – within as well as outside museums – researchers, and artists. Paying careful reflexive attention to the negotiations and struggles that ensue has been at the core of the TRACES research process.

Opening Europe's contentious memory vaults: what might be unleashed?

At the time of writing, we have not completed the TRACES research and so a thorough assessment of the effects of the strategies designed for making contentious collections public is not yet possible. Nevertheless, it is already clear that a tremendous amount has been learned and achieved during the innovative multi-expertise process of creative co-production. The discussion above introduces some of the questions and areas that such work has brought to light, as do other parts of this Companion. Here, I restrict myself to some brief remarks on the questions with which I began.

As I noted at the beginning, opening up neglected collections can bring more pasts – more positions, perspectives and voices – to light than had previously been recognized. This has undoubtedly occurred in relation to the collections in this project, both those already constituted as collections when the research began and also those assembled during it. Without it having been a concerted or pre-planned strategy, all of the creative co-productions that are part of the *Contentious Collections* research have drawn on the diversity thrown up by collections in their various forms of public transmission. Moreover, they have often chosen to focus on the more complex examples – the 'awkward' ones, to borrow the term used in *Awkward Objects of Genocide* – in order to prompt visitors into greater reflection rather than settling into established narratives, especially those of the usual perpetrators and victims. There are two particular risks, which run counter to each other, of such established narratives. First, they prompt readings in terms of the past categories – with perpetrators thus being, say, Nazis or colonial scientists. This in effect 'contains' the potential of the collections to particular historical moments. The other risk, however, is that categories are deployed that transcend time in ways that allocate people to pre-given and taken-for-granted identities within already familiar narratives, thus confirming existing stereotypes rather than prompting reflection on the ethics involved. In other words, the risk is that it is prefigured that certain groups of people – say 'Germans' to take the example from the exhibition in the former synagogue in Medias – will be the perpetrators. Disturbing such 'easy-readings' helps encourage more complex subject positions, offering up visitors the possibility not just of being classified by history but to take their own stand.

Delving into collections has also revealed unpleasant, even reprehensible and violent, practices, events, or objects – of the kind that might generate anxiety about making them public, perhaps especially when they relate to the histories of cultural institutions themselves or to continuing social or political divides. There has, undoubtedly, been anxiety in some of our cases, and sometimes disagreement from within institutions or elsewhere about what should be shown and how. Yet even in the face of these, curators and other institutional staff have expressed senses of relief about addressing the (sometimes literal) 'skeletons in the closet' – of, at last, something being done. Sometimes this is out of longstanding wishes to tackle contentious collections or historically resonant locations, perhaps sometimes before

these are either made public or developed in other, cruder and less thoughtful ways.

Working with artists and other researchers to develop strategies for tackling the collections has allowed for a quality, extent and creativity of approach that would not have been possible otherwise. Staff in many of the institutions with which we have worked have spoken about this, and have remarked on how the collaborative project work has opened up new ways of seeing or doing things. How much of this will continue or even expand in the future, beyond this project, is hard to assess – and there are factors that push against it, such as limited resources – but there is clearly a will that it should from those who have witnessed the benefits.

The latter include visitors – for those of our projects that have already reached this stage – as well as museum and other staff. Again, we await fuller assessment but it is already clear from some of our cases that for some visitors at least, opening up contentious histories – providing more complex and challenging cases to think through – is relished rather than avoided. Doing this kind of addressing and thinking – rather than automated application of ready-made categories and moral stances – is at the heart of creating a more reflective Europe.

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[1] The term has had occasional use previously (e.g. van Ginkel 2005) and more recently (e.g. Smith 2015) but it has not been theoretically elaborated or widely deployed.

[2] Others include ‘undesirable heritage’ (Macdonald 2006), ‘orphan heritage’ (Sendyka, this volume), and also terms that do not put their focus on ‘heritage’, such as ‘difficult knowledge’ (Lehrer, Milton and Patterson 2011), and ‘sensitive collections’ (Brandstetter and Hierholzer 2018) and in the creative co-production on Holocaust objects, discussed in this article, the idea of ‘awkward’ objects is used.

[3] The synagogue was abandoned not due to Holocaust but rather emigration of the Jewish community after World War II. See *Absence as Heritage,* this volume.

[4] A classic and much discussed case is the dispute over the planned redisplay of the Enola Gay (the plane that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima in WWII) at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington in the 1990s (e.g. Linethal and

Englehardt 1996), and very recently, that over the display of Polish history in the new World War II Museum in Gdansk (Machcewicz 2018).

Making heritage contentious. The politics of heritage in different configurations

Marion Hamm

Heritage, it is suggested, is something to be cherished and preserved as a reminder of human ingenuity across borders and generations. However, taking a closer look, we begin to realise that even the most picturesque instances of heritage hold the notion of conflict past and present. This is also true when we take a look at heritages in Europe. As Noam Chomsky (2011) remarked: "For centuries, Europe had been the most violent place on earth, with murderous and destructive internal conflicts and the forging of a culture of war that enabled Europe to conquer most of the world"[1]. Traces of this history can be found in institutions and subjectivities, and also in the field of heritage. The proposal to study heritage as contentious emerged from the remit of the TRACES project (Transmitting Contentious Cultural Heritages with the Arts – from Intervention to Co-Production). The project aimed to contribute to a new imagination of Europe that takes conflict as a starting point rather than a closure.[2] The work presented in this companion refers to highly regulated dimensions of heritage as well as the messy processes of memory-making. Drawing on and performing critical artistic practices, the contributors propose new forms of representing and transmitting contentious heritages. The concept of contentious heritage was introduced in the project as an open concept. Over three years, TRACES researchers shaped, applied, or rejected the term in different ways. This contribution is based on these exchanges and shaped by the research interests I share with my colleague Klaus Schönberger. It develops how contentious heritage can be used as an analytical device, to direct attention to the politics of heritage. It takes inspiration from the research experiences collected in this companion, combines them with critical research on heritages, and relates these to theories of social movements. It is argued that academic, artistic and civic engagement with contentious heritage can challenge normalized understandings of belonging and exclusion on the terrain of heritage by setting existing regimes of truth into motion [-> Agonism]

When is heritage contentious?

Over the last decade, research in critical heritage studies has challenged conventional perspectives on heritage (Harrison 2013). Scholars have introduced heritage concepts such as awkward, uncomfortable, troubling, difficult (Macdonald 2008 and in this volume), contested

(Pakier/ Stråth 2010; Schneider 2019 forthcoming), dissonant (Tunbridge/ Ashworth 1996), or multidirectional (Rothberg 2009) to capture different forms of unease with heritage [->Contentious collections]. (Kockel 2010; Macdonald 2013, Packier/ Stråth 2010) As Whitehead and Bozoğlu (2017) show in an excellent research review on heritage and memory in Europe, this body of work overlaps with the research fields of remembering, collective memory and history (Halbwachs 1992; Hobsbawm/Ranger 1992; Nora 1989). Heritage is, other than memory and history, a normative term with governmental implications. Yet the concept is being re-configured to include subjective and affective aspects relating to everyday experience (see Smith 2006, 2012). The aforementioned concepts relate to specific heritage configurations touching on contentious issues such as racism, antisemitism, colonialism, public or subjective memories of Nazism or the repression thereof. Is the unease about specific heritages therefore restricted to those heritages that are related to risky or controversial discourses in the present? As Smith (2006) states, "heritage *is* dissonant", not because some heritages are more risky than others, but because the process of heritage itself is deeply implicated in power structures. Smith explains that heritage "is a constitutive social process that on the one hand is about regulating and legitimizing, and on the other hand is about working out, contesting and challenging a range of cultural and social identities, sense of place, collective memories, values and meanings that prevail in the present and can be passed to the future" (Smith 2006:82). In this understanding, all heritage contains the notion of conflict.

Contentious heritage as an analytical research perspective

Building on this work, we propose to shape the concept of contentious heritage as an analytical research perspective rather than treating it as a specific, clearly defined type of heritage. This perspective invites scrutinising a variety of heritage configurations with a focus on conflict, difference and ways of dealing with them. Rather than asking: 'What is contentious about a particular heritage object or practice?', it suggests questions such as 'where are contentious aspects in this object or practice?' or 'in which heritage configuration (for whom) does it point to a contentious dimension?' Which creative practices can be or have been used to make negotiable that which is contentious, or to invite a process of reflection? Contentious heritage aims to direct attention to the cultural politics of heritage – even in those instances that, at first sight, show no sign of conflict or contention [-> Communities past and

present] [-> Casting Death] [In Schwebe]. *Making heritage contentious* means to look for those aspects of heritages that may challenge the hegemonic regime of truth [-> Agonism].

Looking for contentious aspects of heritage presupposes a processual understanding of heritage, where the meanings of any heritage object or practice is not fixed, but emerging in a social process. In this sense, Smith defines heritage as "a cultural process that engages with acts of remembering that work to create ways to understand and engage with the present and the sites themselves are cultural tools that can facilitate, but are not necessarily vital for, this process" (Smith 2006:44). Analysing contentious heritage requires contextualisation with specific *heritage configurations*. Often, the contentiousness of a heritage case, object or practice can only be noted in relation to the wider settings, discourses or public debates where it is situated. For instance, the archive of a disused synagogue is not contentious per se, neither is the thriving community centre that is part of the same compound [Absent heritage]. It is through contextualisation that the contentious aspects unfold. In this way, contentious heritage implies a relational approach and emphasises multi-perspectivity. Building on Smith, I propose to define a heritage configuration as a given, yet unstable, point in the process of heritage, involving relationships between institutional and other actors, performances and discourses.

Proposal: Situating heritage on the terrain of politics

The concept of contentious cultural heritage situates practices and material objectivations within existing power relations. Contentious heritage as a research perspective directs attention to the cultural politics of collective memory in the field of heritage. The online thesaurus thesaurus.com lists the following meanings for the adjective contentious: quarrelsome, antagonistic, combative, testy, argumentative, belligerent, disagreeable, factious, perverse, petulant, querulous. The word clearly has pugnatious connotations. In the German language, this aspect becomes even clearer: We speak of *umstrittenes Kulturerbe*, which contains the root 'Streit', meaning anything from dispute and controversy to quarrel and brawl. However, in social movement theory, 'contention' is not a pejorative term. In this transdisciplinary research context, 'contentious collective action' is an analytical term to denote different types of protest events. Here, contentiousness, as it is framed in social movement theory, relates to four dimensions that can be applied to the study of heritages: agency, interaction, relationality and public performances/repertoires.

First, "contentious politics" are defined as "*interactions* in which actors make claims bearing on someone else's interest (…)" (Tilly 2008:5). This broad definition allows comparison of very different types of non-conventional political action. Collective action "becomes contentious when it is used by people who lack regular access to institutions, act in the name of new or unaccepted claims and behave in ways that fundamentally challenge others" (Tilly 2008) [-> Dead Images]. Second, the *agency* of ordinary people increases when they "join forces in contentious confrontation with elites, authorities and opponents" (Tarrow, 2011). This relates to the different subject positions and institutional settings we identify in the various TRACES case studies. Third, as a central approach to the study of contentious politics, scholars of social movements propose to analyse public performances, bundled together in 'repertoires of contention'. Forth, they emphasize that the formation of collective identities within contentious politics is a *contingent, dynamic and relational* process based on multiple connections and interactions between different collective or individual actors, and the creation on collective stories about 'us' and 'other' (McAdam et al 2006).
In the complex and dynamic process of heritage, the notion of contentiousness directs attention to the political dimension. It articulates heritage with the political implications, processes of naturalisation, involving people, emotions and subjectivities as much as policies. Following these points, I came up with a first working definition: Contentious heritage is an analytical research perspective on a wide variety of heritage configurations Contentious heritage configurations involve public interactions in which actors use heritage objects or practices to express and perform different / contrary positions on issues related to contemporary versions of collective pasts.

Method: Follow the conflict

Contentious heritage as a research perspective invites to contextualise heritage configurations through a methodological approach that 'follows the conflict', rather than one specific historic or empirical anchor. Drawing on ethnography, I propose to conduct contextualisation is guided by an operation that might be termed "follow the conflict" (George Marcus). This term was coined by ethnographer George Marcus in his ground-breaking concept on multi-sited ethnography. Traditionally, an ethnographic research field was geographically bounded. Marcus claimed that we can construct a multi-sited ethnographic research field by following certain actors, concepts, narratives or qualities. Medias, for instance, is not part of TRACES because the project focusses on, say, South-Eastern Europe or multi-linguality, or Jewish

history, but because the Synagogue building in its specific setting invites questions on the contentiousness of heritage.

Practices: Public interactions/Performance

The production of heritage is seen as a contingent, dynamic process which evolves in public interactions. Thus it is crucial to understand the relations between different actors / stakeholders and settings. Looking at public interactions draws attention to interactions between different actors holding different positions. Without interaction, there is no contentiousness. Interactions take place in public institutions (schools, museums etc), in civil society (citizens' associations, cultural associations, pressure groups, art festivals), in the media, in families… The focus is on *public* interactions, such as the ones described and analysed in this companion. Public interactions connect individual, everyday recollections, collective narratives and hegemonic heritage regimes. Interaction has the potential to transform actors and the relations between them. Who engages in and organises heritage performances in our research fields, how do they relate to those we initiate as artists, researchers, heritage workers, as parts of communities [-> communities of implication] or engaged citizens? Who interacts with whom, who is excluded? Heritage objects and practices are media of communication, and can be mobilised to create public interaction [-> Diaological photography] Meaningful material culture or ways of doing things which signify one or several versions of a collective past are often emotionally charged. Different positions on an object or practice of heritage are publicly articulated. Performing contemporary versions of collective pasts: Ann Swidler's concept of *public performances* explains why the TRACES teams invested time and effort into the public interactions beyond the call of duty. Public performances such as exhibitions, workshops, guided tours, press conferences, theatre can be shaped as open platforms [-> Contentious glossary], and thereby help to create open democratic and pluralistic spaces for agonistic interaction on the terrain of heritage [Agonism]. Repertoires of performances can create a collective memory holding different positions: A heritage that is contentious, but at the same time shared.

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[1] See online: https://www.alternet.org/visions/chomsky-classic-we-have-means-end-civilization-we-know-it-how-revolutionary-pacifism-can

[2] A new European imagination based on conflict and difference was a central remit of TRACES.

Shifting regimes of truth: An agonistic perspective on contentious cultural heritages

Marion Hamm und Klaus Schönberger

At the time of writing, it is becoming prevalent that European states – or even Europe itself - are facing a crisis of democracy. In parliaments, governments and civil society, positions on the extreme right are increasing, the democratic legitimacy of the European Union is challenged by a variety of actors in several member states. This crisis is currently most prominent in the negotiations about the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union, where democracy is evoked by all parts of a heavily divided body politics [-> Staging the object]. The crisis of democracy is accompanied by social and technological change. On the cultural level, we observe a re-configuration of values and beliefs. In this situation, 'heritage' is heavily mobilised. This reminds us that heritage is closely connected to the political realm. In Foucauldian terms, we are witnessing how established systems of truth, and knowledge, are set into motion in a polarising and divisive way. According to Foucault, each society has its "regime of truth" (Foucault 1976., 12), where truth is "a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and functioning of statements" (Foucault 1976, 14). For him, if a new "politics of truth" is to be created, the task is to change the "political, economic, institutional regime of the production of truth" (ibid.). Following a central argument brought forward by the TRACES (Transmitting contentious cultural Heritages with the Arts) project, we argue that artists are well-placed to respond to the task of shifting regimes of truth, and show how the arts contribute to negotiating antagonistic interests on the terrain of heritage. The notion of agonism is introduced both as a strategy towards creative and productive ways in dealing with contentious heritages, and as an analytical device. We focus on antagonistic heritage configurations, where different versions of the past are competing for hegemony through claims to 'truth', often in direct opposition to each other in conflicts, which are shaped by existing power relations.

Heritage as regime

Heritage, and the practices and policies it involves are part of a wider regime of truth, that is, the ordered procedures which regulate what is seen as true or false, acceptable and normal or outlandish, radical or even dangerous. Referring to heritage conventions set out by the

UNESCO, Bendix et al point out that "the implementation of the international heritage regime on the state level brings forth a profusion of additional heritage regimes, endowing actors at state, regional and local levels with varied levels of power over selective aspects of culture" (Bendix/ Eggert/ Peselmann 2013, 14). Interrelated, multi-scalar heritage are impacting also on the everyday dimension. Through public performances and legislation, certification and classification, in museums, archives and popular culture, they regulate which narratives of the past are seen as legitimate, real, or 'true', which ones are officially promoted, and which ones are silenced or even oppressed. As selective procedures within hegemonic regimes of truth, heritages are always potentially or actually contentious [-> Contentious Heritage]. In TRACES, we studied the contentious dimension of heritage, rather than focussing on the unifying and elevating aspects. For instance, the team in Krakow [-> Awkard objects] worked with objects which museums and archives tend to classify as folk art. These were explored and curated as *vernacular holocaust art* [-> Awkard objects]. The objects were taken out of an often romanticising discourse of non-controversial and seemingly timeless folk art, and instead placed in a difficult and specific discourse in Poland on bystander-ism and antisemitism. Through the lens of shifting regimes of truth, this work can be interpreted as a critical statement on the level of heritage-as-procedure, which did not comply with the hegemonic heritage regime and demonstrated how the symbolic order can be challenged. For their final exhibition, they did not take an antagonistic approach, where the objects would have been bluntly denounced as evidence for instances of antisemitism. Instead, the exhibition opened up a space for a more nuanced, and perhaps even more unsettling perspective through Wojtech Wilczyk's series of close-up photographies [-> Close-ups]. In our view, this work exemplifies how an agonistic approach can bring regimes of truth in motion on the terrain of heritage through combining a procedure of re-classification with artistic practices.

Antagonistic heritage configurations

The term *contentious cultural heritage* emphasises the conflictual and divisive aspects of heritage [Contentious Heritage]. The notion of antagonism directs attention to the political dimension of heritage. One modality of heritage-related antagonism are situations where a current conflict over social, political or cultural issues is articulated through heritage. This contribution focusses on heritage-related antagonisms which are rooted in a conflict in the past that is perpetuated into the present, or in a current conflict over the evaluation and discursive shaping of an historical event that was, at the time, experienced in different ways.

Such antagonisms are often highly charged with emotions such as pain, grief, or resentment. Disputes over the correct interpretation of the past, or which version of the past is promoted as 'cultural heritage' are always connected to questions of hegemony and power over meanings. Lines of conflict can be drawn between specific communities of implication (Erica Lehrer in this volume) [-> Communities of implication] within societies, but also between states. Opposing sides compete for recognition, acknowledgement or codification of their respective positions, through a variety of memory practices. Such antagonistic heritage configurations often relate to traumatic experiences and collective memories, for instance of of civil wars [-> Transforming Long Kesh/ Maze], various instances of dictatorship, or wars between states, of genocidal acts or persecution of political adversaries, or, not least, of colonial exploitation and violent acts relating to it. The antagonism is often expressed around the victim/perpetrator binary, on guilt or historical responsibility. Each side insists on their own version of the past, or 'truth'. In antagonistic heritage configurations, it is almost impossible not to position oneself on either side of the argument. [-> Other land]. More nuanced in-between positions tend to be marginalised; and so are potential go-betweens and interpreters, who could mediate between entrenched positions. Active remembering on one side faces collective repression on the other. Acknowledging and making visible of experienced suffering on one side faces trivialisation and silencing on the other. Power-relations are inscribed in the regime of truth: Memories that deviate from the hegemonic version of the past are often excluded from public discourse, or silenced in other ways. However, what is excluded often remains present underneath the surface of public debate, as a different version of memory or counter-narrative. Such repressed memories often find their way into the public, albeit in a dis-placed way.

An example from our research in Carinthia may illustrate the complexity of such processes In post-war Austria, public acts of hegemonic remembrance of World War II focussed on acts of violence carried out by partisans against the German-speaking population – which, in large parts, supported the Nazis. Partisans [-> Partisans], many of whom were Slovene speakers, did in fact carry out acts of revenge at the end of the war. However, these pale in comparison to the terror of the Nazi-Terror against the Carinthian Slovenes and the Yugoslav population, which included the deportation of more than 300 families in 1942. Nevertheless, so-called partisan violence remains an important topos in the hegemonic historical narrative in Austria. Meanwhile, memory of the German-Austrian complicity in the crimes of the Nazi *Wehrmacht* is largely excluded from public remembering. The positions of victim and perpetrator have

been reversed. Articulations of the traumata of the Slovene-speaking minority are vehemently rejected. The particularly aggressive tone of this rejection points to the fragility of a hegemonic narrative, which disclaimed responsibility for the deportations, and firmly denied any involvement in Nazi crimes over decades. In recent years, the historically grounded antagonistic power-relations between Slovene and German-speaking Carinthians have taken an agonistic turning: The conflict has not been resolved, but irreconcilability, hatred or anger are becoming less important, and frontlines are beginning to dissolve [-> Signage dispute].

An agonistic approach to antagonism

We borrow the term agonism from political philosopher Chantal Mouffe (2005, 24; 2013). In her *agonistic* approach, she proposes a productive perspective on antagonism. She argues that in democratic societies, antagonism is unavoidable. Therefore, the aim cannot be to resolve conflict completely. Rather, she proposes that the way in which opponents relate to each other must be reconfigured. The task, then, is to create open, democratic, pluralistic spaces, where antagonistic positions can interact and be negotiated. This allows finding compromises all side can live with, although no side will be completely satisfied. Mouffe's agonistic approach to politics and pluralistic democracy holds three proposals which are interesting also in regard of ways of dealing with contentious cultural heritage.

First, enemies can become adversaries. The term agonism comes from the Greek word *agon*. It refers to an athletic contest oriented not merely toward victory or defeat, but emphasizing the importance of the struggle itself—a struggle that cannot exist without the opponent. While in conflict, adversaries acknowledge each other's legitimacy. They see themselves "as sharing a common symbolic space within which the conflict takes place" (Mouffe 2005, 24). The contest creates a situation where antagonistic interests (both adversaries want to win) are, in a way, being civilized. Making concessions to a respected adversary is bearable. It does not destroy our subjectivity, identity or honour. Re-Framing Carl Schmitt, Mouffe explains that enemies have an *antagonistic* we/they relation. The two sides do not share any common ground. There is only winning, loosing or, at worst, elimination. In contrast, the agonistic perspective transgresses the dichotomy of friend-enemy, us and them. The task is to encourage people to relate to each other as *adversaries* rather than *enemies*. The conflict remains, but there is no need to eliminate an adversary.

The second proposal is that an agonistic approach to antagonism does not seek for consensus. Mouffe rejects the idea that complete resolution of conflict is possible at all. To the contrary: antagonism is constituent for democratic, pluralistic societies. Consequently, her agonistic democratic project shifts attention from the production of complete consensus to enhancing the democratic process. As anthropologist Marcel Mauss put it, democracy does not consist in reaching total consensus, but rather in *organising dissent*. In other words, an agonistic political space enables people to hold different positions without treating each other as enemies. The democratic project unfolds in public space, which, according to Mouffe, is “the battleground where different hegemonic projects are confronted, without any possibility of final reconciliation” (Mouffe 2007). The arts can be players in this battleground.

Third, an agonistic approach accommodated emotions. A widespread view on resolving conflict in the political realm is that rational deliberation in an Habermasian public sphere will eventually result in resolution. An agonistic approach “is clearly very different from the one defended by Jürgen Habermas, who presents what he calls the ‘public sphere’ as the place where deliberation aiming at a rational consensus takes place“ (Mouffe 2013, 203). This deliberative model of politics focusses on rationality, and leaves no room for passions and emotions. In contrast, the agonistic model presumes that in pluralistic democracies, there are “conflicts for which no rational solution could ever exist” (Mouffe 2007), and focusses instead on the creation of open, pluralistic and democratic spaces, where interaction is possible despite unresolved conflict and emotionality. Antagonistic heritage configurations, where traumatic and divisive experiences and strong emotions are present, cannot be resolved through informed dialogue, participatory models or rational debate. An agonistic approach allows conflict to exist, but in the spirit of *agon*, as interaction between adversaries. In the Carinthian context, the creation of an agonistic platform led to an arrangement in the long-standing dispute over bilingual town-signs [-> signage dispute]. The dispute was not resolved, but the relationship between proponents of the opposing sides has been transformed in a way that makes interaction possible. This process dis-articulated the question of bilingual town signs from the antagonistic configuration, and re-articulated it in an agonistic setting [-> Other land]. It challenged a regime of truth that demands irreconcilable hostility by shifting the focus on the enacted possibility of communication.

Art & Contentious heritages: Creating open platforms

Sharon Macdonald (2019) critically raised the question in how far an agonistic approach to heritage might contribute to sustainable change in existing orders of knowledge. Taking up this question, we will take the opportunity to reflect on the impact of an agonistic approach to contentious heritage. On the discursive level, we see potential for significant change in the transformation of the relationship between opposing sides from enemies to adversaries in antagonistic heritage configurations. Existing regimes of truth can be challenged by dis-articulating heritages from hegemonic perspectives on conflict, and re-articulating them with other, less entrenched perspectives. On the practical level, this can be – and has been – achieved in the creation of pluralistic, democratic platforms on the terrain of heritage [-> Contentious glossary]. This is often achieved in cooperation with artists, whose critical practices "can contribute to the creation of a multiplicity of sites where the dominant hegemony can be questioned." (Mouffe 2007) The creation of open platforms can be seen as part of the hegemonic struggle, which "consists in the attempt to create a different form of articulation among public spaces" (Mouffe 2007)", for instance between museums and art galleries or festivals and community centres.

An agonistic approach drops the unrealistic vision of an all-encompassing consensus. When we think of the currently much-debated issue of restitution of human remains, as well as art-works such as the Elgin marbles, a consensus that heals the wounds struck by colonialism is hardly imaginable. Instead of aspiring to the impossible, an agonistic approach shifts the focus on the extension of a pluralistic, democratic public space, which can exist even when unresolved conflicts persist.

An important aspect of the agonistic approach, which has not yet been fully explored, is the re-articulation of hegemonic regimes of truth with subordinate or simply other perspectives. In the process of re-articulation, the ambivalent and hazy dimension of the arts proves advantageous. Re-articulation requires a different language and esthetics, new images and metaphors which often emerge precisely from an ambiguity which, in the perspective of rational discourse, is seen as an obstacle [-> Co-production]. Through their openness, artistic practices carry the potential for transformation. This allows for a blurring of existing antagonistic dichtotomies.

In the past, heritage providers such as museums, archives and memorial sites were leading actors in articulating and representing hegemonic perspectives on contentious heritages. This leading position has recently been facing a crisis, as it has been challenged by migration, post-

colonialism and globalisation. Positions that were once undisputed have become contentious, their legitimacy is challenged. In this situation, the ground for a dis-articulation of hegemonic perspectives is prepared. This may explain why heritage providers are increasingly calling upon artists to somehow deal with contentious cultural heritages. The assumption is that artists will generate new and critical perspectives while leaving the respective exhibitions and institutions intact [-> Artistic upgrade]. According to the agonistic approach, however, critical art also has the potential to act as a counter-hegemonic force in that it „foments dissensus, that makes visible what the dominant consensus tends to obscure and obliterate" (Mouffe 2007)

Concluding, we find that an agonistic approach to contentious heritages challenges hegemonic systems of truth by dis-articulating contentious heritages from antagonistic settings, and re-articulating them with new, and unexpected discourses. An agonistic approach shifts the focus from the impossible task to resolve irresolvable and highly emotionally charged conflict, and instead concentrates productively on the creation of open, democratic and pluralistic platforms. Critical artistic practices are central to this endeavour. Engaging in counter-hegemonic struggles, they bring an ability to re-configure conventional spaces and procedures in unforeseen ways, and thus put into practice the abstract call to re-articulate contentious heritage with the political.

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Signage dispute in Carinthia: Antagonistic struggles on language and an agonistic turning

Marion Hamm and Klaus Schönberger

Until today, the Austrian federal country of Carinthia at the Southern border of the republic carries the burden of a contentious cultural heritage. It is rooted in the homogenising national politics in the 19th century, the new borders drawn after World War 1, territorial claims of Nazi-Germany, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and its forerunners and the mass deportation of Slovene-speakers during the Austrian-German terror regime of the Nazis in Upper Carniola (Yugoslavia), and reprisals by cross-border partisan units led by Josip Broz Tito afterwards. Collective memory in Carinthia is split. Especially for the Slovene speaking minority, it holds bitter experiences involving loss of language and property, displacement, forced resettlement, pain and death. The majority of German-speaking Carinthians tends to completely blank out the complicity of Austrians in Nazi crimes.

At the heart of the conflict over 'correct' commemoration is a long-running dispute in the Southern part of Carinthia about the use of the Slovene language in schools and kindergartens, on place-signs at the entry and exit of towns and villages, and in official announcements. This part of Carinthia was largely bilingual, until the repressive Germanisation policies of the Nazi regime set in in force. With the emergence of nationalism at the end of the 19th century, there were several waves of Germanisation against the Slovene- speaking minority in Carinthia. Even after liberation from the Nazism, use of the Slovene language in everyday life and in state institutions (e.g. schools) remained a constant cause of conflict. The basic rights of the Slovene-speaking minority were stipulated in the Austrian State Treaty of 1955 at the instigation of the Allies (Paris Conference, 1949). While these rights were rhetorically recognised in austrian politics regardless of the political leanings. They were, however, never implemented (Rettl 2005).

As a result, bilingualism was turned into an antagonistic dispute over national identity in Carinthia. This led to an exclusion of the Slovene-speaking population which is still ongoing albeit in less obvious ways. The conflict over everyday use of the Slovene language was, and still is enacted through a politics of representation. The annual national holiday of Carinthia on October 10th commemorates the *Volksabstimmung* in 1920 by a wide range of public

performances. At this referendum, the majority of the mainly Slovene-speaking citizens in the bi-lingual part of Carinthia had voted to remain in Austria, and against the incorporation of the Southern-Carinthian region into the neighbouring Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Until recently, commemoration of the referendum was dedicated less to the democratic value of the event. Rather, it clearly served an ideological mobilisation against the Slovenian minority. The most prominent example is perhaps the demand for bilingual place-signs on the part of the Slovene-speaking minority, which many in the German-speaking majority opposed vehemently. This *Ortstafelstreit* or signage was performed as an antagonistic conflict. It was highly charged with emotion, and polarised the population over decades. In the early 1970s, the signage dispute took on alarmingly violent proportions. Members of the minority remember pogrom-like attacks by angry mobs as a traumatising experience. The signage dispute deeply affected people in both language groups, and also those who are somehow in-between [-> Other Land]. No way out of this antagonistic polarisation appeared to be in sight.

In this context, using bilingual place-names is clearly a political statement. The Alpen-Adria University of Klagenfurt positioned itself by tolerating a semi-official bilingual name, where the Slovene name of the city of Klagenfurt is added to the official name: *Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt / Celovec*. Numerous students and lecturers make a point of using the bilingual name in their emails and letterheads. Besides a multi-lingual welcome greeting at the entrance of the main building, visitors approaching the campus also find the University's very own town-sign. Employing a mixture of seriousness and craftiness, it marks the premises of the University as *Universität Klagenfurt* (German), *Univerza v Celovku* (Slovene) and also in sign language. Such multi-lingual self-representation was - and, for proponents of a nationalist, racialised, exclusionary or even 'völkische' politics still is - seen as a dividing statement in support of the Slovene-speaking minority.
Language conflict as contentious cultural heritage was firmly established in the hegemonic political discourse in Carinthia up until the death in 2008 of the popular figurehead of the extreme right, *Landeshauptmann* Jörg Haider (FPÖ). However, even today, political actors in political parties such as ÖVP and FPÖ, and sometimes even in the social democratic party (SPÖ) frequently succeed in perpetuating a narrative popularised by the Nazis and their forerunners, where Slovene-speakers in Carinthia are demonised as allegedly dangerous 'Southern Slavs' ('Südslawen'). Elements of racist or 'völkische' ideology are also tangible in everyday life, for instance in widespread indignation about bilingual church services, or in

recent outrage against a policy to employ only bilingual headmasters in the bilingual part of Carinthia. In a situation where positions have been entrenched for decades, hardy any citizen has the choice to *not* subscribe to one or the other side of the conflict. In an antagonistic conflict, in-between positions are near impossible. The research project *Performing Reality* conceptualises this specific configuration as *Dispositiv Kärnten/ Koroška* (N.A. Performing Reality 2018; Grundnig-Wetzlinger, Liepold-Mosser 2018).

Agonist approaches

Beginning in 2005 an arduous agonistic process unfolded to deal with the signage dispute, which in 2011 concluded with the *Ortstafelkompromiss* (signage compromise). Representatives of both language groups met for what they called *Konsensgespräche,* or consensus talks. Facilitated by mediators and moderators who did not have a stake in the conflict, an agreement was found over the number of places where bilingual place-signs would be tolerated. None of the conflicting groups was entirely satisfied with this pacification: For the Slovenian minority, there were not enough bilingual signs, for the organised German speakers, any bilingual sign would have been one too many. Thus no consensus in the deliberative sense was achieved. Antagonistic perspectives on the shared history remained intact. Angry supporters of a monolingual German-speaking Carinthia are occasionally still spraying over the agreed bilingual signs. In 2018, it was not possible to define Slovene as a second official language in the Carinthian constitution, and the dispute over bilingual headteachers in schools in the Slovene-speaking part of Carinthia is lingering on.

The achievement lay in the construction of a pluralistic democratic space, or an *agonistic* space (Mouffe 2013), where hard-liners amongst the organised German-Nationalists[1] and representatives of the organised Slovenian minority could seek a compromise. On this basis, enemies turned into adversaries. As Chantal Mouffe points out, antagonistic conflict is unavoidable in democracies. In the agonistic form of dispute, antagonistic conflicts may be pacified, but this does not mean that they will be fully resolved. An agonistic agreement does not end the conflicts of interest, but it does render them negotiable [-> Agonism]. This is reflected in several approaches towards overcoming the dispositive Carinthia/Koroška. The Carinthian government, currently led by social-democrats, is seeking to transform the celebrations on October 10th from an antagonistic day of struggle into a celebration of direct democracy and to include representatives of the Slovenian minority in the preparations. For

the 100th anniversary of the referendum in 2020, numerous efforts are being made to emphasise that which is common while putting the divisive at the back. In addition, after a dramatic decrease of Slovene-speaking Carinthians, a considerable boost for the Slovenian language has been noted. However, the suspicion that the antagonism on language has merely shifted from one minority to another cannot be dismissed. Given the current migration, the familiar conflict on which language may be spoken in kindergartens or in the school yard now revolves around other languages – a phenomenon which is by no means restricted to Carinthia. The demand for linguistic assimilation of the migrant population is linked to the well-known claims for dominance of the German language over Slovene. The antagonism over the Slovene language may have shifted to the background. However, at present, Austria has a party in government whose local representatives are still willing to bring anti-Slovenian propaganda back to life. The question of how far antagonism over the Slovenian language can be resolved remains open.

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[1] The German-national orientated *Kärnter Heimatdienst* (Carinthian Homeland Service) initiated an ideological turn, mediated by a Social Democrat-led federal government. The consensus talks were initiated together with the populist Carinthian state government.

Diskurs/THEATER. The Other Land. Dis- and Re-articulating the Dispositif Carinthia/Koroška

Ute Holfelder

„Wir ziehen Hand in Hand,
in ein unbekanntes Land,
wo Glaube, Liebe, Hoffnung nie vergehn!
Wo die Sonne nie erlischt und der See die Erde küsst,
da wollen wir hin, da wollen wir hin...“
(Engl.: Hand in hand, we move towards an unknown land, where neither faith nor love nor hope shall end! Where the sun never sets and where the lake kisses the earth, that's where we want to be, that's where we want to be…)

This verse, which was sung together by stage actors and audience, concluded the performances of the *Diskurs/THEATER Das andere Land* (The Other Land), which were performed in September/October 2018 at the *Museum of Modern Art Carinthia* / *MMMK* in Klagenfurt by actors of the *Theater Wolkenflug* and researchers of the Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt/Celovec. The production was part of the transdisciplinary arts-based project *Performing Reality. Dis- and Re-articulation of the Dispositif Carinthia/Koroška, a co-production between arts-based research and research in the field of cultural studies for the 100th anniversary of the Carinthian referendum* in which ethnographers and theatre directors are working together over a three-year period.

The project deals with the memory of the so-called *Abwehrkampf* or defensive struggle in 1918/19 and the subsequent plebiscite on 10 October 1920. This referendum was to decide whether parts of Carinthia (the southernmost Austrian province), where a predominantly Slovenian-speaking population lived, should remain with Austria or be incorporated to the Yugoslavian predecessor state (SHS). This historical event still determines the history and fate of Carinthia. Remembrance is kept alive in annual celebrations on October 10th, and is firmly inscribed in the regional collective memory. All this also preserves the contentious perspectives on Carinthian history, which are still expressed today in the smouldering conflict over the significance of the Slovenian language and culture [-> Signage dispute]. In Carinthia

– so it seems – there are still trenches: almost every political discussion and discursive debate ultimately demands a positioning either as a German Carinthian or a Carinthian Slovene.

The term dispositif Carinthia/Koroška captures the complex connections between discourses, practices, views as well as systems of values and relations that emanates from the Carinthian defensive struggle and the referendum of 1920. This use of the Foucauldian term allows bringing together the Carinthian dichotomies between the hegemonic German national discourse and its critique – and possibly even their transgression. Starting from the assumption that realities are produced in performative acts, the project aims to investigate and deconstruct the conflictual attributions inherent in the dispositif Carinthia/Koroška and dichotomically related to one another. With the means of the theatre, the attributions are to be made visible and negotiable, the prevailing discourses liquefied and transformed, thus making imaginable *The Other Land*, the "unknown land" mentioned in the song above. This contribution focuses on how the dispositif Carinthia/Koroška can be dis- and re-articulated in the context of theatre.
The first of three planned plays took place as part of the exhibition *Das andere Land* (curated by Christine Grundnig-Wetzlinger, director of *MMKK,* and Bernd Liepold-Mosser). It featured works and texts by Carinthian artists and authors. The *Diskurs/THEATER* presented the discourses of Carinthian regional historiography in a scenic manner and placed them in relation to the contents shown in the exhibition. The pictures and texts of the exhibition provided a dense picture of the dispositif Carinthia/Koroška. Works by representatives of different political persuasions from a period of around 150 years were arranged into an overall show. In her production Ute Liepold from *Theater Wolkenflug* took visitors on a trail through the rooms of the MMMK, while dramaturgically translating the exhibited pictures and texts. Actors and actresses recited those exhibited literary texts and presented them in short scenes. Klaus Schönberger and Ute Holfelder two cultural anthropologists were part of the theatre team. In the *Diskurs/THEATER* they presented their own - academic-style - texts as actors in the performance.

Klaus Schönberger, opened the theatre evening with a prologue, which combined different lecture styles. After introducing himself with his real job as a professor of cultural anthropology from Germany, he outlined his view on the dispositif Carinthia/Koroška from an outsider perspective. He focused on the so-called 'Kärntner Urangst' or 'Carinthian primal fear', a discourse element omnipresent in Carinthia: Carinthians, so the story goes, would

firstly be afraid of being annexed again by ‘the Slavs’; secondly, they would fear having Slovenian ancestors; thirdly they would, in connection with this, be afraid of social decline – to be more precise: of sinking down to a lower social level, which until recently tended to be attributed to the Slovenian minority. The protagonist enriched the depiction of this 'primal fear' with a thick description of his own arrival in Carinthia and the "ethnographer's fear of the field" (Lindner 1981), a phenomenon that is well-known and widely discussed in cultural anthropology. Despite urgent warnings of the southernmost federal state with its specific brand of German nationalist politics as pursued in the so called Haider era, no such fear had set in for him. In the course of the prologue, the protagonist deconstructed the narrative of primeval fear and another element of discourse, according to which in Carinthia 'everything is different' than in the rest of Austria.

This critical analysis argued at the level of scientific discourse. However, at the end the protagonist overturned his own academic rational analysis by leaving the discursive level and openly declaring a positive commitment to Carinthia: "Ladies and gentlemen, in view of the trenches here in Carinthia, it is important not to be too afraid and to change one's perspective from time to time. I love this country and its people. In spite of the folklorism." At this point the prologue took a dramaturgical turn and the audience was invited to imagine 'another land' (Fig. 1). This turning point was underlined by a change of costume: In the beginning, the protagonist wore a brown *Kärntneranzug* that is the national costume invented in 1911, which German nationalists in Carinthia wear to this day as a tribute to their homeland. At the turning point the protagonist replaced his suit jacket with a red Loden jacket. The change of costume disarticulated the discourse of homeland from the entrenched positions and re-articulated it with a statement that was marked by love for the homeland and its traditions as well as a critical perspective on the hegenomic discourse.

The content dimension was not only emphasized by the staging, but also by the format that oscillated between an academic lecture and a theatre performance: A real professor acted as a protagonist of ‘science’ in a professional theatre ensemble. This led to irritations in the audience, which were reflected not least in the question of ‘whether the professor was real’. The analytical perspective offered by the professor-as-actor pronounced and delimitated the tabooed and only implicitly known discursive content and thus helped to create an interpretive openness.. In this staged prologue, the dispositif Carinthia/Koroška was first dis- and then re-articulated.

My own contribution also oscillated between the academic dimension of cultural analysis and that of the theatre. Together with the songwriter and lead singer of the Austrian indie band *Naked Lunch* and two actresses I played and sung in the *Singstube* (singing room). This part of the exhibition was dedicated to the theme of singing, because the federal state of Carinthia has an above-average number of choirs and describes itself as the 'land of singers'. The *Kärntner Lied*, a song genre in folk song and dialect, plays an outstanding role. Thus, the staged figure of the 'researcher' gave a scientific lecture on this important discoursive element of imagined Carinthianism. She too introduced herself at the beginning of her appearance as a an academic and, beyond that, as a singer who sings in a renowned choir in Carinthia in her spare time. In her contribution, she focused on the aspect of how collective singing can produce inclusions and exclusions, thus analysing the power of song. She developed this using the example of the Carinthian national anthem, which in its fourth verse refers in a martial way to the *Abwehrkampf* and the referendum in 1920:

„Wo Mannesmut und Frauentreu'
die Heimat sich erstritt aufs neu',
wo man mit Blut die Grenze schrieb
und frei in Not und Tod verblieb;
hell jubelnd klingt's zur Bergeswand:
Das ist mein herrlich Heimatland!“[1]

(Engl.: Where faithful women, courageous men / Wrestled and won back their homeland / Where the border was drawn with blood / And free remained in Need and Death / Rejoicing resounds at mountain's wall: /This is my glorious homeland!) (fig. 2). The national anthem is a fixed part of the 10th October celebrations, it is always sung together at the end. The fourth verse in particular is the subject of extremely controversial discussions. In the theatre production, the explanatory, analytical part of the lecture was followed by an intervention by the singer Oliver Welter, who was supposed to symbolize the Carinthians' desire to sing and convince the protagonist to leave the cognitive level and sing along. In the end he succeeded

[1] "The Carinthian Tune" (Kärntner Heimatlied) https://lyricstranslate.com/en/k%C3%A4rntner-heimatlied-carinthia-carinthia-tune.html.

and together with the two actresses he tried to encourage the audience to sing along. This was only possible to a limited extent at this point of the theatre evening, as the audience's voice literally got stuck in their throats as a result of the deconstruction of the community-building power of singing. The irritation about the performance of the staged scientist, the shyness to sing during a theatre performance, and the scepticism towards the national anthem certainly also contributed to this.

The tension was dissolved in the final scene in which the song *Das andere Land*, composed by Oliver Welter and quoted at the beginning, was sung by all actors together with the audience. Through this form of collective singing of a new song, including all those present, with thoroughly religious reminiscences of the promised land, the 'other land' - at least for the length and context of a theatre evening - could not only be imagined, but also was performed. In this respect, this theatre evening can be seen as an example of the possibility of the dis-articulation and subsequent re-articulation of the dichotomous dispositif Carinthia/Koroška with performative means (fig. 3).

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Reading a Gravestone: Perpetuating the conflict?

Marion Hamm

Sifting through the shared folders of my research team, I come across a photo of a gravestone. According to the time-stamp, it was taken on April 16.4.2016. My colleague Klaus Schönberger tells me that he took it at the graveyard in Diex, a village with less than 1000 inhabitants and fifteen citizens associations – *Vereine* - in rural Carinthia. The photo simply documents the lettering on the Gravestone from a slightly angled perspective [-> Shooting in the field]. Aesthetically, it certainly is not fit for publication. It does, however, speak to the ethnographer who is trying to figure out the workings of the dispositive Carinthia/Koroška [-> Other Land]. I am looking at the gravestone of the *Polessnig-Schmied* family. Polessnig is a germanised Slovenian name, as is Maria's maiden name *Glaubitsch*. Stephan, born in 1920,, presumably her son, is remembered by profession as a master smith. Philip, presumably her husband, is commemorated as an *Abwehrkämpfer*, or defense fighter. The *Abwehrkampf* or war of defense was fought after World War 1, when the Hapsburg empire dissolved, and the Slovenian state made territorial claims to the bi-lingual part of Carinthia. Philip and his mostly German-speaking mates fought against a feared occupation by the Slavic neighbours. In the 1920 referendum, the majority of Carinthians, including many bilinguals and Slovenian speakers, voted to remain with Austria. We don't know the mother-tongue of Philip and Maria, but we can be pretty sure that they voted remain. However, fear, paranoia and resentment did not go away. Philip died in 1972 aged 81 years, when the bitter signage dispute [-> signage dispute] about the bilingual inscriptions on town signs in Carinthia was in full swing. Inscribing his gravestone with the characterisation 'Abwehrkämpfer', probably decided by his wife and son, now in his fifties, can be seen as a popular practice of representation which perpetuates into the present the experience of the Abwehrkampf, the imagined threat from South of the Karawanken mountain range and the fear vis a vis the Slovenian speaking minority – of which, it can be assumed from the family names on the gravestone, the ancestors of the family may well have been part. Such perpetuation is supported by hegemonic and at the same time popular heritage performances, such as annual commemorations of the 1920 referendum [-> Other land].

Under the Nazi regime, Slovenian Carinthians were systematically deported to forced labour or even concentration camps. In the 1942s, many escaped 'into the woods', where they joined

the Yugoslav partisan army. The partisans are the symbolic counterparts of the defence fighters in the Carinthian dispositive - but this is another story [-> Partisans].

Of Hushing Up and Remembering – Partisans in Carinthia

Klaus Schönberger

At the end of the Second World War, there was a special case in Carinthia where the Slovenian minority resisted the Nazi Wehrmacht militarily. Numerous Carinthian Slovenes ‘went into the woods’ and joined various partisan associations of the Yugoslavian People's Liberation Army. In Carinthia, the events shortly before and after the capitulation in May 1945 are remembered in the hegemonic German-Austrian memory narratives as 'partisan violence' with pejorative intent until today. Such narratives are practices and techniques of defining and fixing (hegemonic) readings of historical events [-> Other Land]. In this way the issue of the anti-fascist resistance and the contribution of the Carinthian Slovenes to the liberation from Nazi fascism is hidden and made invisible. The actions of the 'partisans' are discursively linked with 'violence' and the actions of the antifascist resistance are generally associated with crimes or war crimes. This 'partisan violence' was in the vast majority of cases arrests and executions carried out on the basis of Allied agreements by the Yugoslav People's Liberation Army. These are denounced in the hegemonic narrative as pure and groundless ‘acts of revenge’" by ‘Tito partisans’. After 1945, the narrative was closely linked to the bloc confrontation between East and West. There is talk of "abductees" (Wikipedia 2011). The arrests were directed against 263 Austrians, 128 of whom have not returned. Other accounts speak of 91 executed civilians, who are said to have been mainly partisans and henchmen of the Nazi regime (Valentin 2000, 11).

The assertion that these people were victims is still a central component of the prevailing German-Austrian historical narrative in Carinthia - both on a private and family level and on numerous political occasions in various state and institutional contexts. In this narrative, the terror that the Nazi fascists (often members of the German civil administration from Carinthia) and the Nazi Wehrmacht exercised against the Yugoslav population on today's Slovenian territory is systematically ignored. The associated offsetting of mutual violence ignores what happened first (The German invasion of Yugoslavia) and what was the reaction (arrests and punishments by the Yugoslav People's Liberation Army). Moreover, only silence enables the continued discrimination of the minority of Carinthian Slovenes after 1945. [-> Signage dispute]. In Klagenfurt, a monument commemorating the victims of the partisans in

antagonistic form can be found in front of the cathedral at a central location of the state capital. (Fig. 1)

Although the Yugoslavian punitive measures against the German-speaking actors of the Nazi regime were minimal compared to the extent of terror against the Yugoslavian population on today's Slovenian territory, the claim of victimhood in Carinthia has remained predominant to this day. The antagonism consists in a representation in which the German-speaking majority presents itself as victims of partisans. The deportation of Carinthian Slovenes during the Nazi period (Stuhlpfarrer 2002), on the other hand, is not thought of equally prominently in Carinthia. The murder of numerous members of the resistance against the Nazi regime was also trivialized for years (Rettl 2006, 112) and made invisible. However, the hegemonic narrative indirectly refers in a classic perpetrator-victim reversal to the excluded memory of the participation of German-speaking Austrians in the Nazi Wehrmacht's reign of terror. Whenever the German national history discourse insists on this perpetrator-victim reversal again and again, the narrative of the minority remains permanently present ex-negativo.
In addition, there is a special feature: the military resistance of partisans in Carinthia during the Second World War was unique, because these military actions against the Nazi Wehrmacht originated from a population group on their own territory. During the negotiations on the state treaty to re-establish Austria in 1955, the Austrian delegation was able to use the resistance of the Carinthian Slovenes as a means of fulfilling the Moscow Declaration (1943). The delegates "regularly referred to the resistance they had shown and their own contribution to the defeat of Nazism" (Inzko 2010, 8). This was explicitly stated in the Declaration as a prerequisite for the re-establishment of an Austrian state after the end of the war. The traumatic experiences of the minority banned from the hegemonic public perception, however, remain implicitly present as antagonistic memory and counter-narrative. Especially the particularly aggressive rejection of the traumas of the Slovenian minority in the German-Austrian public refers to a return of the repressed and the fragility of a hegemonic narrative that for decades denied responsibility for the deportation of Carinthian Slovenes and denied its own involvement in Nazi crimes.

Despite a continuing presence in the narratives, this antagonism has also transformed over the past 15 years: In the course of the so-called consensus talks, representatives of the *German National Carinthian Home Service* (*KHD*) and the *Central Council of Carinthian Slovenes* (*ZKO*) approached each other. Marjan Sturm (*ZKO*) and Josef Feldner (*KHD*), two central

protagonists in this antagonistic debate about historical narratives, developed a changed practice of commemoration and remembrance. Starting in 2010, both Feldner and Sturm developed an agonistic perspective on the past in their speeches. [-> Agonistic perspective] At a celebration marking the 90th anniversary of the KHD at which Marjan Sturm also gave a speech, Josef Feldner confessed: "The defensive struggle is over" (90 years of the KHD, 2010). The defensive struggle is still a cipher for the legitimation of the exclusion of the Slovenian speaking minority [-> Other Country]. Marjan Sturm spoke in 2018 at a commemoration ceremony of the KHD in memory of the German-Austrian victims of the Yugoslavian army in Leše near Prevalje (not far from the Slovenian-Austrian border near Bleiburg). Sturm was able to present his personal view and his traumatic family experiences at eye level with the relatives of these victims. In 2018 he emphasized the positive outcome of this approach during a memorial service for murdered Wehrmacht deserters in Goldegg im Pongau (near Salzburg):

"The reactions of the relatives [of the KHD, KS] were very positive. What was even more important, Feldner also started to participate in events in memory of the resistance fighters and we even held a joint event in Slovenia in memory of the more than three thousand hostages shot by the Germans and laid a wreath." (Sturm 2018).

However, the conflict has not yet ended. We are dealing here with various groups which are not all prepared to replace the antagonistic perspective with an agonistic one. In Carinthia there are still enough political followers of that *dispositif Carinthia/Koroška* [-> Signage dispute] who continue the antagonistic opposition and continue to instrumentalize the minority question for acts of both social and political inclusion and exclusion.

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Conflict Learning: Concepts for understanding interactions around contentious heritages

Nora Landkammer and Karin Schneider

In this text, we will outline three concepts for understanding the way conflict plays out in learning about contentious heritage. We will discuss how these concepts have proven valuable in relation to our research sites in the field of education and conflict learning within the TRACES project. These sites are museum collections with a colonial background and exhibitions on colonial history, as well as memorial sites of Nazi atrocities in the German speaking countries of Europe. We refer to these sites as sites of *difficult heritage* (Macdonald 2009) in the sense that they point to troublesome histories of genocide, racism and violence that visitors and educators have to come to terms with and as *contentious* in the sense that it is debatable on how and with which consequences these histories should be commemorated.

The focus on the German-speaking context in the examples from educational practice we refer to reflects our own subject position. As native German speakers with English/Spanish second languages and as researchers based in Austria/Switzerland, we are limited by a language barrier and a restricted knowledge of the specific historical backgrounds in most of the localities we visited as part of our research in TRACES. To fully grasp the subtleties of learning situations in a workshop or a museum tour, language skills and an understanding of the historical background are crucial. For this reason we decided to focus on learning situations in the geographical/language context we are familiar with.

Although we write from and refer to a specific locale, we propose the concepts outlined here – the *agonistic conflict zone, working through* and *multidirectional memory* – as 'conceptual tools' for educators also in other contexts and seek feedback on how they resonate. In addition to outlining the theoretical background and previous research on these concepts, we draw on selected *moments* from educational practice in exhibitions, museums and memory sites. These are scenes we observed in our

empirical study[1] or were personally involved in as educators. These insights into practice are not intended to illustrate a theoretical approach, as in practice meanings emerge which exceed and obscure the theory. Instead they should serve to discover how a given lens applied to pedagogical practice would shape its comprehension, and inversely: how practice shifts our comprehension of a concept.

Our starting point is the assumption that if difficult and potentially contentious heritage is at stake, learning settings need to create spaces where conflicts of interpretation can appear, be talked about, be negotiated. Practices of engagement and education need to allow for or create these spaces rather than attempt to sooth or even exclude conflicts. This approach may be counter to assumptions made in everyday practice, especially of education staff in museums and galleries. Education and community engagement in cultural institutions has a long history of being brought forward as a means to sooth potential social conflict (see for a study of the history of arts education in the UK with reference to this function Mörsch 2017). The function of harmonizing different views is also present in the use of the German term ‘Vermittlung’ (mediation), for gallery/museum education. It becomes visible when, for example the director of VMS and ICOM Switzerland, David Villaume, states that education/mediation is necessary in museums that “have to attain a certain degree of harmony among innumerable viewpoints” (Vuillaume 2013, 154). Although for many it appears convincing that artists or researchers should address the conflicted aspects of heritage, it is often assumed that the heritage practitioner, especially the educator, should manage to provide safe spaces for all participants, aiming for settings without conflicts or aggression. In a constructivist framework, however, learning is always a dialectical process between the known and the unknown that enables the learner to reach out of her/his comfort zone:

> “People need to connect to what is familiar, but learning, by definition, goes beyond the known; it leads to new ‘agreeable places’.” (Hein 1998: 176).

One pedagogical aim in the constructivist paradigm is to induce dissonance in order to foster learning. If, from this perspective, learning on contentious heritage can be

approached as conflict learning – both learning on conflict and being itself a situation in conflict – then how can we understand the dissonance and dissent arising in educational settings in order to devise meaningful forms of engagement?

Learning as an agonistic conflict zone

Curator, educator and theorist Nora Sternfeld is known as one of those who tried to grasp these challenges through the concept of the 'contact zone', as introduced by Mary Louise Pratt and James Clifford in the 1990s (Sternfeld 2013). Transferred from the sites of colonial encounter (Pratt) to the museum (Clifford) this term helped to describe museums as spaces of negotiation which are reflexive in terms of the power relations at play (Pratt 1991, 2007; Clifford 1997). Sternfeld attempted to adapt this terminology further to include commemoration sites in the post Nazi-context. This enables an address to learning on the history of Nazism and World War II as part of the current migration society and to open up pedagogical practices for different, potentially conflicting and diverse narratives representing different backgrounds and contexts. According to Sternfeld, the introduction of the concept of 'contact zones' in the context of commemoration sites means that in opposition to a seemingly clear and unambiguous history that should be communicated in a memorial site on Nazi crimes, different backgrounds and different access points towards this history can unfold. Though the concept of 'contact zones' it is possible

> "to imagine connections between different positions against the background of the history of Nazi crimes, but without making appropriating or unifying assumptions". (Sternfeld 2011)

To further emphasise the notion of conflict, the power relations and counter-hegemonic potentials, Sternfeld connects Pratt/Clifford's *contact zone* with Chantal Mouffe's theory of *agonism* and proposes her own concept, the *agonistic conflict zone*.

> *"*In order to do justice to the conflictuality of the concomitant situations in theory, it seems appropriate to expand Clifford's concept of the contact zone

> with a democracy-theory approach to dealing with dissent: Chantal Mouffe's concept of agonism.[By condensing Clifford and Mouffe, it becomes possible to describe our processes with the idea of an 'agonistic conflict zone' as one that is open and decidedly partisan at the same time" (Sternfeld 2011, NP)

The idea of educational spaces in museum and commemoration sites as zones where conflicts unfold and challenge hegemonic narratives is intriguing. They encourage educational approaches that take different, including marginalized, subject positions into consideration, and are open for differences, discussions, negotiations, whilst being simultaneously accurate from the political standpoint. Hence our empirical research sought educational practices that themselves seek to actively establish such approaches. However a closer analyses and description of some of these micro-moments also show that these zones are pervaded with sometimes unexpected or undesired contradictions and contingency.

In the context of our action research at the Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt we (Nora Landkammer, Karin Schneider and Julia Albrecht) designed the workshop *What Is This Doing Here?* to address and discuss the issue of ownership and claims of restitution of museum objects from colonial contexts in German museums. As we wanted to encourage young students to express their point of view, raise discussions and develop their own position, it can be seen that we, in some aspects, followed the idea of agonistic conflict zones - at least there are some moments of interaction we could describe as such[2] [-> Transition points] [-> Researching with young people]. An example is a discussion in one of the working groups after the students had interviewed the curator of the African collections. In this interview the question was raised if there were museums in Cameroon to which the objects from Cameroon in this collection could be restituted (theoretically). As this question was not fully answered in the interview, the educator took it up again in the working group and encouraged the students to search the Internet for information about museums in Cameroon:

> " (…) The students are almost shocked when Google immediately spits out 'the 10 most important museums in Cameroon' and at least one of these

> museums appears very big and modern – much bigger and more modern than the museum we are currently in, as one girl notes. The students are also appalled that in the interview the curator did not mention how modern the museum in Cameroon was. One boy claims that he thought the museums there were more like huts and the educator points out the huts on one of the pictures are actually museum pieces to show the local history (…). Some of the boys (…) say: why make such a fuss about this? What is the problem? The items are now in Germany and it does not matter anyway. One girl (…) gets really upset with this statement (she already earlier expressed her standpoint for restitution). Before the educator knows it, a loud fight starts between two of the boys and two of the girls. One of the girls addresses one of the boys directly, saying: You are also from… from… He says he comes from Eritrea. Exactly, says the girl, there are also things stolen from there, aren't there? The boy says that he doesn't care." (Shortened observation protocol, translated from German, Karin Schneider)

This scene appears to be conflict learning – the involved students argue for their standpoint and the involved educator provides the space for the arguments to evolve. The conflict aligns with the customary debate: Some of the pupils plead for the restitution of the objects while others argue that the objects are now in Germany, that history is a 'done thing' and that we should not care about this so much. The setting enables visitors to engage with a highly debated museological and political conflict on the future of ethnographic collections (Harris/ O' Hanlon 2013), but which is rarely present in public programmes of museums, at least in the German speaking countries (see Landkammer, "Researching with young people…" in this volume). However there is another tension at stake that probably contributes to make this a conflict zone, rather than a disengaged dispute over a research exercise.

> "The students are also appalled that in the interview the curator did not mention how modern the museum in Cameroon was".

It seems as if the whole group developed an uneasy feeling towards the fact that they were, in a way, left alone with their fantasies and projections. It might have appeared

to them that none of the adults in charge provided the needed information. The educator is hardly active in this scene. Neither the curator nor the educator felt the urge to update the students about the museum scene in Cameroon. This was not necessarily because they might have thought the students should figure it out by themselves as that would appear too obvious a task in relation to all the other research questions the students were asked to develop. More likely it is because they do not consider this as a necessary basic expert-knowledge in this context. We might say that this conflict line describes a tension between the students – who feel their dependence on provided information to fulfil their task of making up their minds if an object from Cameroon should be restituted or not – and the educator and the curator who do not comply with the expectation of giving the knowledge that is required to fulfil that task. The discussion described also develops out of an infringement of the terms of a classical pedagogical relationship. The institution museum and its speakers (in this case the educator and the curator) becomes an object of doubt rather than a secure reference. This unsettling experience becomes a motor for the students to engage personally in the debate (Schneider -Transition points, in this volume) [->Transition points].

On another layer the sequence shows that specific subject positions matter, but they do not predefine the position in the conflict. The fault lines do not necessarily run in alignment with the subject positions but can cross or contradict them: The boy from Eritrea does not feel that it is his duty to represent repatriation claims or something that is projected on him as ‘his heritage’. He insists on the freedom not to care. Also at stake, though not directly a part of the conflict, is the problem of dealing with what Paul Mecheril describes as nation-ethno-cultural order of belonging: the reference to cultural/national background also functions, in European migration societies, as a system of repeating the distinction between those who ‘belong’ and those who do not (Mecheril 2010). Being fixed on a national background, especially in the context of the ethnographic museum, is a gesture of othering that this particular participant rejects. In this sense, the personal engagement of students is in itself conflictive.
The multiple layers identified here already point to the fact that not all conflicts that arise whilst actively engaging with contentious heritage can be acted out in an open way. Sometimes the conflicts remain hidden for a reason. It is necessary to

acknowledge this and try to recognise the hidden layers of those conflicts. The next case refers to such a situation and hence also calls for an alternate theoretical framing.

Working Through - learning through crises and mourning

Not every situation arising in the context of contentious heritage learning can be described as resulting in dissent. Other situations might trigger reactions of uneasiness, shock or defensiveness on the side of educators or visitors that remain difficult to grasp fully.

During our research we observed an educational setting at the memorial site of a former concentration camp in Germany: A tour given to a German high school group age 16-17 provided general and very detailed and accurate information about the history of the concentration camp but also included moments of discussion, in part in small working groups. Unnoticed behind the back of the educator who gave the tour, a group of boys in the class introduced a secret role-play, performing the 'warden of the camp' and the 'prisoners'. They were acting the 'warden' talking in a harsh mocking-Nazi voice to the 'prisoners', telling them that they 'will be shot' and talking about their 'Aryan blood status'.

A group of educators from the site were hugely impacted when analysing this scene with them, especially because it took place unnoticed by the colleague who gave the tour. The question was raised as to what it means that these scene could happen, if it might have been triggered by the methods used, the content delivered, the age, or the gender and family background of the students, as well as the question what the educator would have done had she/he noticed the scene. It is very unlikely that these young students were supporting the extreme right, or that they did not understand the seriousness of the place per se – further sequences of the observation protocol show that in other situations some of them were quite interested and actively engaged in the discussions. During this session of analysis we sensed a hidden *potential* conflict between the told and the untold stories in such a commemoration site that might hint at deeply embedded traumatic aspects to it. If this is the case we need ways to

describe forms of conflict in learning situations that go beyond the outspoken, touch the unspeakable and arouse crises in the educators, the teachers and visitors alike.
It is understandable and consensual that a commemoration site of this nature is a place where the victims' memory is intended to be honoured and the perpetrators' voice is not to be allowed a hegemonic position. However to transfer this approach to educational situations might obscure the question of the degree of complicity, general knowledge and voluntary participation of the civil society and general family stories and narratives in Germany. Ulrike Jureit and Christian Schneider (2010) described what they call 'victim identification' as a problematic pattern of German remembrance culture. This kind of identification with what in most of the cases appears as 'the other' can help to get rid of one's own feelings of guilt, shame or responsibility that are connected with the perpetrator's stories. The problem of the obliteration of the perpetrators' stories at the former KZ memorial site depoliticizes the history that is taught: The violence that is caused to the victims appears as an anonymous, faceless power with no graspable human interests behind (Gudehus 2006). We could assume that the hidden role-play brought these neglected subject positions to life without necessarily identifying with them – and it showed through not-showing the fact that these positions are hidden. This scene shows how the invisible, not openly reflected issues matter in educational situations. Furtive conflicts provide a potential for learning processes that we might be able to address through a contextual frame provided by those educational theories working with psychoanalytical vocabulary.

Julia Rose (2014) for the museum context, Deborah Britzman and Alice Pitt (2004) or Shoshana Felman (1991) have been drawing on concepts from psychoanalysis to understand learning processes on difficult knowledges (Britzman 1998) that might show similarities to the structures of trauma (Britzman/Pitt 2004).
According to the Freudian notion of 'working through', in order to heal a traumatic past one has to repeat it on a symbolic level until remembrance (and new future perspectives) can emerge; this occurs in the client and the analyst alike (Freud 1964 [1914]). Based on these psychoanalytic methods and her own teaching experiences regarding Holocaust testimonies, Shoshana Felman pointed out that teaching needs to undergo some sort of crises in order to "encounter either the vulnerability or the

explosiveness of a (explicit or implicit) critical and unpredictable dimension" (Felman 1991). Regarding informal teaching situations e.g. in museum or commemoration site pedagogy we propose to understand 'crises' in a symbolic way whilst still addressing issues that might encourage a shifting of perspectives. In this concept the educator holds an ambiguous position: On the one hand as one who hosts the safe space where the crises can emerge and the process of 'working through' can occur whilst on the other hand the educator is her/himself part of the difficult situation. He/she also has a specific subject position and above all is going through an own critical learning process.

It is interesting to connect this concept with a tour we observed in an exhibition about colonial history and its local impact in a German city. In this case it was an open tour, the participants where all *white* Germans in the age between late 50s and early 60s. Although the tour was not announced explicitly as interactive format or debate, the visitors engaged vividly in discussions and interfered with questions.

A part of the exhibition dealt with colonial imagery in historic product design and advertisements. They tour arrived at this section having already discussed colonial violence and histories of Black people in Germany. All members of the tour group had expressed interest and a desire to know more on colonial history and had engaged in discussions about the consequences of colonization. After the educator mentioned the racially stereotyping logo of a chocolate company, a participant says: "I grew up with this and never questioned it." Another participant joins in and gives an example of figures of black children used to collect donations for missionary work as a childhood memory. The participants start successively to share youth memories on racist stereotypes. Some participants pose their statements from a sarcastic distance; some ensure themselves that things "were not meant in an offensive way, anyway". The educator after a while attempts to interrupt what seems a chain of associations triggered by the colonial images exhibited. The flow however resists this attempt, and becomes successively more personal and engaged. A chocolate store, children's books, education, housing, a flow of racist imageries enters the room, mostly voiced in an ambiguous tone: between affirmation and critique. It culminates in a participant stating that he "drank racism with his mother's milk" and that however much he reflects, he knows that on a bodily level he still "hasn't got rid of it". The educator

regains attention after he himself provides an example of a racist term. He uses this attention to emphasize that not everyone who picked up a racist thinking pattern might have been a malicious person, but colonial perspectives underpin these ideas in an often unconscious way and it is our duty to reflect on them critically (from the recording). He retells the history of Black people in Germany "from some 1000 migrants from the colonies", to the "Black GIs after WWII" to the, "fortunately, multicultural society today" – that might also lead to "irritations and discussions" (from the recording). After a moment of seemingly relaxed silence one participant adds that because of these developments the attitude of how to deal with that "what has been locked away" has to change.

The scene is uncanny, one could qualify it as a re-enactment of what the tour wanted to question, racism stemming from colonial history. If we now interpret it in another way this does not take away the fact that it was violent, and offensive. Yet, it led in a white-only group to an acknowledgement that can be viewed as an extremely important step of learning on racism and privilege: the acknowledgement of one's own involvement in racism (Ogette 2017). It is interesting that both educator and participants refer here to psychoanalytical terminologies – the unconscious, that 'what has been locked away' to explain (and excuse?) the impact of colonial history. If, as we suggested earlier referring to Felman's approach, learning on difficult history needs a process of 'working through', the scene might be read as a group's urge to work through their previous (racist) socialisation. Julia Rose points out that learning which questions previous convictions and dearly held memories, with reference to Freud, can be compared to a process of mourning. Repetition and denial are phases of this 'working through' of previous knowledge in order to re-create a perception of the world that integrates the new knowledge. Spaces like this exhibition can be used, in this perspective, as an environment to act out that which is unconscious, embedded, covered and 'has been locked away'. The scene described points to the fact that spaces for 'working through' problematic knowledge are indeed needed for learning – yet they remain ambiguous, always in danger of re-creating and reaffirming what is supposedly deconstructed.

Multidirectional Memory Learning

A third important concept for our attempt to understand learning situations on contentious heritage is ‘Multidirectional Memory’ as introduced by Michael Rothberg (2010). Rothberg, analysing the relation between remembrance of slavery and colonialism, and of the Holocaust,

> “instead of memory competition, (…) proposed the concept of multidirectional memory, which is meant to draw attention to the dynamic transfers that take place between diverse places and times during the act of remembrance. Thinking in terms of multidirectional memory helps explain the spiralling interactions that characterize the politics of memory.” (ibid, 11).

Rothberg suggests considering “memory as multidirectional: as subject to ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing, and borrowing; as productive and not privative” (ibid, 3) For him the explicit claims of the “productive, intercultural dynamic of multidirectional memory” bears “the potential to create new forms of solidarity and new visions of justice” (ibid, 5).

As a result of initial fieldwork, we came to understand that there is no primary abstract necessity to ‘entangle’ the different histories. They start to intersect in educational practice through the active evolvement of participants in the way people approach images, draw connections, build associations. Hence we propose to understand these situations as ‘doing multidirectional memory’. Sometimes these connections help to obscure other connections, or memories that are pushed aside; sometimes they open up discussions or provide starting grounds. A scene from an educational programme on a colonial image archive in an ethnographic museum in Germany is interesting to observe from this point of view:

> The group has assembled around a table. […] The educator opens out a series of photographs from boxes on the table, pictures taken by a German doctor and anthropologist in the 19th century. They show front, back and profile views of naked persons – anthropometric photography, half concealed by the tracing paper that separates them in the boxes. The educator asks whether the students want to see these images, or if she should rather pack them away again. Some of the students nod, they want to see them. “What do you see on these pictures?”, she asks. […] “Selection ….Euthanasia” a student associates.

> The educator explains that the anthropologist worked as a doctor on a plantation and did research there on 'race science'. […] Prompted by the educator who asks for more thoughts by the students, the boy who already spoke earlier says that people were selected whether they were fit for work or not, and only if they were they could survive. He does not name it, but apparently he speaks about the 'selection' in Nazi concentration camps. (Observation protocol, shortened and translated, Nora Landkammer)

The scene documents a misinterpretation. It is, however, a telling one, because it testifies to the fact that the speaker identified the images as violent. We would say, he used the history he knows and that is available to him (he makes reference to what he prepared for a presentation in school about Nazi concentration camps at a later point) to grasp a situation in which the gaze and the observation of the body as violent in another context, not known to him. Therefore his misinterpretation provides a starting ground for understanding one history through another, closer one, which is how Rothberg defines the process of multidirectionality in memory.

What this means for an educational setting of course depends very much on what happens next. In the sequence described above, the teacher intervenes by bringing yet another association: police photography, and the photographs of criminals by Lambroso. The educator engages both statements by referring to 'the body being measured'. She reacts to the interpretation as a concentration camp scene by saying: "These pictures do not come from this context, but that does not mean that there is no relation at all". The educator introduces the history of scientific racism, to which the students react by wondering about the 'sense' that racism made in different historical situations as a means to justify exploitation. A discussion ensues as to whether the scientists establishing racial categories are responsible for the consequences of this knowledge, whether they "meant to do harm" or not, and if this matters. We describe the conversation at considerable length for several reasons. The educator, by providing context information, but not rejecting the associations, brings about a common inquiry that keeps jumping between various historical contexts. He/she remains somewhat vague, but for that same reason contributes to the group building understandings of the relation between science, power and violence.

In the educational settings that we observed, the educators rarely take up the cross-links provided by visitors and move onto the thin ice of entangling histories, which risks producing incorrect comparisons and doing injustice to historical specificity. Yet, multidirectionality in memory can be, despite the risks, a productive dynamic for learning.

It is not just by chance that the situation chosen here is one in which the memory of Nazism and of the Holocaust arises in dealing with geographically and chronologically different histories of violence. This is the single most common way of ‘doing multidirectional memory’ by visitors that we observed in the German speaking context. In his book “Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization” (2010) Rothberg clarifies that the “reference to the connection between Holocaust and de-colonisation memory is not coincidental”. Referring to the Holocaust he states: “there is probably no other single event that encapsulates the struggles for recognition that accompany collective memory in such a condensed and global form” (Ibid, 6). Yet, he also points out that “early Holocaust memory emerged in dialogue with the dynamic transformations and multifaceted struggles that define the era of decolonization” (Ibid, 7). If images of the Holocaust are brought up in the German context as a reference point for dealing with – often less known – colonial heritages, then it is a case of the application of a majority narrative, which is part of official history and its teaching, to building memories of other histories. Other instances of historical cross-links by participants do appear in the education settings we observed, but often have, as minoritarian memories that cannot count on being understood and shared, much lower visibility. The indication that associating ‘black’ with ‘bad’ has its own racist history, for instance, was made by a student of colour in a tour at a former concentration camp site when this association came up in the discussion. The comment, drawing on knowledge of the history of racism that could well have contributed to the learning in the visit, was voiced as a murmur, only audible to the researcher who was the immediate neighbour, not for the whole group. The setting of historical learning in migration societies is much debated (e.g. Messerschmidt 2011; Sternfeld 2013). The concept of multidirectionality in building up memory can be a fertile starting ground for devising educational settings that take up and actively encourage cross-links between the individual knowledge of

participants, viewing them rather as gateways towards understanding than competing memories.

Rather than focusing on a particular approach or method employed by facilitators, the ‘moments’ from educational practice outlined here have shown how dissent, instances of ‘working through’ problematic knowledge, and multidirectional memories appear in and impact upon learning settings. Also, they show evidence of how difficult it is for educators to perceive and acknowledge these moments as gateways to learning experiences rather than as disturbance, threat or resistance. The concepts of multidirectional memory, the agonistic conflict zone and learning through crises debated in the TRACES project can be taken as reflective tools to bring conflicted learning moments into the picture.

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[1] Observation and interviews with educators in museums, exhibitions and heritage sites, 2016-2018. This study conducted within TRACES concerned programs that aim to encourage debate and active engagement with cases of contentious heritage, focusing on topics of colonial heritage and racism, as well as Nazism and the Holocaust.

[2] For a more detailed analysis of the experiences with this workshop format see Schneider: Transition points and Landkammer: Researching with young people in this chapter

The burdocks of *Klettengasse*: Reflecting on presence in Mediaș, Transylvania

Julie Dawson

Nostalgia itself has a utopian dimension, only it is no longer directed toward the future. Sometimes nostalgia is not directed toward the past either, but rather sideways. The nostalgic feels stifled within the conventional confines of time and space.

Svetlana Boym (2001, xiv)

The ochre-coloured synagogue in Mediaș sits directly across the street from the derelict central bus station and a stone's throw from the communist-era train station. It is considered part of the historic old city, though it technically lies outside the former medieval walls. For all intents and purposes, it is thus centrally located – and yet the corner on which the synagogue and other buildings that once belonged to the Jewish community are located is easy to overlook, crouching at a dusty intersection of loud traffic going anywhere but there. Its deferential character may be due to its spatial positioning, it is lower than the rest of the town, lying at the bottom of a gently sloping hill, probably at the lowest elevation in the old town. In fact, the high level of ground water in the soil causes regular drainage problems and structural issues, though this feature may once have been desirable so as to facilitate the construction of a mikveh, which according to Jewish law must have a natural water source and the existence of which is fundamental to a new community.[1] At the same time, the ground water may have made the location unattractive to other potential tenants – and thus more readily affordable: a muddy, swampy plot of land in the shadow of the thick medieval wall of brick and stone and overgrown with the massive leaves of the tenacious, water-loving burdock plant – after which the street, *Klettengasse*, or Burdock Lane, was named.

Situated physically on the historic threshold of the town, though at an entry point more akin to a servant's entrance than a main gate[2], the site functioned then and still does today as a liminal space, the home of a marginal community. The location comprises the

synagogue, a former Jewish school and 'modern' mikveh (built in the 1920s), a building which served as housing for community employees and offices with large terrace, and a spacious garden courtyard surrounded by the afore-mentioned buildings. A further adjacent building constructed onto the historic fortification wall itself, with the metre-thick wall forming the left side of the building, was recently sold to local real estate developers and was probably the first building connected explicitly with the Jewish community. It appears to have functioned at various points in time as a home for the rabbi or other employees and, according to one testimony, may have been the site of the first prayer house.[3] The complex of buildings and courtyard act as a 'symbolic mezuzah', as described by Ruth Ellen Gruber in her book *Upon the Doorposts of Thy House* (1994, 4), marking the entire corner as a Jewish space. However, like the scars left by proper mezuzahs, it is seldom identified as such by many passers-by[4]. Just as mezuzahs once marked the doorways to Jewish homes, these Jewish spaces mark what was once a private, intimate space, profoundly Jewish – the location of weddings, meetings, and prayers – and, until recently, cloaked in a profound silence. This essay is both an exploration of the liminal and marginal characteristics of Jewish Mediaș, past and present, as well as a reflection on the actions taken by the TRACES Mediaș team to lift the veil which descended over the site following World War II or, perhaps, more accurately expressed, to limn the contours of a shrouded community [-> Absence as heritage].

Liminal spaces

Liminal and marginal sometimes function as synonyms or augment the meaning of the other on a parallel plane. Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines liminal as "of, relating to, or situated at a sensory threshold: barely perceptible or capable of eliciting a response", a secondary meaning is "of, relating to, or being an intermediate state, phase, or condition: in-between, transitional." In addition to occupying the physical space of transition from within the town boundaries to outside those boundaries, the Jewish spaces in Mediaș (and the surrounding region) indeed are "barely perceptible" and rarely "elicit a response" from the majority population of the town. The spaces likewise have found themselves in

a perpetual state of transition over the past seventy to eighty years, shifting gradually from ownership and care to a state of apparent abandonment and intensifying dereliction, beginning with the war-time departure of the community president and patriarch of a historic family and the subsequent death of the rabbi (vehemently disliked by many community leaders, which is another story) and intensifying in the wake of waves of mass migration to Israel during the 1950s and 1960s. The tiny community that remained faded away over the next decades. By the 1990s, the last members had moved to a centralised Jewish home for the elderly, passed away, or finally conceded to join family members abroad.

For the past decade, the spaces have inhabited a new period of intermediacy and in-betweenness, of liminality defined by Horvath, Thomassen, and Wydra as "captur[ing] in-between situations and conditions characterized by the dislocation of established structures, the reversal of hierarchies, and uncertainty about the continuity of tradition and future outcomes" (2015, 2). Though lacking an official legal framework, a number of projects have taken place on the grounds, including such grassroots events as garden clean-ups and film viewings but also more elaborate long-term endeavours related to the Jewish heritage of the town, such as the rescuing and processing of the community archives discovered in the women's balcony of the synagogue, the restoration of handmade tapestries, the cataloguing of library books, the curating of exhibition material and the hosting of workshops (see Toma in this volume) [-> Communities past and present]. These projects have been carried out administratively under the umbrella of local, supportive NGOs while the space itself remains undefined, an untethered structure, at times discombobulating expectations and bedevilling or delighting visitors.

Marginal roles

Besides the definition related to book margins, marginal also denotes "of, relating to, or situated at a margin or border" and "not of central importance also: limited in extent, significance, or stature" and "occupying the borderland of a relatively stable territorial or cultural area." It may further denote "characterized by the incorporation of habits and

values from two divergent cultures and by incomplete assimilation in either" and "excluded from or existing outside the mainstream of society, a group, or a school of thought" and finally, "located at the fringe of consciousness." Jewish Mediaș and the Jews of the Saxon region were marginal in every sense of the word: geographically, the southern Transylvanian Jews dwelt in settlements on the border of the Habsburg empire, these were frontier communities, at the threshold of Ottoman empire.[5] Though at a crossroads of peoples and states, this frontier space was far-flung, remote from the centres of the day. Besides occupying the self-evidently marginal role within the majority society filled by almost all Jewish communities within Christian Europe, these Jewish communities were marginal within the Jewish world itself; they were small and unquestionably insignificant compared to communities elsewhere within the Habsburg empire.[6]

Within the continuum of European Jewish history and, more specifically, Central European Jewish history, these communities acquired a further marginal feature – that of intact survival during World War II. The war years were certainly a time of fear and apprehension and, without doubt, no family or individual was left untouched by Romanian anti-Semitic legislation, the atmosphere of terror and intimidation created by the Iron Guard, and the eventual deportations of the Jewish populations of northern Transylvania, a territory devised by an arbitrary borderline dividing extended families and friends overnight. Nevertheless, in Mediaș itself, there were no mass deportations. The tide of war began to shift and in 1942, dictator Ion Antonescu gave up plans to deport Romanian Jews en masse to German camps, this opportunism saving the lives of hundreds of thousands of Jews in southern Romanian territories.[7]

This deviation from the majority narrative of annihilation often confounds the visitor to Mediaș. Over years of discussing local Jewish history, it has become clear that many people lack a framework for talking or thinking about absent Jewish communities when the absence stems not from the familiar narrative of violence, but is due rather to a gradual fading over decades, the result of self-initiative.[8] Today, perhaps exacerbated by this fate outside the narrative of utter destruction in the Shoah, these communities are

given scant attention by historians and continue to exist only on the fringes of local consciousness and of mainstream history – as spaces of silence and sites of decline.

Exclusionary silence

But marginal also indicates exclusion: exclusion from urban life, exclusion from collective memory, exclusion from identity narratives, exclusion from historiography. Writing in the 1980s regarding a similar exclusion or 'silence' surrounding the Transylvanian peasantry, anthropologist Katherine Verdery suggests we be wary of such "silent spaces", noting that "in social science and history they are suspect, representing failures that embarrass our pretensions to knowledge, both of the world and of ourselves in it" (198, xi). Correspondingly, in his work exploring the early years of the Miskolc Jewish community, historian Howard Lupovitch notes the "historiographical imbalance" that sees the "lion's share of attention" being concentrated on "larger centres of Jewish life" while smaller, more marginal communities are ignored. Lupovitch suggests that there is much to be gained from examining the "ebb and flow of communal relations on a local level" in such peripheral communities (2007, xv-xvi). The task of the Mediaș TRACES team was to explore techniques for extirpating this silence and for arresting decline, to develop methods for, if not erasing absence, so for at least to see how one can remove what is not there, for recalling a presence.

Our actions may be interpreted as an exercise in nostalgia on many levels, not least for the careful and conscious focus on counter-technological processes with which our artist, Răzvan Anton frequently works (see Anton in this volume) [-> Fading Studies]. The Casa de lângă Sinagogă is, in its essence, a nostalgic space, evoking a past when there was a community large and prosperous enough to finance a large new building for the Jewish school, one of the few interwar modernist structures in Mediaș, and to maintain the multiple buildings associated with the community. During the summer residencies, our daily routine was frequently consumed with the names and stories of those who passed over the thresholds of these rooms several generations ago. The narrator of the story in our second exhibition *Liminal Portraits: Stories from the Margins* herself dwelled in the

very rooms we use as an atelier, work and gallery space. The central actions of the story she recounts unfolded here – a fact which only became clear to us after deciding to work with this material. Our variety of nostalgia is affiliated with Svetlana Boym's interpretation as "a sentiment of loss and displacement, but […] also a romance with one's own fantasy" (2001, xiii). We work to employ a productive "reflective nostalgia […] dwell[ing] on the ambivalences of human longing and belonging" as opposed to a potentially destructive "restorative nostalgia […] stress[ing] *nostos* and attempt[ing] a transhistorical reconstruction of the lost home." While "restorative nostalgia protects absolute truth," writes Boym, "reflective nostalgia calls it into doubt" (2001, xviii). Following this idea, in the text introduction to *Liminal Portraits* we wrote that the exhibition seeks to "explore the limits of what can be known and communicated through vestigial belongings of a community or written testimonies" and invited the visitor to view the contents as "uncertain, shadowy, fragmented, potentially distorted and flawed" (Dawson and Anton 2017).

Peripheries and hybridities

It has also been argued and is perhaps a hallmark of culture making today, that a position on the periphery and away from the mainstream centre serves to stimulate artistic and alternative practices and modes of thought, that it can embody the "pure site of radicality, creativity, and intellectual empowerment" (Gilman 1999, 5). Certainly, our peripheral position of non-affiliation with local churches or the state within the context of today's Mediaș allows the space to be embraced and used by a wide variety of community members. On the other hand, I argue that perhaps our most salient feature is not one of complete marginality, but rather one of in-betweenness, both in the past and present. The Casa de lângă Sinagogă is of Mediaș and outside of Mediaș, we inhabit a space of hybridity. In his essay "Inbetweenness and Ambivalence", sociologist Bernhard Giesen argues that such hybridity and "inbetweenness is essential for the construction of culture" (2015, 62). Our archive and library contain materials in Romanian, Hungarian, German, Hebrew, and Yiddish (as well as a smattering of other languages). Almost every visitor, local or international, encounters the familiar and the foreign. In line with one of the

manifold definitions of 'marginal' cited above, the historic Jewish community assimilated neither to the local Germans nor Hungarians, they perched somewhere in-between, though, as Jews, not equidistantly in the centre between these two, but rather situated sideways. This feature is still relevant today and allows our space to be self-evidently multi-lingual and complex to classify.[9]

Our activities undoubtedly place us within the context of the European-wide memory phenomenon discussed by Sharon MacDonald, engaged as we are in "past presencing" (2013, 17, 238). But we also seek to tie our activities to the lives of those in the community today, to be relevant to the young. Our 2018 oral histories exhibition *"... but we brought it back…": Objects, Paths, Stories* sought on multiple levels to knot the past to the present and to indicate a connection to the future. A thread was traced through stories from Romanians, Saxons, Hungarians, Roma, Jews, as well as new Mediașers (from elsewhere in Romania and Ukraine), a web woven between past and present, telling of world wars, family fates, departures and returns. One story was related by the great-granddaughter of a Jewish woman, "renowned in Mediaș for her beautiful mezzo voice,"[10] so much so that she was asked – and agreed – to perform in the Hungarian Catholic church. At the opening of this exhibition we invited a female cantor, Svetlana Kundish (born herself in Ukraine, schooling in Israel and classical and cantorial training in Vienna and Berlin), to perform *hazanuth* (cantorial compositions) in the Mediaș synagogue. Not only was the synagogue, for the first time in decades, alit and ringing with the sound of voices but it almost certainly marked the first time a female voice had filled the space.[11] Though an ephemeral experience, the performance of a female cantor at an exhibition underlining the vocal talents of a local Jewish woman almost a century before fashioned a tangible bond from past to present, a link not perceptible to all but profoundly meaningful to some.[12] The exhibition and its associated concert was at once a reminder of a distant past, a picture of the present, and an inquiry into the future, presenting a Mediaș of depth and complexity unknown to many.

As I wrote this article I considered ending with an anecdote about how, in the summer of 2018, during a conversation about historic street names and especially our own, the

Klettengasse (*Strada Brusturilor* after World War I and *Strada Mihail Kogalniceanu* in the post-World War II era), we looked towards the weedy patch of ground at the perimeter of the former Jewish school and realised that the burdocks had returned – or perhaps never left. I pondered ending the article with this thought, suggesting a latent continuity of space prior to development by people, in a place that had otherwise witnessed significant upheavals amongst its stewards. I began to search for recent photographs of the burdocks in the garden but with little success. Eventually one from 2016 surfaced, just as the TRACES project began and before the garden had been cleared, showing a lush patch of the frilled, massive leaves in the centre of the courtyard, which is today planted with grass and clover. So, the burdock is gone after all, or at least most of it, I reflected, knowing that in the end the presence or absence of the burdock today is irrelevant. It is the knowledge that it once grew there, that it gave the street its original name (and the historic implications of the many subsequent name changes) that instils a more nuanced picture of historic Mediaș. Similarly, our work is not intended to suggest a return of a Jewish presence to Mediaș in the historic sense, but rather to recall a presence that has been forgotten, to trace the outlines of shadows and listen for the echoes of voices, to enjoin the Mediaș community today that both the Jewish absence, as well as their onetime presence, is their heritage.

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[1] A natural water source did not necessarily mean a mikveh's waters would be clean. For descriptions of mikvehs in rural Germany in the early 19th century see Lowenstein (2005, 144-145). Medias's first mikveh was probably similar.

[2] In fact, historically the *Klettengasse* dead-ended into the medieval wall, historic maps show no gate though it is possible a simple door existed or was cut at some point in time. We do not know when this part of the wall was taken down and the street extended another circa 100 metres to its present length.

[3] Personal communication made to me by Philipp Leitner, born in the 1920s in Mediaș. The Mediaș Town Hall collection held at the Alba Iulia National Archives would almost certainly be able to provide confirmation of these details, but the collection is permanently closed and, according to a conversation with the archive director in 2016, there are no plans to facilitate access.

[4] It is not uncommon to see a pedestrian cross themselves when passing the synagogue. The custom of crossing oneself when passing a church is still fairly widespread in Romania, especially in more rural areas.

[5] For more on unique characteristics of frontier communities see both Sander Gilman's reflections in the introduction of *Jewries at the Frontier: Accommodation, Identity, Conflict* (1999) and especially the introduction and chapter one of Howard Lupovitch's study of the Jewish community of the frontier town of Miskolc (2007).

[6] There is, however, some evidence that as the community first began to form in the 1850s, its small numbers belied a disproportionately large (and probably controversial) leadership role in the region. This was the result of its young rabbi, David Bäumel, recently arrived from and trained in western Bohemia, a region far more advanced in many ways but not least in terms of Jewish emancipation and education, than Transylvania.

[7] Exact motivations that led to the cancellation of deportation plans continue to be disputed. See especially chapter fifteen of Vladimir Solonari (2010). On the opportunistic activities of local Saxon populations vis-à-vis anti-Semitic expropriation legislation, with an episode in Mediaș as an example, see Weber and Danecke (2016). For the Jews of the Bukovina, Bessarabia, and Odessa regions, the shift in Romanian government intentions came too late. Hundreds of thousands of Jews from these regions perished as a result of mass deportations implemented by the Antonescu regime in 1941. See Solonari (2010) and Ioanid (2000).

[8] For example, supporters of the work at the Casa de lângă Sinagogă once suggested we install *Stolpersteine* (small concrete cubes inscribed with names put into the pavement before the homes of individuals murdered in the Shoah) in Mediaș, though no deportations took place here nor were any local

community members killed to our knowledge during the war. Another visitor was bent on labelling the Jewish narrator of a war-time testimony the 'Mediaş Anne Frank' though the circumstances of the story were crucially different – the narrator was not in hiding, she survived, etc.

[9] This trait is in contrast to Transylvanian Jewish communities to the north which were generally Hungarian-speaking, a characteristic maintained to this day. Only in the Regat, the 'old kingdom' of Romania were Jewish communities Romanian-speaking. Yiddish was spoken both in northern Transylvania as well across the Regat, especially in Moldova. There is little evidence that Yiddish was widely used in Mediaş, even at the time of the community's founding and initial growth, though many would have had at least a passive understanding. German as the official language of the Mediaş community is laid out in its Statutes as late as the 1930s. The first rabbi David Bäumel's daughter published several German-language poetry books, indicating the primary language of the community's religious and cultural leaders in the 19th and early 20th centuries. That Hungarian was also commonly used if not universally understood is clear from archival documents. In an unusual twist, Yiddish came into greater use in Mediaş in the years immediately following World War II as a result of the influx of refugees from Bukovina and northern Transylvania. This state was, however, short-lived.

[10] Interview with Janet Leuchter, August 25, 2018.

[11] According to Jewish Orthodox law, it is forbidden for men to hear a woman sing ('kol isha'). The Mediaş Jewish community was officially orthodox and though individual observance practices varied widely, no woman would have been permitted to sing within the synagogue itself, especially under the new, more conservative rabbi, Moishe Reich, who arrived in the early 20th century.

[12] The great-granddaughter of the Mediaş Jewish woman is herself a cantor today in the United States.

From heritage communities to communities of implication

Erica Lehrer

Given the intensifying global migrations of people and things during the 20th and 21st centuries, the grounds for *cultural authenticity* – and the authority and analytical tools to determine it in relation to material culture – increasingly overspills the contours of any single national or cultural community. Quite simply, the language of ownership and property is insufficient to both theorize and productively activate certain kinds of material culture present in colonial-era museums today. Without eroding the fundamental ethical (and legal) achievement of recognizing 'source communities' and championing the restitution of 'cultural property' to those groups from whom it was unjustly acquired, we must explore how museums can supplement and expand notions of object-community relations. Museums are in a powerful position to help broker new modes and terms of engagement with collections that enhance both our understandings of meaningful objects, and our ability to envision and call into being new, progressive communities and solidarities with their help. We need additional concepts that support innovative museum work in a range of social, cultural, and political settings, a vocabulary suited to complex past and present relationships not only of museology, but of object-making. This language must also support new visions of identity politics and cross-group solidarity, to counteract our dangerously polarized world.

How may we simultaneously grasp the plural meanings of objects, constitute ethical stewardship, and allow for (or encourage) the emergence of future(-oriented) communities? What new models of *inheritance* or *kinship* might transcend the modern Western framework of 'possessive individualism' (Handler 2019)[1] – that we are what we own – and fit a range of circumstances within but also beyond the Indigenous-colonial paradigm? And what approaches to display and encounter can museums use to open up such objects to their inherent plurality? Ivan Karp and Cory Kratz invoke the variety of "links and claims", including "felt kinship, ownership, and rights", that define the relations that diverse "stakeholders" may have to objects in museum collections (Karp/ Kratz 2014, 284).[2] It is this range of possible relations that we need to enlarge,

to bring a dynamic, pluralist gaze to bear on museum objects. Such an expansion can help us re-envision our relations not only to objects, but to each other.

A starting point is the notion of a *heritage community*. The Council of Europe (CoE) defines a heritage community as "people who *value* specific aspects of cultural heritage which they *wish*, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations" [my emphasis] (Council of Europe 2005, 2). This conception brings a usefully flexible sense of agency, process, and change to people-object relations.[3] But the notion of a heritage community is also limiting in its focus on *desire* and *choice* in relation to heritage. For this reason, I propose the term *community of implication*, building on the CoE's definition to include people who are *affected* by or can be said to be *implicated*[4] in certain tangible or intangible cultural products, in ethical terms. Such a move decenters Europe as the space of definition, and yet keeps European connections to the objects that have sojourned in colonial museums in full view without imputing any necessary or noble character to such custodianship. It also takes into account the problem of cultural appropriation, which entails the loss of crucial historical and contemporary meanings – and thereby power – due to the choice by new individuals and groups to identify with, or simply employ or enjoy, objects or intangible heritage originating with other groups.[5]

More exceptionally, thinking about implication involves shifting the focus away from the agency of the *subjects* – the idea that we always choose what aspects of heritage relate to us – and transposes it instead to the agency of the *objects*, recognizing the material world's ability to depict, to move, to connect, to remind, even to accuse.[6] Such a shift is particularly salient when considering complex recent histories involving both colonialism and other forms and catalysts of mass violence, forced migration, and subsequent mnemonic formations – so called "difficult heritage" (Macdonald 2008). Heritage discourses are often deployed by regressive or even dangerous forces in highly exclusive, essentialist forms, that countenance no acknowledgement of 'undesirable' heritage that would complicate celebratory nationalist (or other exclusivist) projects (De Cesari 2017). We must thus go beyond the notion of *positive valuation* and a *desire to protect and bequeath* 'heritage' as a gift of identity that one hopes to see continued by one's descendants. There are simply too many tangible and intangible traces of the past that *intrude* on our social lives and consciousness unbeckoned (and often undesired), in ways that may strongly

contribute to our senses of self and others ideas about us, to allow us to think of heritage as always fully chosen and embraced.

Museum collections also contain such *awkward objects* [-> Awkward objects], which bear traces of forgotten or suppressed histories that link communities in ways that raise important questions and point to needed social and cultural work of redress, repair, recovery, and reimagining.[7] An example from the Kraków Ethnographic Museum is instructive: a group of ratchets (wooden noisemakers) on display in the 'spring customs' room of the permanent exhibit of 'Polish folk culture' in the Kraków museum (fig. 1). The only interpretive material 'reads' them as Catholic Polish *terkotka*s (or *kołatka*s) – used in Eastertime ritual processions, or in place of bells to call locals to church on Good Friday.[8] But they could just as easily be Jewish *groggers*, used by local children each time the villain Haman's name is said during the traditional reading of the Book of Esther on Purim. (That is how they appeared to this author, having played with them as a Jewish child in the USA). The addition of an explanatory label connecting the two traditions that employ the same object, historical and contemporary photos of the two religious communities using them, or reminiscences from Jewish and Catholic individuals who played with them, could remind museum visitors that Poland was prior to World War II (and to a very small extent is still today) a multi-ethnic, multi-religious society, and thereby place Jews within the story of 'Polish culture' from which they have, in significant ways, been erased. The display would tell a story of cultural proximity, exchange, and hybridity that could help both communities understand 'their culture' in more expansive ways.[9]

Terkotky/Groggers on display at the Krakow Ethnographic Museum (1929, Brzezowa near Myślenice, gift from the girl's junior high school. Object inventory no. 3764. Photo by author).

Colonial-era museums have *a priori* multicultural heritage. Their collections span the globe and contain evidence of cultural contact and heterogeneity elided by the very national boundaries these museums were founded to underscore and legitimate. From continually-transforming American Indian totem poles (Jonaitis / Glass 2010), to Kenyan Samburu marriage beads (of 19th century Venetian origin, coveted today by middle-class American women) (Straight 2002), and ubiquitous 'tourist art' created by cultural insiders but catering to visitors desires (Phillips/ Steiner 1999), the objects contained in them bear a wide range of cultural meanings and affects

reverberating from a history of ambivalent inter-group engagements. Should not their galleries do the same?

This call for a new term and related innovations in museum practice is necessarily enunciated in a highly political, over-determined field. We must therefore commit to an ongoing conversation about how ostensibly emancipatory terminology may elide the ongoing injustices perpetrated by European and Euro-colonial museums that continue to hold and misrepresent ill-gotten collections. The development of a notion of *communities of implication* must take vigilant care to distinguish itself from the practice of "inventing conceptions and slogans that will protect [museums'] illegal holding of looted / stolen cultural artefacts of others" (Opoku 2015, n.p.). Such terms include 'shared heritage', 'world heritage', or 'heritage of all mankind'. We must also open difficult discussions about the divergent power relations surrounding Indigenous, Jewish, and further racialized, ethnicized, or differently 'otherized' collections. Attention to Holocaust memory, for example, can *in some locations and under some circumstances* become a "comfortable horrible" (Linenthal 1995:267) that is grievable (Butler 2008) – and politically, socially, and emotionally 'safe' – in ways that colonial memory is not. Indeed, Holocaust memory may even act to conceal colonial memory.[10]

With these caveats in mind, the idea of *communities of implication* aspires to expand the circle of voices that museums bring to bear on understanding objects, with democratic interpretation and exhibition – and new network-building in relation to these – achieved through the widest range of means. Further, the push to diversify the interpretive toolkit does not only apply to Indigenous or "minoritized" (Smith 2016) cultural objects in majority, dominant-culture museums.[11] A Picasso painting inspired by African masks stands to gain as much from being viewed in the context of a multi-cultural, multi-national, multi-vocal *community of implication* as does a Benin bronze, or a Polish folk sculpture depicting the Nazi persecution of Jews. Arguments that such objects are somehow better exhibited in the British Museum, rather than in Benin or Brooklyn, are merely exercises in the perpetuation of colonial-era power politics. Rather, such contextual shifts – potentially achieved via rotating itineraries of custodianship – would aid in the accumulation of perspectives on human-object implication, and in building the envisioned communities, a new kind of global kin.[12]

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[1] Anthropologist Richard Handler (1991) discusses how even Indigenous groups have today adopted – quite fairly in political terms – flawed Western notions of group property in efforts to regain their culturally-significant objects from Western museums.
[2] The term „stakeholders" is itself problematic, as it has economic and business-oriented resonances that work against a more humanistic notion and approach to the museum as a public good.
[3] Or more broadly 'people-heritage relations', to encompass 'intangible' cultural materials like music, stories, specialized knowledge, ritual practice, etc.
[4] I am broadly inspired here by Michael Rothberg's (2014) expanding on and complicating the standard victim/ perpetrator/ bystander paradigm via his theorization of 'implicated subjects', which he defines as the "large and heterogeneous collection of subjects who enable and benefit from traumatic violence without taking part in it directly." He notes that "The category of implicated subjects emerges in relation to both historical and contemporary scenarios of violence: that is, it describes the indirect responsibility of subjects situated at temporal or geographic distance from the production of social suffering. It helps direct our attention to the conditions of possibility of violence as well as its lingering impact and suggests new routes of opposition…*implication* draws attention to how we are *entwined with* and *folded into* (im-pli-cated in) histories and situations that surpass our agency as individual subjects." In the present context, I am interested in the lingering impact of violence and the conditions of possibility for retroactively witnessing it in ways that surpass our agency as individual subjects.
[5] The problem can be particularly egregious in a capitalist system where money is being made by dominant groups' use of marginalized people's creations.
[6] Recent scholarship on the agency and affective force of objects includes: Navaro-Yashin (2009); Forensic Architecture (2014); Hoskins (2006); and Bennett (2010).
[7] Indeed, collecting practices and policies as a discrete process (separate from interpreting or curating what has already been collected) have implications for the notion of heritage communities, as the act of amassing materials may itself make visible previously unseen cultural interconnections and raise new questions.
[8] The quote inscribed on a nearby wall, next to a similar rattle, reads, „there is a custom in the countryside, that from Holy Thursday until the end of the week (...) boys race about the village clacking their clackers." Buków (near Kraków), 1903. [In Polish: jest taki zwyczaj na wsi, że od Wielkiego Czwartku do końca tygodnia (...) chłopcy biegają po wsi z kłapaczkami i kłapią. Buków (koło Krakowa), 1903.]
[9] In fact, recent additions to the Ethnographic Museum's website do offer such interpretive material in relation to another Purim object: a scroll of Esther. See http://etnomuzeum.eu/zbiory/-88. Similarly, in March 17-18, 2018, the museum organized a workshop for families focusing not on the traditional Easter celebrations, but focusing on Purim, in association with local Jewish organization Czulent. For one image see: http://etnomuzeum.eu/images/upload/edukacja/Etnokalendarz/03_2018/9.jpg
[10] „Comfortable horrible" is Edward Linenthal's term for narratives of tragedy that have little social power beyond confirming what "we," as a pre-determined collectivity, already know, think, or feel. The idea of a "grieveable subject" is from Judith Butler's *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (2008)
[11] "Minoritized individuals belong to groups that as a result of social constructs face prejudices and have less power or representationthan other groups (Smith 2016)
[12] A shorter version of this article appeared in TRACES journal 5, pp 7-11.

Caduca, or es*cheat*ed heritage

Roma Sendyka

Post-violence countries often face the problem of how to deal with the abandoned heritage of those who fell victim to events. The term *orphan heritage* was recently coined to describe such forsaken legacies. According to Jon Price, orphan heritage is "*owned* by people distant from the territories that contain the material” (Price 2005, 182). Communities linked to those who were murdered, expelled, or emigrated maintain symbolic, emotional, or discursive relationships to tangible objects or properties that remain in the country from which they or their kin fled but there is “a separation between those who would normally wish to enact codes of behaviour, policy structures and legislation by reason of ownership of heritage, and those who are legitimately able to by reason of ownership of location” (Price 2005, 182). The current ‘owning country’ can have “a variety of responses ranging from being co-operative to being completely disinterested, destructive, or not enacting any form of protective legislation (Miles 2016, 73). The orphan heritage may be thus destroyed, appropriated, misappropriated, commodified, or may become a magnet for newly formed ’heritage communities’ (Lehrer 2019) [-> Heritage Communities].

(Fig. 1)

In post-genocide countries the problem is exacerbated. The totalizing scale of genocidal acts often results in the lack or extreme deficiency of a population that could – even from afar – negotiate care for their patrimony or sustain its meanings. The ‘owning country’ might even be implicated in the destruction of the heritage-originating population, a situation that further impedes post-genocide relations to the material. How might the concept of orphan heritage be re-calibrated to account for the processes unfolding in countries that suffered extreme population loss and are left to reckon with the heritage of the dead?

The ancient legal term *caducus* might help to grasp the complexity of the phenomenon. *Caducus* (derived from the Latin *cadere*, or *fall*) means *fallen*, figuratively connoting something doomed or connected with death. As a legal term it relates to vacant ownership[i]. The concept of *caducus* was developed in feudal times to describe a situation when “a land or fee had been fallen back or reverted, or returned or become forfeited to the lord” (Burrill

1998, 173). A more recent term for such a situation is *escheat* derived from ancient French *eschier* (a variant of *eschiver* – meaning to *avoid*, *prevent*, *refuse*): “when, by accident, lands fall to the lord of whom they are holden - we say the fee is escheated” (Burrill 1998, 430). *Escheat*, in turn, means in legal terminology a sudden or unexpected falling back or reverting of ownership “in consequence of an extinction of the blood of tenant, either for his dying without heirs (*propter defectus sanguinis*) or by his attainder for treason or felony (*propter delictum tenantis*)” (Burrill 1998, 430). Modern societies have replaced the feudal owner with the state: “It is a general principle in the American law that when the title to land fails from defect of heirs or devisees, it necessarily reverts or escheats to the people, as forming part of the common stock to which the whole community is entitled” (Burrill 1998, 430).

(Fig. 2)

The definition of orphan heritage proposed by Price clearly refers to an estranged or abandoned possession of an existing population, not an ownership of an erased one. Thus the terms *caducus*, meaning caducary, or escheated heritage, may serve as a useful tool for describing the particular situation of post-genocidal ownership relations. *Caducus* would then generally denote the ‘ownership’ status of an obliterated population, who left no descendants, to the material heritage they left behind. Such ‘caducary heritage’, falling in the feudal past to an individual, politically-stronger subject, would today describe a publicly-sanctioned (even if morally despicable) appropriation or looting by a particular person. ’Escheated heritage’ – based on an old legal term for nationalization – may today refer to actions undertaken by the state in the name of the people.

In Polish, the old legal term survived in the saying *to do something ‘by the law of caducus’* (‘*prawem kaduka*’), meaning done unfairly, without rights, using instead blunt force and disregard for the law. While drawn from a legal term, the popular use suggests that *caducus* is a dubious act, with negative associations, an act of violence rather than justice. It is no surprise that elsewhere one can hear the word *cheat* resonating in *escheated*.

(Fig. 3)

I did not leave any heir here,
So let your hand ferret out the J things,
Chominowa of Lwów, brave wife of a snitch,
Sly informer, mother of Volksdeutsch.

Let them serve you and yours, why should they serve strangers[1].

Zuzanna Ginczanka, a Polish-Jewish poetess, wrote these sarcastic lines on fleeing Lwów in 1943, leaving her scanty belongings behind. The poem resonates with the today discussions in which post-genocide countries struggle to come to terms with material heritage that was appropriated in the wake of mass violence on their territory, whether via state-level writ or individual looting[2]. Property seizure – even if grounded in old traditions or modern legal procedures – still feels unjust, and raises a whole range of affective responses, ranging from fear on the part of the appropriators to anger among those who were dispossessed.

Interestingly, in Polish the old (and almost forgotten) term for transferal of ownership in the absence of heirs is *puścizna* – a derivate of the word *spuścizna* (literally: *legacy*)[3]. *Puścizna* also derives from the word *puścić* – meaning to *let something go*. For a modern-day speaker it carries echoes of the word *pustka* – meaning *emptiness*.

(Fig. 4)

Hence, escheated/ caducary heritage reminds us always of loss, and recalls brutal deaths. The material appropriation by new users of the property of the dead – whether private or communal, and no matter how zealously justified or officially sanctioned – retains the sense of trespassing some older, universal moral principle. Research into the actual terminology developing on the ground among post-genocidal populations will allow us to ascribe further, more detailed meanings to the concept. Observing local discussions of processes catalyzed by heritage with no heirs will lead to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of truly orphaned heritage.

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[1] The poem in translation by Bożena Shallcross (Shallcross 2011, 38).

[2] Such discussion in Poland, for example, is heated. For an overview see, for example: Grabowski and Libionka (2014); Forecki,(2018); Gross and Grudzińska-Gross (2016).

[3] Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett distinguishes *legacy* from heritage. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett/ Sikora/ Dudek (2016, 40). For the English abbridged version see: Kirshenblatt-Gimblett/ Dudek/ Sikora (2015)

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Restaging the object: Participatory methods of artistic research for the former prison Long Kesh/Maze

Martin Krenn and Aisling O'Beirn

Transforming Long Kesh/Maze is a social sculpture that explores the future of the former Long Kesh/Maze prison, located on the outskirts of Belfast in Northern Ireland, whose legacy makes it a site of contentious cultural heritage. Our project asks how perceptions of the prison might be transformed, with a view to positively engaging with the knotty realities of its past [-> Transforming Long Kesh/Maze]. This task becomes all the more pertinent and pressing giving the ongoing, ironic backdrop of potentially seismic political change, coupled with stultifying stagnation.

During the course of the project's development, the British electorate voted for Brexit, Britain's exit from the European Union, in June 2016. In January 2017, the Northern Ireland Executive collapsed. Northern Ireland now holds the longest record of a jurisdiction with no government. Britain is set to leave the European Union on 29 March 2019, even though a majority in both Northern Ireland and Scotland voted to remain in the European Union. Britain leaving the EU means that the border between the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland is now set to become a land frontier between Britain and the European Union. This border arose out of the partition of Ireland in 1921, the very source of the current/recent conflict, and has since gone from being militarised to all but invisible and frictionless since the Good Friday Agreement of 1998.

At the time of writing, huge uncertainty surrounds negotiations regarding Brexit and whether a deal between Britain and the EU will make it through the UK parliament. A major stumbling block persists of how to retain a frictionless and invisible border on the island of Ireland, should Britain diverge from regulatory alignment with the EU. Failure to maintain a frictionless border carries with it the potential to undermine the Good Friday Agreement and to potentially destabilise the relative peace that now exists. A 'backstop' in any final Brexit deal is supposed to guarantee against the possibility of a hard border if no other solutions are found. This throws into sharp and urgent focus the constitutional conundrum regarding

Northern Ireland, where practical, legislative, and economic concerns become as pertinent, if not more so than traditional historical or ideological positions. (fig. 1)

Given this context, it is possible to see how any ramifications from Brexit might be felt more profoundly on the island of Ireland than anywhere else. Twenty years on from the signing of the Good Friday Agreement, which heralded the early release of prisoners and the ultimate closure of the prison in 2000, it is clear that the tensions around Anglo-Irish relations, which resulted in so many people being imprisoned, are still unresolved and manifest. It is no surprise that there is such difficulty in deciding the future of this contested site or in addressing its difficult and traumatic legacy. (fig. 2)

The prison of Long Kesh/Maze is famed for housing most of those imprisoned as a result of the recent conflict in Northern Ireland – both Republican and Loyalist. Its narratives are known: its complex history, which is still very much within living memory, and its thorny legacy have been well documented. David Beresford's 10 Men Dead (1987) gives an account of the 1981 Hunger Strike and preceding events, by structuring his contextual commentary around the first hand 'comms' produced by prisoners and others. 'Comms' were secret communications written by prisoners to each other and the outside world, on cigarette papers and secreted in the body until passed onto the intended recipient. Laura McAtackney's more recent publication, An Archaeology of the Troubles (2014), provides in-depth analysis of the material culture of the prison from an archaeological perspective. Her work highlights the importance of the relationship between artefact and first-hand testimony. Unsurprisingly, given this is such recent history, no political agreement has yet been reached regarding the site's future. Plans for a sports stadium and peace centre were shelved in 2013 against a backdrop of political tension. Indecision about the complex's future at governmental level is revealing in terms of the political climate of 'post ceasefire' society in Northern Ireland. Now partially demolished, with only some indicative structures remaining, the closed and inaccessible site articulates much about the relationship between the spectres of the conflict's legacy and the current state of political stagnation. This former prison site, therefore, has both a physical presence and a conceptual importance, despite its inaccessibility to the general public. (fig. 3)

During our three-year project, we were to find that the prison's political tangibility lies not so much in the abandoned site or its architectural shell, but more in its dissipated manifestations,

which are to be found well beyond the prison gates, since its artefacts are largely dispersed in a range of public and private collections. In the course of an intense year of initial research, we took a lead from archaeologist Laura McAtackney's work on the material culture of the prison, most especially her concept of the "distributed self" (2014, 244-265). This allowed us to consider the inaccessible prison's presence beyond its physical architectural manifestation. In our conversations with Laura McAtackney, we found similarities between her practice as an archaeologist and our own practice as artists as we were both concerned with the relationship between materiality and testimony. In projects such as City Views (2003 – 2008, Krenn), Urban Myths (2002, O'Beirn) and EUCC, (2003, Krenn/Ressler) we paid close attention to the vital role that first-hand testimonies about places or objects play in better understanding contested and ideologically loaded topics.

Based on our methods and experiences as artists and inspired by the conversations with Laura McAtackney about her research practice, we considered the prison as a 'dispersed presence' rather than a mere architectural entity. Enduring prison material ranges from chunks of prison infrastructure to contraband communication devices and a huge range of prison art. Many of the artefacts in question have not been seen publicly before. We recognised their potential to offer unrehearsed accounts of this politically charged site. Cognisant of this, we developed our artistic approach, asking: Can the very obstacle of the site's inaccessibility present a means to address future possibilities by engaging with its vernacular and lesser-known narratives?

Bearing this question in mind, we contacted people from across the political spectrum, many via McAtackney's connections, aiming to work with interested individuals and communities who had first-hand experience of the prison. Participants who took up this invitation include ex-prisoners (both republican and loyalist), former visitors, community museums, prison staff, and a former member of the independent Board of Visitors. (fig. 4) Their commitment to work with us on this project showed us that the site's inaccessibility is symptomatic of the hurdles that exist for a "post-conflict" society in dealing with difficult legacy issues. As the prison went from a state of occupancy to dereliction, its former inmates, staff, and visitors dispersed – for the main part back into their respective communities – taking with them artefacts from the prison along with their attendant testimonies. Inside the prison walls, the site was partially cleared, with some elements retained. On the outside, community museums developed and grew, acting as collectors, custodians, and curators, and to this day a

generation of private individuals continue to safeguard objects and memories (McAtackney 2014, 244-265). As she notes, many such individuals, with their personal memories, are not always foregrounded in familiar prison narratives or the evolving canon. Nonetheless, they are very much present. Time plays its role in the processing of such memories, revealing context as historical facts emerge.

As time passes, there is the attendant risk that some memories and contexts may be lost forever. Many people across the political spectrum told us that some ex-prisoners and former staff face significant health issues, whilst both republicans and loyalists reflected on the decreased life expectancy of the ex-prisoner population. This emphasised the importance of developing an artistic methodology to engage in dialogue with the people who had first-hand experience of the prison. (fig. 5)

These sensitivities and urgencies necessitated ways of working that avoided the simplification or sentimentalisation of such an ideologically loaded context. The artefacts varied from hand-made crafts and artwork by prisoners, which were often gifted to people on the outside, to pieces of prison infrastructure salvaged from the closed site by those who identified their future historical significance as objects with the potential to testify. To this end, and in light of our dialogue with McAtackney regarding navigating this ever shifting but stagnating political context, we developed three primary methods to responsively explore the prison's lesser-known narratives using artefacts and objects as catalysts for a dialogical process. The methods, *re-staging* (whilst occasionally repairing), *re-appropriation* and *re-telling* stemmed from the participants' personal relationships with these objects - either as makers, owners, or caretakers and allowed testimonies to evolve from artefacts that were preserved, lost, or even imagined [-> Dialogical photography].

These dialogical processes explore the potential of lesser-known prison narratives, as articulated in the participants' statements. The participants generously and openly engaged with us over a two-year period, against a background of ongoing political stagnation [-> Restaging the Object].
The exhibition *Dispersed Presence* (PS^2 Gallery, Belfast, 2018) presented a set of photographic prints of the artefacts along with the original, new objects and an accompanying booklet of testimonies. A touring exhibition took the form of a set of postcards and was shown in Peace and Beyond Fringe as well as Féile an Phobal and can be shown in public

venues such as libraries and community centres. The artistic process and its outcomes are documented in the book 'Restaging the Object: A Participatory Exploration of Long Kesh/Maze Prison' (O'Beirn/ Krenn, 2019). As a result of this process, we believe that a multi-perspective discussion – based on human experiences, rather than reiterations of established narratives – is a suitable way to productively address the site's difficult past and uncertain future [-> Fragile trust]. The ultimate aim of *Transforming Long Kesh/Maze* is to add to a transformative discourse that will contribute to the ongoing peace process in Northern Irish post-conflict society.

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Part 3

Creative Co-Productions

The Creative Co-Production: An experimental model for artistic engagements with contentious cultural heritage

Tal Adler

This article outlines an experimental model for collaborative artistic work, with the overall aim to pursue significant and sustainable change in heritage institutions and beyond. This model, called the *CCP – Creative Co-Production* – was proposed and designed by the author in 2015 for the research project TRACES (Transmitting Contentious Cultural Heritages with the Arts – from Intervention to Co-Production) that received funding from the EU Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme.

In the TRACES project, the CCP model was implemented and tested by setting up five different projects that varied in topics, geographies, methods, and participants. Each project had autonomy to develop unique methods. In spite of the differences, the core elements of the CCP model were present in each project. This allowed for a comparative exploration of the CCP model and a better understanding of its advantages and disadvantages. Looking at the CCP model can thus be useful for artists, researchers, communities, and institutions who are considering collaborative work on and with difficult, complex topics.

Motivated by difficult encounters

The CCP model is the result of three kinds of difficult encounters.

The first is the inconvenient, shocking, and/or frustrating experience with representations of contentious cultural heritage (Sharon Macdonald in this volume) [-> Contentious Collections]. I personally experience it often in different countries and contexts. I feel ashamed and outraged in the face of monuments, museum displays, commemoration sites or festivities that narrate events in the history of the state of Israel without acknowledging their entanglements with disastrous consequences for the Palestinian people and the complexities of facing challenging narratives. Displays in European ethnographic museums of artefacts obtained during colonialism, antisemitic figurines in Polish markets[1] , 'Western' films portrayal of 'Indians and cowboys', or monuments for national heroes involved in slave trade, evoke similar experiences.

The second kind of encounters occurs with artistic interventions that react to cases, appearances or representations of contentious heritage. I am often struck by their limitations embodied in aestheticization, simplification, superficiality, affirmative outcomes, lack of dialogical or discursive capacities, and/or an inability to promote institutional transformation. I will elaborate on the reasons for these disappointing results below.

I experienced the third kind of encounters as an artist engaging professionally with two museums in Vienna – the Natural History Museum (Adler/Harries in this volume) [-> Dead Images] [-> Shock], and the Weltmuseum Wien[2]. Although the relationships and the working modes with these two museums were very different, the similar challenges in my relationship with them were crucial triggers for the development of the CCP model: In both cases I was interested in a critical engagement with these museums' collections and their exhibition practices; I felt that there might be a contradiction between my interests and the interests of the museums; I was external to the museums; I was interested in gaining better access and establishing more secure and equal relationships with the museums and their staff; and I was interested in encouraging and supporting critical processes of change within these museums regarding their display ethics and relationships with affected communities.
So, the CCP model was developed as a result of my experiences both as an audience *and* as a practitioner of artistic engagements with and on museums and their difficult heritage. But why were these experiences often difficult and unsatisfactory?

Reduced to critical gestures

Before delving into the challenges facing artistic engagements with museums and other institutions of cultural heritage, it is important to note that such engagements indeed become challenging, or problematic, when they require dealing with difficult, bothering, contested, conflicted and/or contentious topics. The critique ahead may be less relevant in such cases of artistic engagement that are meant (or commissioned) to be affirmative, entertaining or pleasing and are engaging with simpler topics and in ways that do not risk contentiousness.

In recent years, more and more institutions of cultural heritage such as museums of art, science, history, or ethnography; public and private archives and collections; community centres; education institutions, or commemoration sites, invite artists to create new artworks based on their encounters with these institutions, their topics and their collections. This

evolving trend is often referred to as 'artistic interventions' [-> Becoming Contentious]. However, I propose to call them: 'Commissioned and hosted artistic interventions' as they mutated from their original form that was more subversive and independent in nature. A form that goes back to DADA and Viennese Actionism, taking shape through Institutional Critique in the 1960s and 1970s, and has now mutated into a more tamed form of mutually beneficial collaborations between cultural institutions and artists[3]. Here is an overview of some of the problems with present-day commissioned and hosted artistic interventions:

Short-term engagements: Artists are usually invited to visit institutions and their collections or stay as a resident artist for a short period of time, usually a few weeks. Consider for a moment the sensitive nature of the material they may encounter – collections that include dubiously gained or looted artefacts or dead bodies, objects and subjects charged with histories of colonial exploitation, racial investigations, persecutions and genocides. Think about their complex and difficult histories, the different communities affected by them, the fields of knowledge associated with them, the decades of textual material produced in their relation, and the possible hidden layers yet to be unveiled.
If we are interested in artistic work that approaches its subject with the depth and respect it deserves, a few weeks for research *and* production are simply not enough. With such little time for research, reflection and production, artists may only be able to produce anecdotal, symbolic reactions. These artworks may very well be interesting, provoking, and beautiful, but they risk a superficial engagement with the subject.

Open calls: Some of the artistic-residency programmes publish open calls that require project proposals. Applying artists are expected to submit a winning proposal before they even had a chance to visit and explore the collection or talk to the curators. This further promotes superficialisation of the artistic practice and is contrary to the freedom of creative processes and to the benefits of immersive and grounded research.

Professional relationship: The relationships between artists and museums are limited to the polar, hierarchical and business-like. The initiator of the engagement is often the host (or a third party in collaboration with the host).
The artists are usually selected by the museums; they are guests that are granted access and let-in by the 'owner' or the custodian. The artists usually receive payment from the institution for their labour. In return they are expected to deliver their 'intervention' within a

predetermined period of time. The institution then usually pays for the production of the artworks *and* it usually also exhibits the artworks. After delivery of the intervention, the relationship usually ends.
These relationships in which the museum selects, invites, and pays for the artists, and then produces and exhibits the artworks might limit further the scope of the artwork and its prospects of being truly critical and to generate a process of sustainable change.

Antagonistic relationships: Unrelated to hosted residencies, some artists still engage in very critical work that is more reminiscent of the original form of the interventions of the 1970s. This is often possible due to third party funding not connected with the criticised institution. However, as much as the critique might be bold, uncompromising, legitimate and inspiring, this kind of artistic activist work is no less limited in its potential to achieve sustainable institutional change than the 'tamed' hosted one. Firstly, access to and quality research time with the heritage and its custodians (the collections and their curators in the case of museums) is usually not possible as the artists/activists position themselves strongly against the institution and its staff – sometimes as real enemies. They either refuse to ask for access under the conditions of the institute or, if they do approach the museum, they are not met with hospitality and willingness to help. Secondly, institution staff feeling personally attacked and disrespected by the outcomes of the artistic work are not likely to consider the critique or to engage in a constructive process with the artists. Thus, the lack of possibility to deeply research the institution and discuss with its staff, and spiteful relations between the artists and the institution, negate the possibility of this work resulting in a significant process of change in the institution.

Respectful or intimidated?: In the case of commissioned and hosted interventions, more often than not, directors, curators and staff at the hosting institutions refrain from engaging in a critical discussion with the artists about their artistic process and its outcomes. In institutions other than art museums the staff usually have different professional backgrounds and lack the experience of working with contemporary artists. As they might be intimidated or embarrassed to be perceived as not understanding contemporary art or as conservative, they refrain from discussing or criticising the artistic outcomes.
While artists can definitely benefit from respect and artistic freedom, the lack of an honest and free dialogue between them and the staff at the hosting institutions might result in the loss

of valuable perspectives and the complexities that are crucial to the artistic process in the context of difficult topics.

Limited exposure: The intervention itself, be it a sticker on a vitrine, a performance, an interactive tour or an installation, is almost always temporary. At the end of the evening, or the festival, or the exhibition, it is removed, leaving the space and the subject it referred to unchanged. The public effect of such interventions is often limited to the visitors who came especially or happened to be there at that time and the inner circles of the artists.

Thus, in spite of the significant resources and intentions invested in such engagements, due to these inherent characteristics of commissioned and hosted interventions, their prospects of generating a sustainable process of change are not great. In a way, what started as a very critical, subversive, almost hostile genre, has slowly been transformed into a system incorporated and controlled by the institution, a mainstream museal practice that, in spite of what I call *critical gestures*, is at the end of the day affirmative in nature.

The CCP model

To meet the challenges described above, these are the main core elements of the CCP that were proposed as an experimental model for the project TRACES (2016-2019)[4]:

Contentious Cultural Heritage: The CCP is designed to develop ways to promote *significant, sustainable change* (more on that below) in the context of contentious cultural heritages in a variety of institutional settings However, this model can definitely be useful in other difficult contexts, for example social or political conflicts that are not necessarily or directly related to cultural heritage.

Multidisciplinary: The multidisciplinary team represents four perspectives: First, artistic research; second, ethnographic and/or other research that is related to the heritage in question; third, heritage providers (museums, memorials, sites, festivals, clubs, associations, etc.); forth, Communities of implication (Erica Lehrer in this volume) [-> Communities of implication] (individuals, groups, organisations, policy makers, etc., who are affected by and invested in the heritage in question).

Long-term: The CCP team works together over an extended period of time. In TRACES this period of time was defined as three years due to the limitation of the funding structure, but it is advisable to allocate a longer time period and in any case not shorter than three years.

Equal relations by sharing resources: The CCP team functions through mutual, equal and non-hierarchical relations. To avoid the guest and host, commissioner and contractor, applicant and patron dynamics, the team members share responsibility not only for the artistic and scientific processes, but also for the financial, curatorial, educational and dissemination concepts.

Budget ownership: The budget is not provided or owned by one of the 'sides' but is acquired by the team as a whole, ideally from a third party, unconditional. The budget and the decisions around it are managed by the entire team and in transparency.

Self-reflection, external observation: In order to understand, evaluate and theorise the potentials as well as the challenges and drawbacks of the CCP model, and also to support and enrich the work of the five CCPs of TRACES, other research teams were set up. These teams (referred to as 'work packages') offered different ways of looking at the CCPs work, such as an interest in education and mediation processes, group processes, community involvement, museological methods, artistic methods, etc. In addition, ethnographers joined the teams to offer insights to inner processes and self-reflection.

Generating change: This point is at the end of this list not because of its suggested hierarchical place but because it is so important that it requires its own section, which follows below.

Sustainable and significant change

My critique on hosted or independent artistic interventions refers to their inability to generate a process of significant and sustainable change within the institution or in relation to the topic they critically refer to. Transformation processes, especially in social systems, can be difficult to notice and describe. Some of the process might happen invisibly and latently and can only be captured and understood in retrospect. In addition, understanding what 'change' could mean depends very much on one's own position, perspective and interests. With that in mind,

referring to the concept of change is crucial when we look at, and try to understand and discuss critical artistic engagements with difficult topics such as contentious cultural heritage. These projects often imply the investment of considerable time and efforts, not only of the artists but also of individuals and organisations who support, advise and accompany the project such as the curators and staff at the hosting or targeted institution, other external researchers and experts, representatives of affected communities, NGOs, assistants, colleagues and friends, etc. These projects also require and consume significant material resources, often using public funding.

Therefore, there is an aspect of *responsibility* that accompanies such projects, a social and political responsibility, sometimes duty, that is a result of the topics they refer to, the critique they offer, the communities and individuals entangled with it, and the aspects of public investment involved in their production.

When I designed the model of the CCP, it was clear for me that the concept of *significant and sustainable change* is crucial if this model was to offer solutions for the limitations of current hosted or independent artistic interventions. However, there was also another role for implementing this concept as a core element of the CCP model: To implement and examine this model, the project TRACES set up five CCPs (more about the five CCPs in the next section). As these teams were free to develop their own methods, I hoped that highlighting *significant and sustainable change* as a core element, a precondition, it will serve as a filtering mechanism, a way to ensure that the members of these teams, and especially the artists, have experience, or at least are very interested in projects that generate (social and political) change.

What could ‘processes of change’ mean, and what would make them ‘significant and sustainable’? In the context of museums, for example, it could mean that curators rewrite a label referring to a certain display or replace objects in an exhibition. The museum might reconsider and change the permanent exhibition concepts, designs, and texts. They could question collections ownership or redefine repatriation and restitution practices. They could redesign the education program, change marketing strategies, change employment practices… In all these examples, the change is significant and sustainable in the sense that its effects are clearly visible and offer an adequate answer to the critique offered by the CCP, and that it is there to stay (at least for some years, until another significant change is required). This also

means that significant, sustainable changes are not only limited to the specific institution in question. They could indeed promote broader processes of change in the field, for example – other museums inspired by the changes described above and embarking on their own processes.

The five CCPs of TRACES

In March 2016, five multidisciplinary teams started their work as CCPs in the framework of the project TRACES. These five CCPs had autonomy over most aspects of their work including their topics and team members selection[5], artistic and research methodologies developed for their projects, new partners and collaborators, and the outcomes of their projects. Between the five CCPs that were located in different countries across Europe and working on very different cases, different interpretations and implementations of the CCP model took shape. The last section of this book offers some ways to think comparatively about the CCP model through the work of the five CCPs.

Below is a list of the five CCPs, their locations and their core[6] team members' names, backgrounds and affiliations. Please refer to the first part of this companion for detailed descriptions of each CCP [->Research Sites], and to the other texts in this book referring to different aspects of their members' work.

Absence as Heritage: This CCP is based in Mediaș, Romania. The core team members are:
Răzvan Anton – Visual artist and lecturer, Cluj University of Art and Design, Fabrica de Pensule;
Julie Dawson – Researcher, Leo Baeck Institute for German-Jewish History;
Alexandra Toma – On-site administrator and project manager at the Casa de lângă Sinagogă.
The organisational administration was performed by local NGO Hosman Durabil.

Awkward Objects of Genocide: This CCP is based in Krakow, Poland. The core team members are:
Wojciech Wilczyk – Photographer, artist, curator, critic, poet and writer;
Erica Lehrer – Associate Professor in the departments of History and Sociology & Anthropology, founder and director of the Curating and Public Scholarship Lab (CaPSL), Concordia University, Montreal.

Roma Sendyka – Associate Professor, Director of the Research Center for Memory Cultures, Faculty of Polish Studies, Jagiellonian University;
Magdalena Zych – Curator, anthropologist and research coordinator, Ethnographic Museum in Kraków.

Casting of Death: This CCP is based in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The core team members are members of the 'Domestic Research Society' (An artistic and curatorial collective established in 2004):
Damijan Kracina – Artist, teacher, School for Design and Photography, Ljubljana;
Alenka Pirman – Artist, PhD candidate, University of Ljubljana;
Jani Pirnat – Curator, the Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana
With:
Marijan Rupert – Comparatist, Head of the Manuscript, Rare and Old Prints Collection, National and University Library;
Marko Jenko – Art historian, curator, Museum of Modern Art Ljubljana;
Janez Polajnar – Historian, curator, City Museum of Ljubljana (Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana)

Dead Images: This CCP is based in Vienna, Austria; Berlin, Germany; Edinburgh, Scotland. The core team members are:
Tal Adler[7] – Artist and researcher, Humboldt University of Berlin;
Linda Fibiger – Senior Lecturer in Human Osteoarchaeology, University of Edinburgh;
John Harries – Senior Teaching Fellow in Social Anthropology, University of Edinburgh;
Joan Smith – Artist, Printmaker and head of Art, Edinburgh College of Art;
Anna Szoeke – Art historian and researcher, Humboldt University of Berlin;
Maria Teschler-Nicola – former director of the Anthropological Department, Natural History Museum of Vienna.

Transforming Long Kesh/Maze Prison: This CCP is based in Belfast, Northern Ireland. The core team members are:
Martin Krenn – Artist and lecturer at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna;
Aisling O'Beirn – Artist and lecturer at the Belfast School of Art, Ulster University.

So, is it worth it?

In order to evaluate the CCP model, it would be a good idea to look at the work of the five CCPs of TRACES. At the time of writing this text, some of the CCPs exhibitions are still on show and most of their reports with conclusions haven't been made available yet. At this point it would be too early to embark on a thorough analysis, but I would like to offer some of the questions that should guide such analysis, when it is time for that. Let's start with my favourite main element of the CCP –

Significant, sustainable change:
How did each CCP understand this concept? Did they in fact incorporate and try to apply it? Was it equally important for every CCP? Was it perceived or interpreted differently by different members of the same CCP? In what ways did it affect their work? How was it reflected in their research and artistic methods? How was it perceived by the communities affected by the CCP's work (sometimes referred to in our project as 'stakeholders')? Were there different ideas about what 'change' should mean (within the CCP team, by the institutions' staff, or by the affected communities)? Were these ideas conflicting? If yes, were conflicts resolved? Were they resolved in ways that changed the idea or plans regarding the concept of significant and sustainable change?
And ultimately, very important questions: can processes of significant and sustainable change be witnessed after three years of work? And will there be someone to continue and nourish these processes when the CCP dissolves?

Team composition: In what ways were the 'providers' of the contentious cultural heritage incorporated into the CCP? Did institutions' staff members (museum curator, site director, researcher employed in the institution, etc.) join the CCP team as regular members? If not, why? How was their contribution reflected in the CCPs budget?
I would also use the same questions to look at the positions of the affected communities in the team, whether this refers to professional researchers and experts on the topic, representatives of interest groups, policy makers, cultural organisations, to name only a few.

On artistic practices: In what ways were the artistic processes (conceptual design, methods development, production challenges, etc.) shared within the teams? How did the teams handle authorship and ownership of artworks, exhibitions, concepts, ideas? How did different team

members discuss and engage with the artistic production and with questions and challenges pertaining to artistic processes? What experiences did they have with artistic collaborations and art in general? And how did this affect the work on an artistic co-production? How did team members define themselves and their professions regarding artistic practices? How did the composition of the teams look like in regards to artists and non-artists? In teams with more than one artist, did they co-produce and how?

Budget: Was the budget sufficient for the CCPs work? Did it reflect equal relations between team members? If not, how did these imbalances affect the team's relationships and the work of the CCPs? If budget wasn't sufficient, in what ways did it affect the main aims of the CCPs?

Duration: How did the time frame (three years in the case of TRACES) affect the CCPs work? Did some of the work start before the beginning of the project? Will some of the work continue after the funding period?

Personal and professional prospects: Where do we find the members of the CCPs, especially the unaffiliated (independent, freelance) artists and researchers, after the project is over? How did the time invested in the CCP affect their careers? Would they like to pursue follow up funding and continue the project?

Ask yourselves

Even if we cannot answer them at the moment, these questions can serve institutions, researchers and artists who are considering creative co-production on difficult topics. Consider being asked these questions at the end of your projects – what then would you want to be answering?

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[1] Erica Lehrer (2014): Lucky Jews / Na szczescie to Zyd. Korporacja Ha!art

[2] See the project website: https://www.weltmuseumwien.at/en/science-research/sharingstories (Accessed 12.1.2019)

[3] Andrea Fraser (2005): From the Critique of Institutions to an Institution of Critique. Artforum Vol. 44 (1)

[4] See the project website: http://www.traces.polimi.it (accessed 12.1.2019).

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[5] These were mainly defined together with the author before the TRACES project started.

[6] In this overview, I refer only to the 'core' team members of the CCP. These are the members that were defined in the beginning of the project. All five CCPs collaborated with and were crucially supported by many other individuals and institutions that are listed in the chapter 'Research Sites'. However, in regards to budget ownership, usage and remuneration, the core list is more relevant.

[7] It is worth mentioning that as I was the author of the CCP concept, I set up the five CCPs and coordinated some of the work with and around them, and I was also a member of one of them, this text is written through these multi-layered experiences and might be influenced by my different investments in the concept of the CCP and in its implementation through the five CCPs of TRACES.

Co-production and contentious heritage: On merging art and ethnography

Ute Holfelder and Klaus Schönberger

The concept of 'co-production', as it is understood below, was developed on the basis of experiences of the interaction between ethnography and various arts. (Holfelder/Schönberger 2015; Holfelder/Schönberger 2018). We understand this concept as part of a broader process of blurring knowledge formats over the last 20 years. In our opinion, it also contains a highly innovative potential for the convergence of other scientific disciplines with the arts. Co-production is to be understood in distinction to the concept of collaboration or cooperation: It is not merely an additive approach, not a juxtaposition or the sometimes delightful mutual complementation in which different perspectives on the same object are taken and explained.

On the contrary, it is a question of transgressing distinct knowledge systems that methodically, epistemically, and in terms of representation catch up with the current blurred social conditions in cognitive or aesthetic capitalism (post-Fordism) by means of artistic and ethnographic research. Co-production means a more comprehensive interaction of these knowledge systems. Ideally, a co-production comprises the joint formulation of a research question, the joint collection of materials, the joint evaluation of the collected materials, and the joint formulation of representation (cf. ECHOES-Collective 2018, Holfelder, van Eck et al. 2017). How such a 'scuffle' looks in concrete terms depends on the field of investigation and the actors involved.
Co-production requires many preconditions, but complex social issues require complex procedures. Our starting point is the assumption that this version of joint research can enable a gain in knowledge that the epistemics involved are unable to generate on their own. On the one hand, the motto is: "I see something you don't see". (Schönberger 2013; Huffschmid/Wildner 2009) which aims to bring blind spots into consciousness, but also to contribute to transformation within orders of knowledge, because familiar perspectives can be made to move and change.
In the methodological debates about their epistemic potentials, the arts are attributed the ability to condense "tacit knowing" (Polanyi 1966) that lies beyond what can be said and is difficult for scientific procedures to grasp and to make accessible (cf. Borgdorff 2009, Huber 2009, Mareis 2012, Ritter 2013). Christoph Schenker (2015: 105-107) speaks in this respect of the "thick knowledge" of the arts, which creates a methodological proximity to

ethnographic processes such as the concept of "thick description" as developed by Clifford Geertz (Geertz 1987).

Artistic Research

The move of the arts towards research is an expression of the tendency towards a blurring of boundaries that transcends epistemes. This is associated with more recent concepts, which are referred to as *artistic research* or *arts-based research*. When we talk about 'the arts' here, we mean currents in contemporary art such as conceptual art and the performing arts as well as artistic projects that proceed on the basis of research.

What does artistic research mean? The term artistic research refers to various research strategies (Borgdorff 2009). Only the concept of artistic research that describes research in or through the arts is of interest here. Such research attempts to explore human experiences and cultural forms of expression through the arts (e.g. Mittelstraß 2011). For this purpose, the artistic process and artistic forms of expression are systematically used as a means of gaining knowledge. Artists examine a fact, an experience, or an object in order to discover something about it and to generate knowledge. Following Bruce Naumann, Elke Bippus (2009: 11) speaks of "doing knowledge" in this context. In addition, the idea of "researching with the means of art" (authors' translation). implies the possibility that recipients also use the artwork as an instrument for gaining knowledge (cf. Bippus 2009: 16, Peters 2015). Jörg Rheinherger (2015) compares artistic research with procedures in the research laboratory.

The horizon of expectations created by the methodological discourse on artistic research is far-reaching. Due to the sensorial qualities of artistic works and the social dimensions of aesthetics, the arts could activate emotional and aesthetic stocks of knowledge (Klein 2015: 309), make implicit knowledge evident (Mersch 2007: 64ff), break up existing patterns of thought (ibid.: 309), open up spaces of possibility (Bippus/Hesse 2008: 50), enable sensorial insights (Badura 2015a), stimulate reflections and provoke actions (Schenker 2006: 147), reflect established discourses, sharpen perception (Prinz 2015) and last but not least give impulses for "inventing ever new possibilities of how reality can be experienced" (Bippus/Hesse 2008: 50, authors' translation).

Arts and Ethnography – Kindred by Choice

The references and affinities to ethnography are evident. This has been noted on several occasions and Hal Foster has also stated this elective affinity in his canonical text from 1995 "The artist as ethnographer" (Foster 1995).

Michael Annoff (2018) pointed out the possibility of a productive triangulation of art, ethnography and activism in the course of the very broad reception of Foster's essay. With regard to ethnography, Annoff's central question is whether the triangulation suggested by Foster is limited to "a critical view of mutual adaptations of ethnographic and artistic critique of representation at the time" (ibid., 177, authors' translation) or whether an ethnography critical of representation succeeds in developing documentary procedures in which site-specific artistic interventions and self-reflexive ethnography can contribute to shifts in existing orders of knowledge (ibid.).

Co-Productions of Arts, Ethnography and Heritage Providers

Within the framework of Contentious Cultural Heritage (cf. definition by Marion Hamm in this volume), co-productions with institutional heritage providers can contribute to a sustainable communication and a transformation of knowledge orders. Here, co-production aims towards bringing together institutions as well as the distinct epistemic systems of ethnography and the arts, which try to relate their own logics to each other in a productive way. The constellation of art, ethnography, and institution tries to accept the challenge of dealing productively with that cultural heritage that is perceived as painful and conflict-laden. Its representation and communication can cause problems, controversies, conflicts and, in the worst case, military confrontations. Starting from the thesis that art and ethnography can generate different knowledge about a given situation, it is assumed that the inclusion of institutional heritage providers enables a lasting influence on the representation of content.

In this constellation, the production aspect included in the concept of co-production has to be emphasised in relation to representation: in a double sense as the generation of knowledge and as the production of artistic formats, which in turn serve to debate the concrete case of contentious cultural heritage in institutional settings. These representations can contribute to a new or at least displaced or shifted heritage configuration. Ideally, such co-production can contribute to a "transformation of existing knowledge orders" (Badura 2015b: 24, authors' translation) (cf. a. Haarmann 2015). In addition, in the constellation of art − ethnography −

heritage provider, there can be a shift in the subject positions of the participating actors up to a dissolution of the classical division of labour between 'thinking' and 'doing'. Such a dichotomous situation, which is usually experienced as unproductive, can be extended by including institutional heritage providers in the process of working on Contentious Cultural Heritage in a triangle situation. The challenge with respect to Contentious Cultural Heritage is to reformulate Foster's triangulation of science, art, and knowledge production. The possibility of shifting knowledge orders becomes all the more probable the more successful the involvement of heritage providers in projects that work with the concept of co-production is.

Problems of Collaboration and Transdisciplinararity

The potential for transforming knowledge orders and the associated undermining of existing trenches in the context of Contentious Cultural Heritage makes the efforts of co-production promising. However, problems regularly arise in the process of co-production. The current discourse aims at an omnipresent 'trans-', but the internal and extra-university conditions remain determined by the logics of academic disciplines or those of artistic epistemes and epistemologies as well as institutional logics. Many difficulties are primarily structural in nature and are not to be blamed on the actors involved. They can hardly be eliminated voluntaristically (cf. Ritter 2018; cf. a. Holfelder 2018 in relation to cooperation projects with the school as an institution).

Another problem arises because of the different ideas about the relationship between empiricism and theory. Ethnography, like all other academic disciplines, differs from the more poetic relationship between the arts and theory. Artists often establish a direct relationship between their intention or their work and a theory. In contrast, ethnography does not aim at the verification of theories. Due to methodological rigour and empirical accuracy, such a poetic use of theory is forbidden for ethnography. The qualitative procedures or methods of ethnography are oriented towards the standards of empirical social research, and are located on a different level of abstraction from the analysis of the theories traded in the field of the arts.

The extent to which joint data collection can work depends on various factors. From the point of view of ethnography, for example, interviews cannot be conducted without preparation; they require the observance of rules of craftsmanship. The preparation of interviews must either be negotiated, or interviews are developed as a different type of material from that used

in empirical social research – for example as material for illustration purposes. Since the generation of data material through interviews concerns the core understanding of ethnography, ethnographic rigour and accuracy of the methods often give the impression of narrow-mindedness, pusillanimity and ignorance on the artistic side. In turn, the art side's interest in experimental transgressions in the survey phase frequently leads to conflicts between the co-producers. In the phase of developing representation, ethnographers refuse to accept the purely illustrative use of interview quotes common in the art field. Ethnographers are interested in the logic of subjectivation of interviewees. They understand the utterances collected in the field as subjects' theories of the self and less as evidence or even as an illustration of an attitude or a fact.

Serious conflicts often arise due to different production logics and rhythms, which is repeatedly reflected in disputes over time windows. Science is often unable to deliver as quickly as required in the faster-paced art world. One consequence must be to conceive co-productions over longer periods of time.

Another problem arises due to disparate field logics of art and science. Artists and scientists pursue different career paths and are confronted with different logics of recognition. What is honoured in one field is not necessarily recognised in the other. However, both sides are dependent on recognition in their fields of origin. For non-established artists and scientists in particular, this is an a priori that can hardly be circumvented. In addition, the various logics and restraints of representation in the respective fields, such as exhibition, catalogue, peer-reviewed essay, or monograph, can lead to disputes about priorities. The different reference systems offer numerous occasions for disputes.

Against the background of a predominantly aestheticised representation and the ambiguity of artistic representation, it does not come as a surprise that the scientific side is often plagued by fears of loss of control.

Paradoxically but comprehensibly, when distinct epistemic systems are merging, we also observe a process of re-disciplinarisation. In order to become capable of co-production at all, one must always be aware of the disciplinary understanding or one's own epistemics. Although those involved in co-production are often sobered, they are rewarded by those moments when it becomes apparent that the possibilities of this kind of collaboration have not yet been exhausted. We see the cognitive potential of the co-productive form of knowledge production primarily in helping to set in motion seemingly fixed orders of knowledge.

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Liminal Portraits: On art/ history co-production

Ute Holfelder, Klaus Schönberger

The exhibition *Liminal Portraits. Stories from the Margins*, shown in the Romanian city of Mediaş as part of the *European Day of Jewish Culture*, is the result of a co-production between Historical Science and the Arts. It was conceived as a collaboration between the historian Julie Dawson (Vienna) and the artist Răzvan Anton (Clus/ Klausenburg) within the project network TRACES under the title *Absence as heritage* [-> Absence as heritage].
The exhibition was shown in September 2017 in a neighbouring building [-> communities past and present] of the synagogue in Medias, Transylvania, Romania.

The project deals with a specific aspect of Jewish history in parts of Romania and Transylvania. Here the Jewish population survived the Nazi occupation and the Shoah. In the other parts of Romania, 280,000-300,000 Jews were killed in the Second World War at the instigation of the fascist Romanian rulers (Friling et al. 2004). The systematic persecution of the Jews ended with the ousting of Ion Antonescu on 23 August 1944. The complex Romanian situation meant that although some of the Jews in Transylvania were able to survive the Shoah, under the aegis of Ceausescu practically the entire Jewish population left the country. Between May 1948 and the end of 1951, already 118,000 Jews left the country for Israel. This first exodus was based on economic compensation transactions between Romania and Israel (Glass 2005: 391). By 1989, a total of 300,000 to 350,000 Jewish people had emigrated. At that time, only 24,667 Romanian citizens still described themselves as Jews. (Migration and Socio-Economic Transformation 1998: 25). Thus, we still find material evidence of Jewish Heritage in Mediaş today, despite the simultaneous absence of a Jewish population in the city. The synagogues in Transylvania have been preserved until today. An extensive archive of the Jewish community of Mediaş, which was found in the synagogue on the women's gallery, has also been preserved. The evaluation and presentation of the contents of this archive is the central concern of the "Absence as Heritage" project.

The exhibition is divided, also spatially, into an artistic and a historical part. It is based on a retrospective autobiographical record of the period of the Nazi occupation of Mediaş. The author is an unknown Jewish woman who was 16 years old in 1942. The ego-document is not part of the archive but was made available to the historian by other means [-> Burdocks]. The

guiding theme of the exhibition is based on the testimony of the young woman almost 50 years later, further finds in the archive, and photographs that had not yet been published.

The recording thematizes the actions of Romanian fascists against the Jewish community, which they experienced as a direct threat, and the contradictory behavior of the German Wehrmacht soldiers, who, the author recalls, protected Jewish apartments and shops from violent attacks by Romanian fascists. In the face of Wehrmacht soldiers sitting in her mother's kitchen, she described the Germans as a people of murderers. The soldiers, on the other hand, defended themselves by pointing out that this did not apply to them, as they came from Tübingen. After all, the university city of Tübingen has the reputation of being an enlightened, humanistically inspired scholarly republic. The historical part of the exhibition follows the account of the young woman. The exhibition does not elaborate on any further local events of 1942. The focus is on the singular event that Wehrmacht soldiers apparently protected Jews. For the historian, one problem was to adequately describe this event without relativizing the Nazi Wehrmacht's actions in their totality. In the exhibition, she visualized the original text, which she had divided into 13 sequences. These were enriched with further source material, photographs, and films. The exhibition texts were offered in Romanian, English, and German.
The artist Răzvan Anton examined the printed material found in the archive in a different way: He translated visual elements of the printed materials found in the archive, such as handwritten notes, scribbles, and stamps, by photographic means into photo prints (‘Sun-Printing’) [->Fading studies].

The fact that neither the name nor the face of the author of the ego document central to the exhibition is known, was of concern to both sides, science and art. While the historical re-construction must adhere to the facts, accepting that neither the name nor the face of the author are known, art, is allowed to transgress this threshold. Therefore, Răzvan Anton took a portrait sketch found in the archive as the starting point for his engagement with the unknown author (Fig. 1). The portrait sketch, also used for the exhibition poster (Fig. 3), is framed and probably has no relation whatsoever to the young woman, but it facilitates a physical awareness of the knowledge gap about her identity. Thus, art opened up a sensorial approach and created an imaginary space in which the main protagonist of the historical representation is the point of reference (fig. 2 & 4)

[[PLATZIERUNG für Druckversion: Fig. 1- Fig. 4: Bitte hier – oder an einer geeigneter Stelle weiter unten – alle 4 Bilder auf einer Seite einfügen.]]

The micro-perspective on the non-textual inscriptions in the archive material expands the view of everyday Jewish life in 1940s Mediaş. The historical part of the exhibition bridges the gap to the artistic representation in the space next door. In this respect, the artistic work broadens the historical horizon: the artistic examination of the pictorial aspects of the archive material enables shifts and new accentuations. In this way, the pictorial means of art bring the unnoticed and the so far hardly noticed into focus.

The co-production of art and science creates access to an expanded memory or heritage space, in which the previously unnoticed and the unexplored are charged with meaning. This provides a different entry into the understanding of the historical event. The joint representation of the research findings, the interplay of art and science creates a cognitive and aesthetic space of imagination and experience that opens up different approaches to the historical event. In this exhibition, it was possible to overcome the fixation on a purely textual representation illustrated with historical visual material.

A merely linguistic description of culture is reductive because it cannot adequately explore non-linguistic aspects. For here, essential dimensions of human action, in particular related aspects of the sensory, must be translated into text. The action to be described and the analysis of subjective experiences lose not only the diversity in the representation of their aesthetic and sensory dimensions, but also the diversity of their meanings.

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Artistic upgrade. Impossible attempt to harness the spectacle

Alenka Pirman (Domestic Research Society)

Ljubljana, June 2016, a museum café. A librarian, an art historian, an ethnographer, a historian, and artists, working as a temporary team, are engaged in a vivid discussion. The artists have just presented their vision of the exhibition that is supposed to reflect what this interdisciplinary group has encountered during its field research. The debate comes to a crunch-point:

Librarian (*disappointed*): Oh, but I thought you'd provide a creative reproduction of the topic. I miss the artistic upgrade.
Artists (*embarrassed*, start listing several ideas that they have already dismissed as jokes, and continue): There is no need that we produce artwork as a summary of all this. The research has to remain open, that's enough. And the exhibition is only a start, a trigger. What does 'an artistic approach' mean anyway? Something beyond the scientific discourse? We don't wish to hack somebody else's work and appropriate it. We want to step back and be fair towards our sources. We don't want to take some of the finds and sign them as our own.
Art historian: I'd still make something from the artistic perspective.
Artists: What's wrong with an exhibition without contemporary art in a contemporary art gallery? We don't have a problem with that. It won't be set up in a classical museum vein anyway.
Art historian (*rhetorically*): Still, how could one convey the contentiousness of death masks?
Historian: Let us not forget what we have been up to. Are we going to attend to our research questions or cater for folk's and media curiosity? We should focus on the phenomenon of death masks in the 21st century and not on death and the manipulation of dead bodies.
Ethnographer (*silent throughout the entire meeting, taking notes*).[1]

What is the position of the artist, engaged in a collaborative, interdisciplinary creative process? What are the artist's unique mediating capabilities and expertise that enable him or her to "identify new directions for cultural institutions and museums to effectively transmit contentious cultural heritage and contribute to evolving European identities"? (TRACES 2016). Such a mediation is supposed to take place through an *artistic upgrade* of a given set

of objects or topics. Artistic upgrade... Let's stick to this phrase although it appears in several iterations.
The Domestic Research Society's (DRS) members have been confronted with this requirement many a time. Active in the field of contemporary art since 2004, we have conducted several artistic research projects – some of them ongoing – that have involved different collaborators (citizens, scientists, colleagues, family members...) in a variety of ways. We have been reluctant to follow either, the scientific or the art system's written or unwritten rules. To us, they have appeared all too predictable. The industries' standards have typified the professionals involved in the cultural production, and reduced citizens to target groups. The prevalent demand for social change via artistic means has grown into a manieristic staging of a performed concern. Critical attitudes have become the norm (Žerovc 2015). And the artistic position has prevailed in the domain of "the charismatic ideology of 'creation'" (Bourdieu 1995, 166-167). At the DRS we have cultivated scepticism regarding the artist's social and apparent political agency. At the same time, since 1990 the Society's three founding members have mastered or even assisted in strengthening some of the industry's rules by pursuing our individual professional careers as artists, pedagogues, and curators. In fact, the need for a working platform in parallel to our individual careers, which led to the founding of our collective, grew out of a professional fatigue.

At the DRS, we have been intrigued by death masks for a long time. Our *Casting of Death* project was the first systematic research of the phenomenon in Slovenia [-> Casting of Death]. We contacted 127 public cultural institutions throughout the country and collected data on 106 death masks. Half of the depicted personalities were artists (sculptors, painters, poets, writers, architects, musicians) and were cast from 1770 to 1998. What struck us the most was the pivotal role of the artist in the endeavours of nation building, both as a service provider and an object of veneration. Our core research question was self-critical: Has the role of the fine artist changed or can it still be traced in the activities of a contemporary visual artist? Unlike our dead and/or depicted colleagues who willingly backed the nationalist project, we would find it troublesome if our research turned out to be in tune with contemporary nationalism. Our colleagues within TRACES, our umbrella project, also perceived such a twist as one of the biggest threats: one needs to avoid a reproduction of hegemonic power relations in order not to enhance the addressed problem [-> Shock].

The above scene, a fictionalised account put together from fieldnotes on interactions in our team, summarises the Casting of Death co-production's dilemma in a nutshell. One could assume that by being reluctant to engage in the art-making, the DRS members, featuring in the scene as 'artists', simply tried to avoid producing an artistic statement that could be misinterpreted. On the other hand, there was no such person in the team as 'an artist', 'a librarian', an 'art historian', 'a historian', or 'an ethnographer'. These are invented generic characters that bring to the fore stereotypes and assumptions about particular professions. What the model of creative co-production [-> Creative Co-Production; -> Introduction] really produced in our case, was a specific set of relationships between the team members, their institutional colleagues, sources, and audiences. How did this come to pass? If a creative co-production is to succeed, each team member may have to, paradoxically, silence his or her disciplinary expertise that qualified him or her to enter into such a model in the first place. In the beginning of our research process, it was interesting to observe how the co-productive setting even strengthened our disciplinary self-awareness and provoked each one of us to defend his or her discipline. The true value of the creative co-production model is that it allows the team members to (re-)negotiate their positions and to overcome an initially defensive attitude. Such a collaborative approach is only suitable for those who can temporarily disregard their alleged skills and doxas. The ways we have negotiated our positions and overcame defensive attitudes were quite subtle.

During our fieldtrips in the museums' depots we managed to establish an informal, even relaxed attitude towards official procedures and protocols. Nothing explicit or outrageous but still not by the book. Each member fed his or her own curiosity and motivation. There was no pressure that we need to do something (although we had a strong impulse to take pictures, Jani Pirnat writes about it in this volume) [–> Shooting in the field]. The core attitude in the team was – trust. It manifested itself also in the conception of the exhibition. The DRS had proposed to make an exhibition on the research on death masks in the Slovenian public collections without actually displaying them. And, even more boldly, to make a contemporary art exhibition without featuring contemporary artworks. The colleagues went along and accepted our proposal, despite their reservations and a certain frustration of their expectations regarding our exhibition.

The performance of museums and galleries is increasingly measured in economic terms. No wonder that the exhibition has been reaffirmed as representational format, a spectacle,

designed to attract audiences. The exhibition-as-spectacle has developed in a sophisticated machinery, it is fixed in its design, parkour, and narrative, no matter how poetic the latter might be. Almost no exhibition can stand alone anymore. Instead, it is routinely enhanced by numerous mediation methods that engineer the engagement of different audience segments. Nowadays, the scale of exhibition-mediation demands a collaboration of a set of specialised professionals that each develop their own sub-narratives and further interpretations of that which is already interpreted. The creative co-production model proposes to permanently include artists in such a set. At DRS, we were not particularly interested in deploying such engineering tools. Instead, we asked: How can one strip an exhibition of its spectacularism and instead deploy it as an open platform where you could simply convey: Look, this is an interesting phenomenon. We are in the middle of researching it and here are some teasers to make you think about it, too. What else is there that we might have overlooked?

Usually, an exhibition, as a medium, stands at the end of a research process, it is the final event, where results are to be presented. In contrast, *Casting of Death* was organised in the middle of our research period. It was conceived as an open platform. Not only literally open to the public in the sense of welcoming visitors' thoughts, but foremost open in its status. We avoided to present a clear-cut taxonomy of art- or heritage-making. Instead, we opted to manipulate such taxonomies. We did however hold on to the conventions of the exhibition format. This enabled visitors to easily orientate themselves in a familiar setting that did not provoke a defensive attitude but established an almost invisible, imperceptible platform because of its perceived normality [-> Quick impression]. The exhibited objects of craft, infographics and instructional drawings, video interview, first-aid demo video and live cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) demonstrations were deliberately displayed in a fashion that left open whether they featured as artworks, documents, or museum artefacts. Why was this important to us and what is wrong with a clear-cut taxonomy? We found the vague, negotiable status of the exhibits less authoritative, more inquiring, and exposed to criticism beyond aesthetic judgement but also to appropriation (by the media in our case) and failure.

When dealing with contentious or for any other reason attractive objects such as death masks, these can easily take over and blur the initial focus. This became obvious at a press conference we held half a year prior to the exhibition. Like the exhibition itself, it was conceived as an open platform. We staged it in the reading room of the *Manuscript, Rare and Old Prints Collection* at the *National and University Library*, a historical venue of

considerable standing. Our aim was to test the public and media interest in the topic. The attendance and media coverage surpassed our expectations. However, the creativity of our audience was also alarming. The journalists would grab the topic, reduce it to the manipulation of human corpses in a framework of hygienic and sanitary curiosity, and exploit the visual attraction of death masks (fig. 1). In the words of our historian: "Are we going to attend to our research questions or cater to folk's and media curiosity?" What do we mean by saying that the 'object can take over'? In our experience, death masks are very suggestive. The face, let alone a cast of a dead face, not to mention that it belonged to a celebrity, triggers the spectator's feelings and associations. Thus, the main challenge in conceiving the exhibition was how to harness the spectacle. Despite risking to confirm our ethnographer's verdict, who had warned of indulging into new animism, our basic challenge was to quiet down the screaming objects and instead to publicly discuss the phenomenon of death mask-making itself: Why they were made, are they still made, which personalities are stored in such a way for posterity, what does posterity do with them? Of course, now we are entering the realm of artistic crafts of fiction-making.

At the *Casting of Death* exhibition, we decided not to appropriate somebody else's experience to create our own artwork but rather to give voice to Viktor Gojkovič, an academic sculptor who has been engaged in death mask-making since the 1960s. We invited him to exhibit part of his collection together with a video interview where he speaks about it. The entrance to the room was rebuilt in order to protect it from prying eyes from the street and we took special care of the lighting to create a warm but discrete atmosphere (fig. 2). Taking pictures was prohibited, not because we unrealistically assumed that it would be possible to control it, but in order to force the visitor to question his or her decision (not) to obey the sign. It is true, however, that we incorporated Gojkovič's work in a broader narration of the *Casting of Death* exhibition.

Another challenge was how not to undo with words what we had created through visual means. As mentioned, exhibitions have lost their autonomy and are submitted to mediation through various types of public events. Here is a short conversation from one of such occasions where a dozen of visitors was taken on a tour by members of the creative co-production:

> **Visitor:** What about some anecdotes, some juicy details? I remember my mother – she used to work in the hospital in the prosection room for years and she was full of such stories.
> **Artists:** Yes, we encountered them, too. In fact, we gave it a lot of thought – are we going to tell them to you at such occasions or not...
> **Visitor:** …so you opted not to tell!?
> **Artists:** Yes. We left it to Viktor Gojkovič, the sculptor who actually deals with bodies when casting the death masks. We filmed him and you are invited to watch the interview. He speaks beautifully about this.

Fine and visual arts involve media that traditionally exclude direct contact between artist and audience. The exhibition has long remained a tacit spatial experience where the visitor was not taken by the hand or asked questions through other mediation techniques. Moreover, since the 1960s, conceptual artistic practices and curatorial approaches have fine-tuned the sensibility of the spatial experience that took into consideration each and every property of the physical space, such as floor, wall, and ceiling, to list the most obvious ones. Thus broke the apparent neutrality of art exhibitions, which had previously enabled the visitor to neglect the political, social, and physical context of the space where the exhibition took place. Once exhibitions were understood as a naturalistic, non-illusionist event beyond pure aesthetic pleasure, it conveyed a different notion of truth. Why that is not good enough and why it has been reverse-engineered and substituted by didactical means is a question beyond the scope of this text [-> Relations]. In any case, once we were literally facing the visitors at the *Casting of Death* exhibition, we had to deal with the temptation to over-enthusiastically share our own experiences from behind the scenes. At least in the above case we opted to give the floor to the 'authentic protagonist' himself and introduced gossip by proxy.

The creative co-production model attempts to go beyond a super-specialised state of the art in the mechanics of academic knowledge production and to embed the artist in a problem- (or conflict)-solving social and political enterprise. Putting the aesthetic methods and techniques at service, however, reminds us of Michel de Certeau's (1984, 6-8) warning against becoming an expert by converting one's competence into authority. In the field of applied arts such as architecture, there is already a typology of roles in which such an authority can be exercised. Esther Charlesworth (2007) discerns the following: pathologist, hero, historicist, colonialist, social reformer (and political mediator), and educator. Let us return to the initial expectation:

the artists are supposed to provide an artistic upgrade. You may finally ask: What, for art's sake, does the 'artistic' stand for then!? We would argue that the artist's agency has shifted from the production of an artwork (in the broadest sense of the term) to a service. The artist is no longer commissioned to create an artwork but hired to apply an artistic *je ne sais quoi*. Cynics would state that the artist is not free to pick the position that suits his or her *credo,* but that it has been defined for him or her by the hegemonic apparatus. But is this a necessarily tainted position? At the DRS, we hold that what has remained in the artistic domain has the features of a secular public ritual. It can be performed through open platforms where a set of intangible and temporary relationships is established but also dissolved. Hopefully not in a cathartic way (what would that make us?). What we strive to achieve is a peer-to-peer relationship that does not presume a patronage over a chosen topic. But wait a minute, who chooses the topic?

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[1] This scene is based on interactions in the team as documented in the author's fieldnotes (2016-2017).

Serendipity and art-anthropology interventions[1]

Arnd Schneider

The true museum is one that ages with its objects
Paul Ingendaay

Ethnographic work with contemporary art and artists is now a widely established field. Rather than being merely research *on* artworlds (Becker 1982) this has now evolved into research *with* artists, much of this in a collaborative vein. This contribution discusses, from an ethnographic perspective, some general lines of inquiry which emerged in the creative and co-productive TRACES-projects conducted between 2016 and 2019 [-> Creative Co-Production]. *Serendipity* is considered as a crucial dimension of the dispersed research processes. Concluding, some results of this 'practical experimentation' are presented.

Five ethnographers, coming from different disciplinary backgrounds of anthropology, archaeology, architecture, and visual arts, critically engaged in reflexive participant observation with five different projects across Europe. These projects are at the centre of the 'practical experimentation' conducted within TRACES. Their common aim is the development of a new way of transmitting contentious cultural heritage: the Creative Co-Productions (henceforth CCPs), consisting of multi-disciplinary teams between scholars, artists and cultural workers. This innovative approach responds to the current economic-political conditions, a Europe in crisis. It reflects and takes further cutting-edge theoretical groundwork on the configuration of a renewed European identity, epitomized by the idea of reflexive Europeanisation (Römhild 2009).

The project research of TRACES was carried out in the form of Creative Co-Productions (CCPs) based in Romania, Poland, Slovenia, Austria and Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Italy. *Absence as Heritage* in Mediaș looked at an abandoned Synagogue in a multi-ethnic part of Transylvania (Romania) [-> Absence of heritage]. *Awkward Objects of Genocide* in Krakow investigated art and craft objects relating to the Holocaust, but made after WWII, which are now in private and public collections in Germany and Poland [-> Awkward objects]. *Casting of Death* focused on the making and public status of death masks in Ljubljana (Slovenia) [-> Casting of death], whilst *Dead Images* investigated the extensive skull collections in the

Natural History and University museums in Vienna and Edinburgh [-> Dead images]. *Transforming Long Kesh/ Maze Prison* worked with prison art made by former republican and loyalist inmates in Northern Ireland [-> Transforming Long Kesh/ Maze]. Finally, a sixth project was realized in colonial collections in the national ethnographic museum in Rome (now part of the Museum of Civilizations), moving beyond participant observation and towards a closer form of co-production, and more properly an art-anthropology intervention. Arnd Schneider, together with artist Leone Contini, carried out this research and developed an exhibition *Bel Suol d'Amore – The Scattered Colonial Body* at the Pigorini Ethnographic Museum [-> Bel Suol d'Amore].

Art, anthropology, contested heritage

Ethnographic research, in these cases, is set in a triangular relationship between art, anthropology, and institutional settings of contested and contentious cultural heritage Not all sides of this imaginary, relational triangle necessarily have the same length. Moreover, standing back from the triangle, they do not seem have the same status. At first sight, art and anthropology appear somewhat as the heuristic, and epistemological means with which to explore a third field, that is, contested and contentious cultural heritage. This latter, however, cannot be conceived just as a passive recipient of other disciplinary interventions. Rather, it is a dynamic social field, characterized by contested and contentious issues, even conflict, and which is actively involved in the research process. In addition, art and anthropology are not just the tools performing an enquiry, but also stand in a specific relationship to each other. Over long stretches of its history, anthropology conceived of art to be researched as a passive object knowledge, not something to be engaged with, affected by or even to collaborate with. The exceptions at certain historical moments seem to be confirming the rule. One can think here, among others, of the productive encounter of French Surrealism with anthropology in the 1920s and 30s, where the editor George Bataille, anthropologists Alfred Métreaux, anthropologist and writer Michel Leiris, and art historian Carl Einstein, artists André Masson and Joan Miró, among many others, worked in innovative ways on the journal *Documents.* Here, different artistic genres and anthropological approaches were juxtaposed both in formal and in theoretical terms. Montage and collage where used to transgress different disciplinary practices, where artists were appreciated through an ethnographic lens and subjects of anthropology and archaeology were reworked artistically, often with surrealist devices (cf. Clifford 1988, Ades/ Baker 2006, Kelly 2012). Filmmaker Maya Deren's excursion into Haitian eth-

nography in the 1940s and 50s is another example. Deren, an experimental film-maker, famous for her film *Meshes of the Afternoon* (1943), set out to make a filmic study of Haitian Voodoo, having consulted beforehand with renowned anthropologists Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson and the mythology scholar Joseph Campell. However, she found writing more apt to capture her intentions to write an ethnographic monograph, whereas here film rushes where only edited posthumously. The book she published eventually, *The Divine Horsemen* (1953) is written in a very personal voice and clearly shows her attempt as an artist to succeed in cultural description and analysis. More recently, the work of artists such Susan Hiller, Lothar Baumgarten and César Paternosto, as well as many others since, has involved fieldwork and crossed the boundaries between art and anthropology (Clifford 1988, Schneider 2006, 2011, Schneider/ Wright 2006, 2010, 2013). In sum, the three poles of the triangle of art, anthropology, and contested and contentious heritage in institutional settings stand in dynamic relationships with each other and across disciplinary boundaries, and none can be thought of as independent of the others or in isolation.

In this triangular setting, and when seen from an anthropological perspective, heritage and contested heritages, obtain specific features. In fact, recent decades have seen a veritable boom in heritage studies, and contested cultural heritage in particular. No attempt is made here to summarize this vast literature, but a few significant contours symptomatic for certain trends and issues, might be delineated. Anthropologist Helaine Silverman (2011) states that "(a)ttention to contested cultural heritage is, fundamentally, awareness of the construction of identity and its strategic situationality and oppositional deployment" (ibid., 1). She identifies a number of paradigmatic shifts which have helped shaping this awareness, chief among them Edward Bruner's early insight that self and society are never fully formed and fixed, but rather always in production, process – insights which were also applied in the seminal and sea-changing volumes *Exhibiting Cultures: the Poetics and Politics of Museum Display* by Karp and Levine (1991) as well as the follow-up volumes *Museums and Communities. The Politics of Public Culture* (1992), and *Museum Frictions* (Karp et al. 2006). The work of Sharon Macdonald (2013, and in this volume)[–> Contentious collections] has been absolutely crucial in this field – the memory-identity-heritage complex being one of the pivotal concepts and areas of research she identified for the contested arena of heritage practices in Europe. The principal idea here is that heritage is to be understood as a relational process between multiple identities and history, characterized by contestation, and ultimately shaped by

social relations and practices, and not constituted by fixed identities and immovable patrimonies.

Museum are “sites of passage and contestation” (Clifford 1997, 210). For a considerable time, anthropologists working with (and in museums) have written about indigenous and first nation communities (often called ‘source communities’ – though this term has been questioned more recently, see below) who lay claim to objects in museums from which they or their ancestors were originally divested through colonial appropriation. Periodically, over the last decades, this debate has been addressed in terms of the politics and poetics of presentation, possible collaboration and decision-making, categorization and display of objects. The debate coalesced at certain turning points such as the ART/artifact exhibition at the Center for African Art (later Museum of African Art) in New York in 1988; the polemics surrounding the new Musée du Quai Branly in Paris (since 2006; cf. Price 2007); as well as the soon to be opened Humboldt-Forum in Berlin (now planned for 2019), and other institutions (see also Plankensteiner 2018, 25, 35-36). In various ways, these issues can also be found in our examples, especially when they refer to institutional collections and their problematic and contentious heritage, such as the skull collection in the Vienna Museum of Natural History investigated by the project *Dead Images* [-> Dead images], or folk art in Polish ethnographic museums referring to the genocide of Jews during WWII, researched by the Krakow project *Awkward Objects of Genocide*) [-> Awkward objects].

In the post-colonial context, debates about ethics of display of objects in Western museum are central here (which implies researching and questioning the moral relationships at the base of collections, Clifford 1997, 192), and the legitimacy of their ‘possession’ in the first place. Linked to this, the discussion on provenance has gained renewed traction (furthered also by a parallel discussion of art looted principally by the Nazis, and others, during the Third Reich, and more generally, during WWII). These debates are informed by a fundamental rethinking, also in the public sphere, of restitution of art objects held in Western Museums from former colonies to their rightful owner. In this context, one of the most outspoken critics of continued Western ‘ownership’ is the French art historian, Bénédicte Savoy, who in her inaugural lecture at the Collège de France in 2017 called museums “archives of human creativity”, emphasizing that “insider knowledge of museums had to become public knowledge” (Savoy 2018, 48, 56), and insisting that those “who have enriched us” (ibid., 54, 57) must be included in the

discussions, research and negotiations concerning the historic provenance, and the future of these objects, including their possible restitution (ibid., 57-58).

Sharon Macdonald, Henrietta Lidchi, and Margareta von Oswald take heed from the recent discussion on decolonialism and propose to decolonize the museum (2017, 96, 97, 102) in order to explore the cosmopolitan potential of the museum. Their cosmopolitanism is precisely not linked to older, colonial Enlightenment ideals, but through readings of post-colonial advocates of cosmopolitanism, such as Paul Gilroy and Kwame Appiah. Macdonald, Lidchi and von Oswald explicitly name the "contexts of unequal power, sometimes outright violence in which collections were made" and the "problematic depictions of 'others' exhibitions" (2017, 96). They state that the "extended legacy of colonial relations are questions about particular knowledge formations and modes of knowledge making, the nature of the ethnographic museum to whom it orients itself, and access to the collections and involvement in shaping their futures, in both the past and the present. Decolonizing the museum requires critical attention on all these fronts." (2017, 97) They are also critical of the "term 'source community' (or 'community of source') because of its potential restatement of a colonial model of discrete peoples and single origins" (ibid., 99). Similarly, the term "'community' (…) too easily ignores differences within groups" (ibid.). Certainly, museums are contact zones (Clifford 1997), and arenas of contestation. It is here that interrelations between issues of "research, authority, the archive and the public good" (Macdonald, Lidchi, von Oswald 2017, 98) will have to be carefully gauged and are brought to the fore.

Contested heritage and ethnographic research

What can be learned from this discussion, taken from this more specific context of museums and contested heritage, for the context of the TRACES projects? Similarly, what can the projects contribute to this discussion? In fact, the research on provenance, the rights and claims of indigenous people, 'original' owners, and source communities which has become ever more prominent in recent years play an important role in the projects.
The colonial dimension appears particularly present in the project *Bel Suol d'amore* on the post-colonial legacies of the former African Museum in Rome and attempts through the project to de-colonize it (cf. Schneider 2019b and Contini 2019), and the project *Dead Images* on the skull collections held at the Vienna Natural History Museum, and the University of Edinburgh. A significant number of the skulls come from former European colonies or people who

stood in a colonial relationship to the nation-states that incorporated them, such as the Sami in Northern Europe. However, the concepts developed from these debates can also be applied and transposed to other contexts within Europe. In fact, the Belfast-based Project *Transforming Long Kesh/ Maze prison*, can also be said to have a colonial (if not post-colonial) dimension, seen at least from perspectives which emphasize the long colonial history between England and Ireland, and Northern Ireland's continued status as a 'province' of the United Kingdom [-> Transforming Long Kesh/ Maze]. Moreover, the issue of contestation is not restricted to the (post)- colonial context, but also very vividly present in other ways in at least three projects, carried out in Medias/ Romania, Krakow and elsewhere in Poland, whilst in a fourth, in Ljubljana on death masks, it was problematized as a constructed (see also Bellu 2019, Maniak 2019, Kempinski 2019, Bajic 2019).

Methodologies and strategies: Ethnography, experiments, and intervention

Macdonald and Basu (2007) draw a very useful parallel between experiments in exhibition making and experiments in ethnography. This is also something that has characterized the projects, and the ethnographers researching them. Experiments are, of course, "knowledge generating procedure(s)", and experiments create "new phenomena" (Macdonald/ Basu 2007, 2). All the projects involved research on and with contested cultural heritage, the making of exhibitions (of different kinds and scales, and composition), and the ethnographic research accompanying this process. The individual ethnographic projects also followed the ´object´ and ´stories´ in their specific research and exhibition settings (cf. Macdonald/ Basu 2007, 7, Marcus 1998), often with serendipitous turns generating new insight.

The ethnographic interventions, embedded within these projects on contested and contentious heritage, which all included exhibition projects, were then precisely such knowledge generating exercises which might be called "art-anthropology interventions" (Schneider 2016) where two disciplinary endeavours come together to engage with a third, in our case contested cultural heritage. A good example of this is the project *Bel Suol d'amore –The Scattered Colonial Body* where artist Leone Contini and anthropologist Arnd Schneider collaborated over a period of six months and which culminated in an exhibition in Rome in June/ July 2017 at the National Ethnographic Museum Luigi Pigorini (part of the Museum of Civilizations) (-> Contini/ Schneider 2019, xxx).

The embedded ethnographers reflected on the ethnographic research process they were involved in. They found themselves in very specific, creative co-productive settings. This productive, relational set-up provided particular challenges but also opportunities. To differing degrees the ethnographers were operating both within and without the CCPs. Rather than closed units, we might consider the CCPs as open social fields; and of course, anthropology has long abandoned the idea of bounded social, cultural or spatial units that would make up the terrain for fieldwork. For at least three decades, if not longer, fieldwork has been multi-sited, and temporally and spatially diverse (see Clifford 1988, Marcus 1995). Increasingly, it is also carried out with local experts, in non-places (Augé 1992), and even with 'virtual' communities and sets of relations on the Internet. Here is an extended example from ethnographer Katarzyna Mania who worked with the project *Awkward Objects of Genocide*, situated in Krakow:

In and outside the field

Katarzyna Maniak

"The subject of my ethnographic research was the *process* of analysis, interpretation and presentation of difficult heritage, and to be precise vernacular or folk art pieces revolving around the Holocaust, created in post-war Poland. This process was conducted by a team of researchers, theorists, practitioners and an artist. It was undertaken under the title of *Awkward Objects of Genocide: The Holocaust and Vernacular Arts in and beyond Polish Ethnographic Museums.* A process which is a sequence of consecutive events, happens on many levels and develops in a way that can be seen as serendipity. In the analyzed case it encompassed research attitudes of particular members of the team, relations within the group, interactions developed during the research (with artists, collectors, museum workers, directors of various institutions, theorists, students research assistants) and the effects of various actions as well as initiatives instigated by the project but going beyond it. Diverse forms of activity were realized within the project, among them: searching for amateur art pieces thematically connected to the Holocaust, tracing the stories of their creators, fieldwork, archival and ethnographic research, photographing the objects, seminars with students, writing articles, preparing conference speeches and the exhibition, and more. All of these investigations unfolded over time, were conducted in different locations, engaged an ever-growing group of people interested in the project, and encompassed various forms of communication and forms of social media.

Overt participant observation was the method I used to follow in all the processes. I have defined my ethnographic research methodology only after a few weeks since I started to be involved in the *TRACES* program, as I found it difficult to conceptualize my role in between the research co-ordinator, who was far away, and the group I had known before *TRACES* started. When the team members introduced me by emphasizing the outside position, or half-jokingly describing me as a ´secret agent´, I understood I would enthusiastically ´change the side´ and engage into the research. I realized that this sense of alienation with the simultaneous desire to be within the group, will accompany me through the whole process. In order not to focus on attempts to subvert this aspiration, as well as prove good intentions and my own 'innocence', I decided to select a method that uses the above-mentioned tension of being in and outside" (Maniak 2019) (fig. 1).

The ethnographers very much followed the working processes in the individual CCPs, both inside institutions (often museums, collections) and outside institutions. This was in some ways similar to photographer Wolfgang Thaler, when he recently surveyed the working processes of ten European Ethnographic Museums, focusing on the processual and ephemeral, rather than static arrangements (Plankensteiner 2018, 26, 48).

Linked to the temporal and spatial complexity of the ethnographic settings is the serendipity which characterizes many ethnographic research projects. Serendipity in its classic understanding via Horace Walpole's story *Three Princes of Serendip*, is the "discovery of something useful while on the hunt for something else" (Martínez 2018, 2). Serendipity as a theoretical concept and epistemological tool recently gained some traction in anthropology (and the social sciences more generally). This is not the place to review the substantial literature in this respect (e.g. Pieke 2000, Laviolette 2013, Martínez 2018a, 2018b). For instance, Rivoal and Salazar (2013, 178) suggest that serendipity is "widely accepted as a key characteristic (and strength) of the ethnographic method." Serendipity is "the faculty of making happy chance find" (Chambers English Dictionary), "an aptitude for making desirable discoveries by accident" (Webster's College Dictionary) or "the art of making an unsought finding" according to van Andel (1994, 631). More specifically, a *serendipitist* is the person practicing serendipity, "the one who believes in serendipity" (Chambers) or "who has that faculty" (Chambers). The serendipitist has to combine creatively chance, intuitive reason but also sagacity – much of this links to creativity and experimentation. In anthropology, of course, it seems then that serendipity is both 'a key to enter the field' (Rivoal/ Salazar 2013, 178), but also from the

serendipitous process “the field emerges” (ibid., 178). Some scholars, such as George Marcus, have even suggested it could become a mode of enquiry, and be the basis for model building in anthropology (ibid., 181), a kind of ‘epistemic partner’, in Martínez’ expression (2018, 1). And looking for material traces has a particular serendipitous quality to it. Though not mentioning serendipity specifically, Geisseler and Lachenal in the introduction to their book on the archaeologies of medical research in Africa articulate this very well:

“Traces are puzzling. (…) Their significance has to be established and re-established in material engagements. They remain as inchoate matter, irregular detritus, until momentarily recognised and re-established as form, by someone who happens upon them – sometimes wilfully researching the historical past, sometimes carefully tracking signs of passage, more often unintentionally while doing something else.” (Geissler/ Lachenal 2016, 16)

Serendipity is also important in another, more figurative (but also more ancient), sense, that of a hunter retracing and re-stepping tracks (and sometimes turning back on his/her own) in pursuit of game. This tracking of spoor has been taken – in an at once speculative and original thesis presented by Liebenberg (1990) – to lie at the origins of the development of ‘research’ in the history of humankind, a kind of first episteme or paradigm one might say. Contemporary artists, too, especially those ‘tracking evidence’ connected to the *Spurensicherung* movement in Germany and elsewhere (Metken 1977), have emulated the tracking of spoor or traces, with close affinities to fieldwork practices in archaeology and anthropology (Schneider 1993).

Serendipity was particularly relevant for the Italy-based projects *Bel Suol d’Amore – The Scattered Colonial Body* and *Dead Images*. In these, like in many other projects, many instances of research could not be planned, or the course of events predicted with certainty – rather unforeseen challenges and opportunities arose which had to be dealt with, and these where part of the unpredictability of the setting. For instance, in the project *Bel Suol d’Amore* serendipity became a major feature. In fact, the research was principally triggered by an early encounter of artefacts from the collections of the IsIAO (*L'Istituto italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente*, incorporating collections of the former Colonial and African museum) in the Pigorini Ethnographic Museum (now part of Museo delle Civiltà), and later compounded by further serendipitous encounters in the museum.

Serendipitous vignette: The palm

“Serendipity was characterizing our research and artistic interventions in an ascending scale since we had discovered the model of the Sabratha ruins on the corridors of the museum that had been excavated by Leone’s grandfather, Giacomo Caputo. Serendipity acquired an even more personal meaning when Tina Gaudino, a museum employee, born in Tripoli of Italian parents and one of our interviewees, discovered that her father had worked for Leone’s grandfather as a mosaicist and skilled craftsman in archaeological excavations in Libya. In addition, it turned out Leone had in his family’s possession a small artefact, a tin palm, made by Tina’s father.

The tin palm, which Leone had inherited from his deceased grandmother, was in a fragile state with some parts broken off. For the artistic intervention, Leone invited Tina to repair the tin palm together. This act of joint soldering symbolically tied them together, a joining of memories, life and family histories which never had been shared in this way“ (Schneider 2019b, also Contini 2019).

Perhaps what the ethnographers most clearly provided for the CCPs was to act as a kind of screen or receptors, even catalysts, who could both record but also express developing issues and concerns from the project. Although this is not always made explicit, potentially the ethnographers could also be an interface to the communities, users, stakeholders – the public at large – or, in any case, observe the relations of these with the CCPs. The CCPs, in turn, were not the passive recipients of the anthropologists and the ethnographic interventions into their fields, but stand in dynamic relationships to them.

Ethnographic work with the creative co-productions

How did ethnographic research intervene into the creative co-productive settings and what kind of results could it yield? What were the potentialities of generating knowledge, and for whom was it generated? Ethnographic research with the CCPs faced a number of challenges that have to do with the extremely varied and fragmented field locations and research processes which can be characterized as multi-sited and multi-temporal – in contradistinction to traditional anthropological fieldwork in seemingly bounded social settings. For instance, the team working on awkward objects of genocide in Poland, consisted of a museum ethnographer, a professor and several students, and an artist based in Krakow, and a theorist based in

Canada. A further challenge was certainly to observe different epistemological logics in different disciplinary fields which were represented in the teams, which consisted of theoreticians and practitioners with different backgrounds (anthropology, archaeology, history, visual arts etc.). In other words, to create different "epistemic perspectives" (Holfelder/ Schönberger 2018, 9), subjects and objects of research.

As regards the ethnographic research on the creative co-productions in their respective settings, the ethnographic research coordinated by the author within TRACES aimed at asking specifically the following questions: What are the challenges and innovative potentials of Creative Co-Productions? How can ethnographies on processes of artistic collaboration and co-production help to produce innovations and knowledge regarding how these co-productions can be established? Are such long-term, cross-disciplinary collaborations able to open up new and multiple perspectives on contentious cultural heritage and European identity? How can the reflexive qualities of artistic and ethnographic forms of knowledge production and representation be forged into a transferrable set of tools and strategies for stakeholders and policy makers?

Whilst with hindsight the questions might have been overambitious, a number of themes nevertheless emerge from the chapters of the ethnographers. Thus the principal challenges for the CCPs were respectively the multiple ethnic communities and their historical identity claims and understandings of contested heritage in question (for example in the Romanian project in Transylvania *Absence as Heritage*), the heritage organizations and understanding of the collectors' motifs (Krakow: *Awkward Objects of Genocide*, the development and problematisation of a notion of contestation (Ljubljana: *Casting of Death*), the collaboration between artist and research team, and the multi-sitedness of the project (Austrian-Scottish Project *Dead Images*), the divergent understanding of history by the communities (Belfast: *Transforming Long Kesh/ Maze Prison*), and the fragmentation of the research site, and a certain initial resistance by the institutions involved in the ethnographer/ artist collaboration in Rome. However, in this latter case, the institution – partly institgated by this research- is now continuing critically reflective research into the (post-) colonial collections. From the research carried out by the ethnographers, it is clear that the CCP model has innovative potential in bringing different, multidisciplinary teams of researchers (artists and academics) together to investigate contested cultural heritage. It is especially the artists' contribution which makes 'visible' both the research process but also the contested nature of the heritage. In this sense, while there are

no immediate 'transferrable' tools (in EU parlance) to be advised, certainly, such cross-disciplinary collaborations, and particularly between ethnographers and artists, are recommended to open up new perspectives.

Ethnographic interventions

Looking at the ethnographic research carried out with the CCPs, a number of themes emerge. (1) The ways of working together, or what in the introduction to *Anthropology and Art Practice* (2013) Chris Wright and I have called 'ways of working' in reference to Tim Ingold's the 'way we work', and where notions of creativity, collaboration, and interdisciplinary exchange are emergent and processual, rather than given, and disciplinarily bounded:

"The working and research methods involved in the projects presented here are probing, exploratory, and often remain fragmentary and open-ended in their results. The process of working with people and materials in ethnographic situations becomes as, or even more, important than the finished product." (Schneider/ Wright 2013, 4)

(2) Following from this, many instances in these projects /ethnographies with the CCPs are indicative of the constructed and performative character of fieldwork. Fieldwork, in these cases has turned into a veritable 'mis-en-scène' in the words of George Marcus (1995). Rather than being characterized by 'objective', withdrawn or distant researchers, and a discreet, and unaffected reality to be observed, the 'mis-en-scène' is constituted by in a socially relational ensemble of researchers, artists and research subjects, both human and non-human. This 'mis-en-scène' character becomes evident, for example, in Katarzyna Maniak's account of the photographic shoots by artist-photographer Wojciech Wilczyk. Here, the artist-photography interacts with the objects of the research (representing scenes of human rights abuses and genocide), when shouting words of condemnation or punishment at the figures representing perpetrators (SS-officer, for example). This clearly blurs the distinction between a presumed role of a distanced, 'objective' documentary photographer, and a discreet object (or subject) of artistic, or indeed ethnographic research.

(3) Following from the discussions around contested cultural heritage, the specific settings are arenas of contestation and friction between different communities, stakeholders, and researchers, also within the research projects by the CCPs themselves where in complex group dy-

namics the political and personal intersect (to bring forth new outcomes, for example in the project *Dead Images*). On the other hand, a less overt or absent notion of contentiousness can also be made fruitful in the public sphere as ethnographer Blaž Bajič explains, who worked with the *Domestic Research Society*-project *Casting Death* in Ljubiliana [-> Artistic upgrade].

The Absence of Contentiousness?

Blaž Bajič

“If the prevalent contemporary attitude is, that upon viewing the masks of the Other, to be fascinated by the macabre cruelty of the penal system of the 19th century, to be astonished by the inhumane character of scientific procedures and to feel guilty for the horrors of colonialism, it is easy to see why and how such items might be considered contentious, especially if there is an agent, actively challenging the politics and poetics of their (re)presentation. It is less clear, however, what precisely does the contentiousness of the masks of the Self consists of. Is it in the fact that manipulation with a corpse is necessary for their production? Is it in the physical contact with the corpse and probability of ‘transmitting’ bodily remains (hair, skin, etc.)? Are masks contentious due to their abstract association with ‘death as such,’ due to being unpleasant remainders of our finitude? Does contentiousness originate from the awareness that the individuals portrayed as a rule did not consent to being cast and subsequently canonised? Or are only a certain few masks contentious due to specific historical roles of the individuals portrayed? Is the mere fact, that many masks are amassed in museum depots and somewhat forgotten, rather than exhibited and celebrated publicly? Is it in their almost completely forgotten link to physiognomy?

Most of these rather essentialist questions were raised very early on in the research process, but no matter the answers proposed, the questions lingered on as the answers ‘felt’ unsatisfactory. For this, two reasons seem to have been crucial. On the one hand, whenever we began to discuss potential contentiousness, we were faced with the question of this notion’s relation to similar, competing and already established terms – with, for instance, the notions of contested, undesirable, difficult, dissonant, negative, undesirable heritage… . On the other hand, no matter how we may have thought about contentiousness, we could not escape the growing (and sobering) realisation of absence of any kind of protest against death masks” (Bajič 2019).

And, as Macdonald (-> Contentious Collections) points out heritage, if not already contentious, can also be presented *as* and *made* contentious for a public audience through such research and exhibition projects.

(4) The conditioning frame of notions of contested heritage (i.e. heritage politics, stakeholders etc.) which are both present in the material, and also evident on a more abstract meta-level, e.g. in the rhetoric of the EU around the topic. This was perceived by some of the CCPs and ethnographers as a complex and difficult process, sometimes of a top-down hierarchical structure, where research directives and designs had to be implemented, and to be negotiated between different levels: EU offices, research co-ordination by the *TRACES* partners, and the CCPs and ethnographers on the ground.

A number of theoretical approaches have been used by the ethnographers in the individual projects. It has to be stressed that the projects, and consequently the field situations were extremely heterogeneous themselves, but also variegated when compared with each other, which, in turn led to a great, and eclectic variety of theoretical avenues being explored. Whilst, at first impression, the approaches might therefore seem idiosyncratic and eclectic, they can nevertheless be applied to start theorizing across the range projects. Amongst these are Liza Nader's notion of affective violence, Chantal Mouffe's concept of 'agonism' both made productive by Katarzyna Maniak, Jacques Derrida's *Archive Fever* employed by Roma Sendyka, and his *Hauntology* referenced by Aisling O'Beirn and Martin Krenn, as well as Katarzyna Maniak (see respectively, their chapters in Schneider 2019b *forthcoming*). Common to all of them is that they put into sharp relief the issues of contestation (even conflict, and problematic identity constructions which crystallize around the objects and artifacts used and interpreted in the present.

The quote with which I opened this introduction "The true museum is the one which ages with their objects"[1] points to the historical contingency and construction of 'the museum', and ultimately, any collection of things, and of course, their 'poly-temporality' as Geissler and Lachenal (2016, 16) termed it in the context of work with the remains of 'past' medical sci-

[1] Paul Ingendaay on the Belgrade flat – now a museum – of the Serbian writer, and Nobel Prize winner for Literature, Ivo Andrić (1892 – 1975), (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 21/07/2018, p. 14; my translation)

ence in Africa. To, at least partially, understand, the making of these temporalities, through museums, galleries, collections and collectors, and communities and individual agents of all kinds lies at the back of the ethnographic projects that have been working with *TRACES*. All the projects deal with communities of memory, historic and present-day, and the links between these and their contested histories, centering on a range of objects and material practices (e.g. museum, gallery, collector's collections, abandoned architectural heritage, bodily remains, or impressions of bodies /death masks etc.). An important strain of theoretical approaches to emerge in this context addresses the profound ethical issue of 'repair', 'care' (as also in 'curating', taking care of), and ultimately leading to the questions of mutual, or crossed understanding, perhaps even reconciliation (partial, and only in some cases) (cf. Reeves-Evison/ Rainey 2018, Elhaik 2016).

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[1] This is a specially re-edited version – for the purpose of this companion – of my 'Working with TRACES", the introduction to my edited volume "Art, Anthropology, Contested Heritage: Ethnographies of TRACES", London: Bloomsbury, 2019.

Creative Co-production Reflexive Glossary

Domestic Research Society (DRS)

In principle, transdisciplinary collaborations have been inscripted in the Domestic Research Society's DNA since its inception. The implementation of the Creative Co-Production [-> Creative Co-Production] model, however, was a thrilling challenge for everyone involved in our project [->Casting of Death]. As an artistic and curatorial collective we reflected our work process along the lines of three different technical-methodical terms: 1) Conditions of creative-coproduction. 2) The specific position of the artist in the research process [-> Artistic Upgrade]. 3) The function and possibility of platforms [-> Agonism] that are as open as possible and allow continuous communication and involvement with the public (fig.1).

conditions of creative co-production *– relations between stakeholders of a creative co-production regarding project's funding, management, and communication; the innovation of research is rooted in renegotiated conditions that do not reproduce the established order; the Casting of Death co-production was the only one with an artistic and curatorial collective as a contractual partner that managed the European Union's funds itself and acted as a* ***self-authorised*** *(→) initiator of local research (anomalous condition) as opposed to being commissioned (prevalent condition) by an art, heritage or academic institution (fig.1)*

An essential aspect of co-production is the possibility of the artist/researcher's to freely take agency to engage in research.

self-authorisation *– an act of self-bestowing a mandate; it enables the researcher to carry out the research without being commissioned or hired by an authorised institution; not to be mistaken for artistic / scientific freedom or artistic / academic autonomy; the claim, however, needs to be performed in public, for instance on* ***open platforms*** *(→)*

Another crucial aspect in the creative co-production is the artistic agency and its formal aspect. We have opted for a communication model that does not result in an artwork. The research and its findings remain artistically 'untreated' and available for further use or development.

open platform *– conventional presentation format (exhibition, press conference, public talk, online database...), designed as an event for a public dialogue and organised already during the research itself as its constitutive part; a series of open platforms on different scales involves specific or larger audiences, feeds-back and serves as a public trial of the research's provisional outcomes; related to the notions of temporary autonomous zone or free space but less funky.*

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Becoming contentious: Participatory art and artistic research as a challenge to difficult cultural heritages

Suzana Milevska

The essay is conceptualised as a triangulation of the artistic research on the topic of contentious heritage(s), participatory art, and the co-production between artists and institutions.[1] More specifically, I put the focus on the debate over the potentials of institutional critique and participatory art as some of the instigating artistic genres which contributed to both, the development of artistic research, and to the interest of artists in contentious heritages (e.g. the provenience of the museums, problematic art collections and other property, debated monuments, and others). The text starts from the assumption that, for a successful critical analysis of the role that contemporary art can have in dealing with contentious cultural heritages, it is important to reflect on the potentials of various new models of artistic practices, art genres, media, methodologies, and strategies. Eventually, this will also make clearer the role of contemporary art for inducing sustainable institutional changes regarding the inherited contentious systemic structures and concepts from the past.
My central argument unravels around the reciprocal relations between contentious objects of heritage and the subjects that directly or indirectly define the contentiousness of the objects. The main aim is to clarify whether and how certain artistic research methods or media are more appropriate and successful in addressing contentious objects and collections and have bigger potentials for inducing social change of the circumstances that lead to defining such heritages as contentious.

Kalokagathia: The reconciliation of aesthetics and ethics in contemporary art and theory

There are generic and officially circulated and accepted ethical principles for social science research. For example, in March 2015 the Academy's Council formally adopted five guiding ethics principles. The five ethical principles are: 1. Social science is fundamental to a democratic society and should be inclusive of different interests, values, funders, methods, and perspectives. 2. All social science should respect the privacy, autonomy, diversity, values, and dignity of

individuals, groups, and communities. 3. All social science should be conducted with integrity throughout, employing the most appropriate methods for the research purpose. 4. All social scientists should act with regard to their social responsibilities in conducting and disseminating their research. 5. All social science should aim to maximise benefit and minimise harm.[2]

Unfortunately, there is no official consent regarding any specific ethical principles to be applied in the context of participatory art that often relies on artistic research. Neither is it clear how to reconcile the long-term tensions between ethical and aesthetical values due to the prevailing dilemmas imposed already by modernist theories of art, mainly due to complexity and diversity of artistic practices (Milevska 2019). Although there is also no reason why these ethical principles should not apply to artistic research, the question remains open whether some additional principles should be drafted particularly in the context of participatory and collaborative projects with a focus on performativity. One reason are the numerous different understandings of what is art among general audiences coming from different social and cultural contexts (Carroll 2000; Lillehammer 2008). The rigorous formalist division between aesthetic and ethical aspects of art, or more precisely the polarised distinction between form and content, or between beautiful and good, has yielded some of the most debilitating outcomes of modernist and formalist theory. The either-or polarity that often results from hierarchical positioning of one of these poles still has a key bearing on our understanding of art's position, and its role in different cultural contexts and in contemporary society in general.

The conflation of the realm of philosophy – to which the aesthetic category of the beautiful belongs – and the realm of art has gradually resulted in a contradictory long-term pursuit of an ever more precise, and false, dichotomy between art and society, as if they could ever be isolated from each other. Taking the current neoliberal political context as a point of departure, it is necessary to reveal and disentangle the difficulties that still prevent many art theorists from abandoning completely (or at least partially) modernist ideals and formalist criteria regarding art and the valorisation of its production. I find it urgent to discuss why and how the socio-political factors that enabled the long-term dominance of modernist aesthetics still affect, or more precisely prevent, the embracing of institutional critique and participatory art as relevant contributions to art theory and art practice.

The criticism, for example, that participatory art merely caters to societal needs is one of many commonplaces stemming from modernist principles: that is the death grip of formalist aesthetics' invigilators: issues of autonomy and positioning – and other contradictions. For a certain limited period after the Second World War, the *l'art-pour-l'art* position enjoyed widespread acceptance in Western art theory, as if the ancient ideal of *kalokagathia* had never existed, and as if the ideals of an otherwise autonomous pure art should be protected from any societal values.[3] The modernist myths of originality, authenticity, uniqueness, universality, art genius, autonomy (Krauss 1985) were also influenced by the Russian early formalist school of Viktor Shklovsky and semiotic analysis of art, wherein the issue of the arts' autonomy stemmed from political interventions in both, art's content and form. Joseph Kosuth published his early attack on the modernist aesthetics of Clement Greenberg in his essay *Art After Philosophy* in 1969 (Kosuth 1991) – in which he addressed Modernism's fallibility deriving from its equation of aesthetics and art (stressing the relevance of conceptually focused art vs. form-driven and -evaluated art). However, he was not yet ready to fully abandon the understanding of art as an entity separate from society. The problems with calling for art's *autonomy* from its contextual background have become clearer, although such anti-aesthetic art tendencies had already co-existed with modernist art in the past, in avant-garde movements in both East and West (Huyssen 1986).

In this respect, attempts to detach art from the ethical, cultural, and social codes and norms prevailing in the period and geopolitical context of its production became questionable and unattainable – for various geopolitical, sociological, and cultural reasons. Thus, the reframing of the triangular relation between ethics, aesthetics, and art is still partial, although the position of aesthetics as a philosophical discipline (and not only a modernist one) relevant in determining art's definition has weakened. Modernist and formalist aesthetic ideals endured for only a couple of decades, but the unwinding of the short modernist time span via poststructuralist and postmodernist debates became a lengthy endeavour that continued throughout the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s and still prevails.

Participatory art as a critique of institutional structures

I have argued elsewhere that the urgency for the emergence of a participatory paradigm shift in the arts (Bishop 2012; Milevska 2006, 2016, 2018) stemmed from the uneven development of theory, which was lagging behind art practices that challenged institutional structures in art and culture. The shift from art that focused on the production of art objects towards art that implicated and engaged various subjects (such as art producers, mediators, audience members, citizens) in order to create new and relevant relations amongst them was imagined as an inevitable strategy of intervening in existing distinctions and hierarchies in order to change them, or to dismantle them entirely. This is one of the obvious reasons that participatory art, I would argue, has the potential to address, extricate, and redress the contentiousness in various cultural heritages.

However, it must be acknowledged that there still are tendencies to keep the art discourse away from issues of social justice and political reality – justified by the absence of relevant artworks (read: objects) – as well as to interpret art's involvement in such changes as irrelevant and counter-aesthetic. Such tendencies relate to the implication of art-world structures in the overall socio-political and economic systemic structures, to which the art production system belongs by default. Ultimately, the remnants of modernist definitions of art are directly linked to this compromised position, to the production and distribution of art in the market, and to the other usual suspects of the prevailing late capitalist and neoliberal economy. Therefore, I want to stress that some of the issues regarding aesthetic and art criteria of evaluation of participatory art still remain unresolved. Yet they are pertinent for a more profound understanding of art's changing role in society, and its effort to break with the inherited socio-political and economic relationships that facilitated the preservation of the strict division between art and society in the first place.

The fight with the formalist aesthetic canons and criteria that were instrumental for the prevailing concept of the arts' autonomy is still going on, inducing social change in the art world and elsewhere. Artistic concepts, genres, and theoretical terms like *community based art, institutional critique, social intervention, relational aesthetics, participatory art, socially engaged art* and *artivism* – all conceived to provide adequate analytical means for better understanding the problems with such modernist dichotomous interpretations of the relations between art and society – survive. They continue to fight against conservative attempts in the art world to use autonomy as a tool of maintaining the status quo.

Adorno's reflections on the relationship between art and society gave way to different interpretations of autonomy, so there can be several different levels of autonomy in art, which makes intersectionality across different levels and registers even more complex (Hamilton 2009, 287–305). Thus, a more specific analysis of conceptions of autonomy could clarify the inner paradox of art's claimed right to autonomy. Obviously, there is an overall distinction between social and aesthetic autonomy, but artists and their artworks also belong to differing and often contrasting registers of autonomy depending on their institutional affiliations and/or allies.

In a recent essay, I addressed the issue of the neoliberal socio-political and economic context as one of the major obstacles for fulfilling the promise of participatory art for social change (Milevska 2016). Distinguishing between two different types of participatory art projects could help clarifying some of the contradictions between the enthusiastically set aims of participatory art and the pitfalls set by institutional power. The first type, based on the various waves of artistic institutional critique (Alberro and Stimson 2009) is concerned with a critique of art institutions, and calls for more substantial participation *within* the art system, in the presentation and/or production of art projects, and in making decisions regarding art. Such projects deal with the relationship between a) art, art institution, and audience, b) artist and art institution (museum, gallery), and c) artist and curator. Although important, I see this first branch of participatory art as too self-referential and self-indulging, and consequently it is easier to have it incorporated and co-opted within existing art institutions and immanent institutional frameworks (Milevska 2016).

The second type of participatory art that could be defined as 'participatory institutional critique' aims towards more substantial critique and societal change, beyond the confines of the art world (Milevska 2016). Participatory institutional critique has more ambitious goals and potentials, but it also faces stronger adversaries: the general political climate and its conflicts, or the inherited colonial pretext. Hence the artistic goals and media of such projects vary: performing social and/or anthropological research; issuing calls for restitution, repatriation, and decolonisation of institutions; engaging with conflicted local communities, often with unforeseeable but imminent results (Milevska 2018b). In this respect, some of the pertinent questions remain regarding which objects, images, and spaces are considered contentious cultural heritages and who decides this (Sharon Macdonald 2018), and how they are transmitted and reflected in the European

'culturescapes' and 'memoryscapes.' More precisely, in Regina Römhild's words: "What we tend to forget is that this fragility and contestedness has always been the case. There never was a clear-cut, consensual entity called 'Europe', nor a geographically defined continent or a cultural formation." (Römhild 2018) These issues are extrapolated regardless of whether the researched materials are included or displayed in collections of various European art and cultural institutions or are presented in public spaces or kept in other contexts. Moreover, questions arise as to how and why these objects became contentious in the first place.

Stereotypical and racialised representations; institutional reluctance to acknowledge the questionable provenience of unlawfully required objects and unethical sponsorship; propositions of how to deal with the repressed memory of the spaces once inhabited by conflict or marked with contested monuments dedicated to disgraceful historic figures or events; collective memory about commoning movements (Milevska 2018a) that contested the appropriation of public space: these are just some of the topics addressed in the project TRACES.[4]

This is not the first time that the question whether and how artistic research contributes to a politics of emancipation arises. The questions of the relations between ethics and aesthetics, the form and social content and conduct in artistic research have been addressed in various academic and artistic contexts. The issue of representation in different artistic and curatorial projects and institutional decisions towards the making of images and objects representing difficult ethical contents (dead and wounded bodies, human remains, Holocaust victims, poverty, amongst others) as well as their different approaches towards reproduction, display, distribution, and circulation also have been debated in various contexts. These include, for example, the discussion regarding the photographic (Didi-Huberman 2008) and video representation of the Holocaust,[5] the debate about the making, displaying, and circulation of images of human remains stored in museum collections (Harries at. al. 2018) and the more general debate about Jacques Rancière*'s* concept '(re)distribution of the sensible' and 'indisciplinarity' (Birrell 2008).

Starting with invisible heritages and contentious objects, images, and spaces (as I proposed in the book *On Productive Shame, Reconciliation, and Agency* (Milevska 2016) or in the exhibition *Contentious Objects/Ashamed Subjects* (Milevska 2019*)*, one needs to clearly declare the urgent need to acknowledge past wrong-doings in order to rethink, deconstruct, and dismantle pre-

existing regimes of representation and systemic malfunctions, while proposing alternative trajectories for future research. The application of various theoretical and research methodologies (as developed in art history, museology, anthropology, ethnology, sociology, pedagogy, political sciences) together with artistic research methods, artistic media, strategies, and actions allows approaching the specificity, appropriateness, applicability, affordance (Gibson 1979) and efficiency in accomplishing these challenging goals, on both ethical and conceptual levels.

Some of the strategies employed by contemporary arts stem from the legacy of postcolonial and feminist critique and the research practices around various theoretical analyses and case studies which have developed in the frame of the humanities and social sciences. Hereby I refer to art projects under the umbrella of TRACES. These included, but were not limited to, the use of critical analysis of vernacular art, field trips, photography as research, lecture performances, interviews, focus groups, contextual inquiry, usability study, survey, diary and hybrid records, critical databases, video essays, curatorial forensics, militant image research, institutional critique, thought experiments, social intervention, participatory research of art made by prisoners, as well as elements of material culture, re-enactment, activist campaigns for naming and renaming, counter-monuments, social design, agonistic research, critical friend, creative co-production, petition, public apology, manifestos, critical and social advertising, advocating and lobbying for decolonisation, repatriation, return and restitution. Instead of dwelling on negatively charged memories, participatory projects cherish research processes that deal with shared or multidirectional memory (Rothberg 2011, 525), and productive shame (Paul Gilroy 2005) in a committed and catalytic way.

Institutional critique, participatory art and co-productions focusing on contentious cultural heritages

The turn towards a participatory paradigm in arts is based on the main assumptions of institutional critique that the institutions and experts have a monopoly on defining art and that they control access to its production and representation. While audiences do not take an active part in the creative process of production and presentation of art, the audiences want and need to do so, exactly because of many problematic decisions that do not take into account the implicated and contested communities. Participatory art therefore offers an approach to artistic processes in

which the process is considered incomplete without the viewers' involvement — turning audience members into co-authors, editors, or active performers who complement and resolve the artist's concept. The main intent behind the emergence of participatory art is not to simply add a new genre to existing art genres and media. This conception is instrumental for challenging the dominant forms and relationships in the art world: a small protected class of professionals that have the monopoly over making and defining art and who conceive of the audience as the 'other': passive and marginal observers celebrating the results of the creation. In this respect, participatory art is closely related to the practice of institutional critique through which different generations of artists have called for revealing, critiquing, and dismantling elitist and exclusive art structures.

Participatory art projects, research, and collaboration with other professionals continue to promote the understanding that an artwork is not just an object that you passively enjoy while quietly looking at — it is a creation in which even non-specialised viewers actively participate, a dynamic collaboration between the artist, the audience, and their environment. Often there are also objects produced in such participatory processes, however these material outcomes are not the main priority because relational, interactive, and collaborative structures established in the process are also considered art. Thus, participatory projects often initiate the emergence of new communities and instigate new and complex relations between the artists, produced objects and images, and the participants. Therefore, although the results of participatory art may be documented with photography, audio, video, and broadcast, the artwork is really to be found within the interactions and relations that emerge from the audience's engagement with the artist and the situation created. Even so, participatory art cannot always overcome societal strictures, and despite the attempt to erase divisions between the artist as a producer and the audience as participant, very often new hierarchies are created, depending on class, ethnicity, access, etc.

Living with and within the current reigning contradictions in the art world is difficult. It is especially difficult to juggle all these contradictions for artists and curators collaborating with high-profile art institutions with inherited colonial or other contentious pasts. According to George Lipsitz (2000, 80), the inability to speak openly about contradictory consciousness from within or outside of institutions can lead to a self-destructive desire for "pure" political positions that ultimately have more to do with "individual subjectivities and self-images" than with a

"disciplined collective struggle for resources and power." Lipsitz states that "the ultimate goal behind the pertinent critique of the exclusive and hegemonic institutional models is to overcome the deterministic approach" (Lipsitz, 80). I would like to conclude with a similarly positive and optimistic understanding of participatory art. Its full potential is still to be unleashed and developed. This can happen only if achieving a quality of relationship among the participating subjects (artists, theorists, curators, audiences, and other implicated and interested individuals) is fully accepted as a possible ultimate goal of art. One should not expect this goal to yield any beautiful objects in the conventional sense. Regardless of whether this is interpreted as anti-aesthetic, counter-aesthetic, or artistic, or merely does not allow the institutions to continue with the difficult issues and relations without acknowledging and challenging their problematic systemic nature, it is obvious that to challenge the relations among the subjects that are instrumental for producing and transmitting the contentiousness is one of the most pertinent aims of participatory art and artistic research employed in such projects.

I want to argue that contemporary art projects that focus on participatory research and collaboration have enhanced potentials for catalysing social change and fighting systemic racism precisely because they focus on dialogical relations rather than on objects and images with contentious pasts. The recent hateful outbursts from the far right in Europe and elsewhere (such as anti-Semitic and anti-Roma sentiments, racism towards indigenous and black populations, patriarchal violence towards women, and prejudices and aggression towards LGBTQ communities) can be confronted only with clear critical arguments against similar hatred from the past, entailed in some of the prestigious European art and cultural institutions, and by establishing reciprocal and intersectional relations between art, academia, and political activism that would work as control mechanism of the ruling socio-political structures.

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[1] The text addresses some of the pertinent issues that have been discussed in the Horizon 2020 research project: Transmitting Contentious Cultural Heritages with the Arts: From Intervention to Co-Production (TRACES).
[2] n/A. Academy Adopts Five Ethical Principles for Social Science Research, *Academy of Social Sciences*, 2015, https://www.acss.org.uk/developing-generic-ethics-principles-social-science/academy-adopts-five-ethical-principles-for-social-science-research/. (accessed 12.12.2018)
[3] *Kalokagathia:* Ancient Greek: καλὸς κἀγαθός [kalos kaːgatʰós], *beautiful-and-good*: the Ancient Greek ideal of harmony between noble human personality and any art action (documented in Herodotus and other texts).

[4] The exhibition *Contentious Objects/Ashamed Subjects* (curated by Suzana Milevska, 18.01.-05.02.2019, Politecnico di Milano, Milan) is imagined as an archive of a long-term curatorial research about artistic research methodologies, methods and strategies used and/or developed by artists and researchers from social and humanist sciences that deal with contentious cultural heritages. It comprises of eleven cross-disciplinary collaborative research projects produced in the frame of the project TRACES or in other art, academic or activist contexts.
[5] Relevant debates on the representation of the Holocaust in photography and film include the French documentary *Shoah* (1985), directed by Claude Lanzmann.

Part 4

Practices of Critical Articulation

Performativity

Marion Hamm

Heritage tends to be associated with 'things': buildings, objects, memorials. To be acknowledged as heritage, things must be shown, seen, engaged with: heritage needs to be 'performed.' The performative dimension has gained currency across the social sciences and the humanities (Thrift 2000) and has given important impulses to the study and the practice of heritage. This dimension highlights creativity, processuality, affect and agency in heritage-making. In the words of a prominent advocate of critical heritage studies, 'heritage is a multilayered performance – be this a performance of visiting, managing, interpretation or conservation – that embodies acts of remembrance and commemoration while negotiating and constructing a sense of place, belonging and understanding in the present' (Smith 2006, 2).

The performative turn challenges traditional understandings of heritage as a symbolic representation of a pre-existing 'authentic' past, an 'exhibition of itself' (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2005, 1). It directs attention to the cultural and social process of 'doing heritage,' where heritage is actively produced through practices. Besides collecting, classifying, conserving, displaying, visiting and forms of audience engagement, a performative reading includes 'intangible heritage,' such as performed acts of remembering in popular culture and everyday life, as well as in the arts and the media.

In everyday parlance, a performance is a staged act, a display of skills directed at an audience. Drawing on Erving Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical reading of social behaviour, performance theory extends this concept from the theatre to life in its entirety, because 'every social activity can be understood as a showing of a doing' (Schechner 2013, 168): a public presentation of the self and an act of meaning-making. As showing requires spectators, heritage performances rely on audiences as active co-creators. A village fete, where people dress up, manage stalls, play music, consume and watch each other in the process, is as much a site of heritage performance as a museum where the beer glass or the dirndl are exhibited and seen, or a medieval re-enactment, or a workshop where artists work with participants around archival objects. As 'a mode of cultural production that has recourse to the past and produces something new,' heritage is continuously produced and reproduced by living persons, 'their knowledge, practices, artifacts, social worlds, and life spaces' (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2005, 1).

As powerful elements in the dynamics of cultural hegemony and a form of social action, heritage performances affect present realities. The embodied language of heritage is performative in that it 'enacts or produces that which it names' (Butler 1993, 23). Heritage performances connect personal

and collective experiences to wider social discourses. The annual Notting Hill Carnival in London may serve as an example for the performativity of heritage. As one of the largest European street festivals, it features steel bands, soundsystems, and a parade. The carnival was created by the West-Indian community in response to racial tensions, and has been held every year since 1966 as an affirmation of the Black Atlantic Diaspora in convergence with London's many immigrant communities. The carnival expresses and produces a heritage that remains contentious. Media reports celebrate it not least as a boost to tourism, but also warn of riots as police units are deployed and administrative regulation sets in. Year after year, the carnival points to a reality of problematic race and class relations, while optimistically and defiantly embodying the claim to overcome them in a flamboyant display of Caribbean culture, enacted in a setting of metropolitan pluri-culturalism.

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In Schwebe – Vse Lebdi – in sospeso: Dimensions of art projects

Marion Hamm

In August 2016, the Klagenfurt University Cultural Centre UNIKUM opened the landscape exhibition *In Schwebe – Vse Lebdi – In Sospeso* at the tripoint near the Austria market town Arnoldstein (UNIKUM (2016a)). The title means something between 'in limbo' and 'in suspension'. Fifteen artists created works to be installed in the skiing resort around the mountain Ofen (Slovene: Peč, Italian: Monte Forno), where Austria, Slovenia and Italy share borders. The exhibition ran until September 18th, 2016. At the opening, around 250 visitors took the mountain cableway up to the tripoint, and explored the landscape through the lens of artistic interpretation. The day ended on the terrace of the mountain restaurant with a traditional Carinthian *Kasnudl* or pasta dinner, musically accompanied by the sounds of jazzy world music interspersed by mixed-language border poetry.

Why would anyone establish a complex exhibition on top of a mountain, which is only accessible by chair lift or a strenuous walk covering 900 meters in altitude? TRACES partner UNIKUM did just that. At the Institute for Cultural Analysis at the University of Klagenfurt/Celovec, Klaus Schönberger and I are accompanying UNIKUM's work as ethnographers and cultural theorists. The aim is to understand how long-term artistic work in the Alps-Adriatic region slots in with the transmission of contentious cultural heritage. Through participant observation, interviews, photography and casual interactions, we explore how UNIKUM draws on everyday practices and objects to create unusual and often oppositional meanings which challenge seemingly clear-cut and often taken-for-granted discourses. After having been to the opening, the obvious answer to the initial question 'Why here?' is: 'because it works.' But what makes it work? This paper explores some of the dimensions in transmitting contentious cultural heritage with the arts, which together create the impression that 'it works'.

The Physical Dimension: Walking as a Way of Enjoying the Arts

UNIMUM's most popular format of transmitting contentious cultural heritage with the Arts is to combine contemplation with the popular leisure activity of walking. Walking, as Wilhelm Berger (p 204) explains in one of UNIKUM's poetic hiking guides, is a method: the construction of space in the process of walking. In the border region between Austria, Italy and Slovenia, such re-imagining

takes on a political quality. The celebrated diversity of Slavic, Romanic and Indo-Germanic heritages is tarnished by bitter memories of conflict and loss. Brutal attempts at creating linguistically and culturally homogenous national territories following the Wars of the 20th century have left traces that are tangible until today. UNIKUM invites its mainly Carinthian audience into this landscape, and to take in art in textual, visual, musical, theatrical or sculptural genres on the way. This may take the form of hiking, intersected by pauses for readings or music. Sometimes it's a stroll along a parcours with different visual or audio-enhanced stations. *In Schwebe* was realised as an art-trail. A printed map was provided for those who didn't trust the signposting. Here is a fictional walk of what you might experience; the numbers relate to the stations as outlined on the map (IMGS. 02-03):

You arrive on the train line Villach-Tarvisio, built to connect the Hapsburg empire with Italy. Or you take the A2 motorway leading from Vienna down to Italy. As you enter Arnoldstein, you pass some architectural remains of the local mining industry, turn left at the large Billa supermarket, and follow a tiny, curvy road to the village of Seltschach where you find the valley station of the cable-car chair lift. You take a seat, and find yourself enveloped in almost perfect silence, suspended between fir-trees, skies and mountain. On the opening day, the silence was broken by occasional singers and musicians travelling downwards. You may notice first traces of the installations – figures suspended from lift pillars and buildings [n.1, Kunstsportgruppe Hochobir (fig. 04)], signs in deep Europe-blue displaying a yellow star and a red-and-white border pole [n.2, Marietta Huber (fig. 05)]. Arriving at the mountain station, you may try to decipher the zippy red lettering above the entrance of the mountain restaurant [n.3, Nathalie Deewan (fig. 06)]. Or your gaze pauses at the inscriptions on the windows around the patio, making you wonder which language these poetic words belong to [n.4, Jani Oswald (fig. 07)]. As you walk up the first hill, the heavy counterweight suspended at the end of a ski lift may catch your attention – the sky above you is strangely mirrored on the lower side of the concrete block [n.5, Niki Meixner (fig. 08)]. Walking across towards the highest lift hut of the mountain, your eyes may be dazzled by the reflection of a shiny aluminium neon sign, evoking memories of fun fairs and urban amusement [n.6, Hans Schabus (fig. 09)]. Over at the next hill, almost in parallel to the Slovenian border at the edge of the wood, is another T-bar ski lift. You see white crosses travelling down slowly, slowly. On closer inspection, you will see what is camouflaged [n.7, Gerhard Pilgram (fig. 10)]. A longer journey, which may leave you a little breathless, takes you to a small alp which serves regional snacks. Over a beer, you may contemplate the circle of artificial cowpats carefully arranged in the pastures [n.8, Cornelius Kolig]. Up towards the Tripoint, seven stations invite reflections on self and other, home

and belonging [n.9, Nataša Sienčnik (fig. 12)]. After passing a gathering of wooden haystacks painted in red [n.10, Ona B. (fig. 13)], you arrive at the real 'Dreiländereck' with its various memorials. The 'Kirchtagshütte' is temporarily transformed into an art gallery, displaying photos of all 48 tripoints in Europe [n.11, Inge Vavra (fig. 14)]. Downwards in the forest, an abandoned Italian barracks may bring up memories of a time full of fear and military deterrence, enhanced by a sound- and video installation [n.12, Inge Vavra (fig. 15)]. Back on the pastures and pistes, another lift-hut houses a tiny cinema [n.13, Céline Struger (fig. 16)]. Now you are already on the way back to the mountain restaurant. You pass the valley-station of another ski lift, where you greet the 'pillars of society': large photographs of the men who run the lifts here [n.14, Johannes Puch (fig. 17)]. After walking up one last hill, you may indulge in homemade 'Kasnudeln' in the restaurant, before taking the lift back down. Again suspended, you are passing the lake which in winter is feeding the snow-machines – now you see the three-dimensional version of the Europe-signs from the beginning of your trip, yellow stars and red-white border barriers floating on the blue lake [n.15]. Once returned to the valley, you may pay a visit at the graceful automaton ballerinas who are doing their after-work dance in the depot of the valley station [n.16, Markus Zeber].

While you have been walking, looking and resting, you have also felt the wind in your hair and the sun on your skin, or you may have taken shelter as it starts raining. Your gaze has enfolded the Dobrasch, the Gail valley, the Julian Alps and the Karawanken mountain range. You may have noticed yellow signs informing you that Slovenian territory begins here, and you may have taken the classic photo of yourself standing partly in Italy, partly in Slovenia and partly in Austria. Besides seeing high-quality artworks, you have also encountered, with body and mind, the cultural landscape at the Dreiländereck

De-centering Contentious Cultural Heritage

In Schwebe – Vse Lebdi – In Sospeso invites us to take in current conflict through the lens of artistic interpretations in a landscape at the margins of Europe. It places a remote mountain area perched between three borderlines at the centre of artistic reflections on current uncertainties. The seemingly idyllic pastures and meadows around the Ofen mountain offer ample aesthetic material to highlight contemporary positions that are 'in limbo' or in 'suspension'. What appears to be detached from the metropolitan buzz of change and perceived progress bears the marks of (de-)industrialisation and (de-)militarisation, of shifting border-regimes, of cultural conflict around language and economic conjunctures such as the rise and decline of skiing tourism in the face of global warming. In this

way, the installation extends the notion of cultural heritage beyond seemingly harmonic objects and activities of touristic value, such as the celebratory driving down of livestock from alpine pastures, the provision of local culinary products, the rendition of folklore songs in choir performances (Kvgfan 2011), or the producing and sharing of videos celebrating not only landscape and folklore, but also, for instance, the Arnoldstein cable car as a particular make of lift (Aig 2016). Making visible the marks of past and present conflict in this landscape reveals how heritage is always contested, conflicted and contentious.

In the 1990s, cultural theorist Stuart Hall (1996) noted: “Now that, in the postmodern age, you all feel so dispersed, I become centred” (114). A Jamaican-born black British-Caribbean scholar, his biography had placed him at the margins of a still colonial system. As the flows of globalisation accelerated, one-dimensional concepts of identity were challenged. Post-colonial subjectivities became models for the new, fluid and multiple identities of the post-modern age. Can heritage be de-centred in a similar way? What happens if the heritage lens is directed at the political and economic margins of Europe, rather than the centres where outstanding products of elite culture are assembled? Marginal regions, especially border regions like the Alps-Adriatic, have never really fitted into a geopolitical model made up of homogenous nations. Have they developed practices and attitudes, an immaterial cultural heritage, which can help Europe in facing contemporary challenges? And if so, can these be shifted to the centre of a new European imagination? Activities like *In Schwebe* demonstrate methods to this end.

The Symbolic Dimension: Practices of Creating Multiple Readings

UNIKUM took on the task of condensing the critical symbolic qualities of the landscape around Dreiländereck in a collaborative process involving artists, companies and political bodies. Over a year, negotiations were conducted with funding bodies, the community council, workers and decision-makers from the company running the lifts and restaurant up at the Dreiländereck/Tripoint, artists were contacted, ideas developed, props and structures were meticulously built and installed. The artistic result is a two-hours art-trail with fifteen stations designed by artists who are, in different ways, familiar with the area. Each station deals with uncertainties: about Europe and the EU, about work and technology, about centre and periphery, nature and industrialisation, war and ideology, subject and society. Ten of the stations are built around lift compounds, machinery and outbuildings as a canvas. The huts of the ski-lifts serve as gallery, plinth or even a cinema. Lift pillars, T-bars and machinery carry objects or are themselves transformed into objects. Restaurant

and cableway-depot acquire new meanings through installations and lettering. Even the lake which feeds the snow-machines during the winter season is turned into an installation. Three stations are set in the landscape: Wooden haystacks painted in red are evoking the agricultural heritage of the area, a circle of artificial cowpats lighted by signal lantern provide commentary on both art and agriculture, and seven white plinths mark an abbreviated 'Via Dolorosa' inviting, with gentle humour, reflections on self and other, identity and belonging. The symbolic cosmology is completed by a sound- and video installation in a small, abandoned Italian military barracks, and an expertly hung photo exhibition of all 48 tripoints in Europe at the *Kirchtagshütte*, which marks the Tripoint

Everyday traces of past and present agricultural and touristic activity, of border-conflict and reconciliation are merging with artistic manifestations to become multi-dimensional, symbolic expressions of a heritage that is not necessarily canonised as such. Instead, *In Schwebe – Vse Lebdi – In Sospeso* leaves it to us as visitors, artists, collaborators or tourists to create meaning and rise questions, as we put our own experiences in interaction with the transformed landscape.

The Social Dimension: People and Networks as a Temporary Community of Practice

Speaking to UNIKUM staff and board members, I get the impression that their work is driven by a passion for *artistic craftsmanship* combined with a critical political position and an intimate sense of caring for the contentious and sometimes apparently doomed cultural heritage inscribed in marginal landscapes of the Alps-Adriatic. Gerhard Pilgram, one of the directors, emphasises that a meticulous realisation can make or break an artistic idea. Details like a missing screw or smudgy lettering can ruin an artwork, while accurate handiwork and careful positioning often enhances a relatively simple idea. To facilitate such *virtuosity* (Virno 2004), UNIKUM relies on networks of people with different roles and skills. The exhibition could not have been realised without careful collaboration between the UNIKUM curators who conceived the project, the artists they invited, the craftsmanship of carpenters and other experts, the workers from the lift association, the landlord of the mountain restaurant, as well as representatives of the community. The lift workers agreed to have their photographs taken and displayed, and expertly presented themselves in the context of their respective skills. They also helped out in the installation process and dealt with the rush of more than 200 visitors at the opening day. The landlord of the restaurant agreed to have the lettering *Alhamdullilah* (Arab for 'thank God') displayed over the entrance of the building, and grew to like it so much that he is willing to keep it – in a political climate where hostility against Muslims is

increasing. He also produced 540 'Kasnudeln' (a Carinthian version of tortellini) for the opening day, and proudly showed me the video documentation of this everyday heritage practice (Bergrestaurant Dreiländereck 2015). A lady who lives nearby would like to place one of the artificial cowpats in front of her house, as a comment on exaggerated cleanliness. The workers from the social business *Soziale Arbeit Klagenfurt* meticulously produced plinths and fittings down to the last screw.

Most of the artists were taken up to the Tripoint to get a feel for the area, and to explore suitable places to install their own work. Objects like Cornelius Kolig's cowpats or Ona B.'s haystacks have been exhibited in many other places before; Nathalie Deewan's Alhamdullilah lettering, although based on previous work with plays of words, emerged as a spontaneous reaction to the place by an artist who has a background of working with refugees and migrants. Conceptual and practical work was deeply intertwined: Celine Struger's (2016) cinema installation and Kolig's cowpats were realised with the help of Niki Meixner; UNIKUM had approached photographer Johannes Puch to create an installation with the lift workers; Nataša Sienčnik's Alpine Orientation Help on contentious identity politics owes much to the meticulous realisation of the plinths at Soziale Arbeit Klagenfurt; and Gerhard Pilgram's Kreuzzug echoes his experience during a co-taught seminar at Klagenfurt University about war memorials in the Alps-Adriatic region. Hands-on support provided by the curators led one artist to the exclamation: 'This is pure luxury!' Rather than having to deal with each detail of her installation on her own, she had become part of an experienced and dedicated team, which took precise production as seriously as herself. Finally, the major of Arnoldstein has signalled interest in future collaborations. Thus *In Schwebe – Vse Lebdi – In Sospeso* generated a thick network of practice-based relationships, building on existing contacts and establishing new ones. While some may well be temporary, others will surely be activated again, and some future collaborations are already on the horizon. A goal-oriented community of practice has come together to realise an exhibition, based on previous relationships and collaborations, and opening future opportunities.

The Economic Dimension: What is the Proof of the Pudding?

Creating meanings and networks is all very well – but does it hold on the level of economic development? UNIKUM is aware that their artistic interventions are, on the economic level, merely a drop in the ocean. According to the landlord of the restaurant, *In Schwebe – Vse Lebdi – In Sospeso* serves as a general advertisement for town and lift, as local newspapers are extensively

reporting. It also brings an extra few hundred visitors who use the chair-lift and may consume food and drink at the restaurant or in the nearby alm-inn, or even stay overnight in Arnoldstein. But can an art project provide a significant positive drive in a region marked by economic decline? It might be more appropriate to examine UNIKUM as one of several players in the region besides tourism and agriculture, and evaluate its collaboration for instance with the Bergbahngesellschaft Dreiländereck cableway company. Despite the general decline of small-scale farming, the Yellow pages list 20 agricultural businesses for Arnoldstein. Cattle are still taken up to the mountain pastures for the summer, and several people continue running small farms in addition to their day-jobs. Arnoldstein never had a purely agricultural economy. Up until the 1990s, it had a century-old tradition of mining led, zinc and copper. According to the Biorem research project, the area has been contaminated for over 500 years. Metal content could be so high that locals were not allowed to feed the grass to cattle, and to grow vegetable in their house gardens (8). After the demise of the Bleiberger Bergwerksunion mining company, the contaminated location was cleaned up, and new businesses were established, most notably the ABRG recycling company. This, in turn, has led to protest most recently in 2015, when it emerged that the company burned highly poisonous HCB (Hexachlorbenzol) contaminated soil. Tourism relies on the Schütt Nature reserve, and on skiing tourism. Built in the 1970s as a major technical attraction, and renewed in the 1990s, the mountain cableway had initially been successful in attracting visitors. The land was leased from local farmers. Over the last decade, decreasing snow levels and climate-change induced warmer temperatures are leading to a decline of winter tourism. A lift-worker stated: ‘When temperatures are mild, even the best snow machines won’t help.’ It is unclear how long the cableway will continue running. The small alp-inn will close this year, as the landlady is retiring. During the Cold War, Arnoldstein owed additional jobs to its location at the Iron Curtain, as military was stationed at the border to the state of Yugoslavia. While the opening of the border with the newly established Slovenia was welcomed, it also meant that the military jobs were lost.

Outlook

The title *In Schwebe – Vse Lebdi – In Sospeso* is long, awkward and complicated. Nevertheless, UNIKUM insists on using all three languages spoken in the area, not only in the title, but also in advertising material, instructions and during its guided tours. English, however, commonly seen as the European lingua franca, is rarely included: German, Slowenian and Italian cover most of the regional linguistic needs. The title directs attention to a cultural heritage in suspension: between Slavic, Indo-Germanic and Romanic cultures, between border-regime and border-crossing,

militarisation and de-militarisation, between idyllic nature and the economic ups and downs of agriculture, mining, skiing and hiking tourism.
Some guests experienced *In Schwebe – Vse Lebdi – In Sospeso* as a pleasant walk in beautiful surroundings with the added benefit of artistic interpretation. Others experience it as a magnifying glass that brings forth current challenges in Europe. Others again are mainly interested in an unconventional art exhibition. For many, it was probably a mixture of all, with the added benefit of sociability. Artistic installations are placed in the pastures, forests and technical compounds. They temporarily transformed a landscape at the European periphery into a space thick with meaning, inviting reflections on memories of war and border regimes, on immigration and cultural cross-overs, on the changing face of everyday life at a time of massive social, cultural, technical and economic change. Europe is happening at its borders.

Today, it is unclear what will become of the area: Will the chair-lift, once a technical attraction in itself, continue to attract visitors? Will a new tenant be found for the small mountain cafe, when the present landlady retires? Will the forest take back the pastures and pistes, will they be extended into an alpine fun fair? Will the area be connected to the flows of globalisation, will new people arrive, like the tenants of the Turkish kebap shop Antolia, as local youths are departing to other parts of the world? On its own, art will hardly provide solutions. However, as an ongoing part of a specific social reality in all its dimensions, it may well add new, forward-looking and hands-on perspectives on European heritage.

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Fading Studies: On counter-technological processes at the House by the Synagogue

Răzvan Anton

In 2016 I joined the team of the Casa de lângă Sinagogă (House by the Synagogue) [-> Communities past and present] as the artist in residence. I come from a visual arts background and have a limited knowledge of local Jewish culture, I also lack the languages required for the in-depth study of other ethnic communities in the region. The collaboration and dialogue with researcher and historian Julie Dawson were essential for studying the context of the archive at the Mediaș synagogue [-> Burdocks].

Certainly, in the past years my practice has shifted in relation to this material and to the way in which I regard a subject today. If up until a few years ago what I produced was, in a way, a modality for filtering things through their own subjectivity, beginning with 2016 and onwards I would say that the visual processes themselves became the modality for investigating a subject and the means with which I explore made discoveries.

Coming from a background of drawing and photography, I found or developed counter-technological and slow processes of working and thinking which allow time and space for the reflection required to understand this subject. Beginning in 2016, I started to incorporate this idea practically, developing and printing images, texts, and documents from the archive, allowing them to develop under the sun [-> Liminal portraits]. Light and time became the medium for filtering this material. Beginning with the plate, the negative or the source of the image, the process may evoke the way in which memory itself develops. Like photographs, memories develop, fade, and perhaps disappear.

This development of memory was, in my case, both a collective and an individual process because an important aspect of this residency included workshops with students, with young people. In the course of these workshops for visual practice, I invited participants to print images coming from the archive of the Jewish communities using silver gelatine paper; the images were developed in natural light in the form of contact prints. The process was apparently unfinished, because the images were not made permanent through a chemical developing process and so in this case they would disappear if they were further exposed to light. After one of these workshops, the participants created an album of ephemeral photographs which would fade if one were to leaf through the book.

I believe this was a collective modality for evoking impressions of the topic of heritage and memory of absent communities [-> Absence as heritage].

Together with the members of the Casa de lângă Sinagogă team, I searched for methods to develop processes which facilitate the study and knowledge of this history, processes through which these stories can become tangible, can appear before the eyes of the participants along with hidden images which acquire contour in the photographic laboratory.

Thinking about, and thinking through the museum, critically

Erica Lehrer

Critical or 'new' museology reflects on institutional authority, collecting practices, and display styles in museums (Butler 2008; Clifford 1988; Karp/ Lavine 1991; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998; Shelton 1990; Vergo 1989; Welsh 2005), and an established body of literature on 'museums and communities' calls for relevance, public engagement, accessibility to broad constituencies, and questioning of longstanding knowledge hierarchies (Jessup & Bagg 2002; Karp et al. 1992; Murray & Witz 2014; Patterson 2016; Sleeper-Smith 2009; Rassool 2006; Rassool & Witz 2008; Watson 2007). But the most current approaches aim to go beyond standard models of academy-museum interaction where scholars simply make these critical observations. Such traditional approaches, while necessary and productive, allow scholars to remain in habitual comfort zones of words, narratives, theory, and specialization, without confronting what it means to think through the physical, social, financial, political, and emotional complexities of the concrete, multi-sensory, and publicly-accountable setting that defines the museum. Imagining beyond Cameron's important and widely-cited 1971 view of the museum as a 'forum', we have been experimenting with an emergent model of museums as active laboratories or workshops for critical practice [-> Awkward objects] (Heller et al 2015; Hiatt 2005; Kratz 2002; Patterson 2011). Beyond being sites for disagreement, debate, and encounter with difficult issues, such 'labs' encourage experiments in, and offer tools for, alternative collections interpretation, place-based curatorial practice, and museum-inspired creativity and critique that engages visitors' knowledge and experience and empowers them to be co-producers. To this end we are working to expand both scholars' and everyday visitors' toolkits with a new vocabulary of critique, strategies of 'creative criticism' (Lehrer & Patterson 2011; Lehrer & Sendyka 2018) and 'theorizing in the concrete' (Simon 1983). Key inspirations have been Kratz & Karp's (2014) 'interrogative museology' and Silverman's (2014) 'slow museology', and our own experiments with Butler and Lehrer's (2016) 'curatorial dreaming,' 'collective curating' , and the overarching approach of 'thinking through the museum' (Lehrer 2015). [1]

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[1] The experimentation described derives from both my work in the project *Awkward Objects of Genocide* and methodologies from the broader project *Thinking Through the Museum* (www.thinkingthroughthemuseum.org), developed in dialogue with Canada-based colleagues Shelley Ruth Butler, Angela Failler, Heather Igloliorte, and Monica Patterson.

Blow-Up Photography

Wojciech Wilczyk

The initial question of the project *Awkward objects of genocide* [-> Awkward objects] concerned whether visual statements made by artists about the Holocaust could be found in Polish ethnographic collections. But others quickly appeared: How should we look at such objects today? What do they actually depict? What are their biographies? Can we treat them as witnesses to murder? What were the artists trying to tell us? What emotions surround them? Who are we – and who do we become – when confronted with these uncanny documents today?

The exhibition *Terribly Close: Polish Vernacular Artists Face the Holocaust* (1.12.2018 – 31.3.2019*)* at the Kraków Ethnographic Museum introduces works from Polish and German ethnographic museums and private collections. These works tell about World War II as seen from up close. They are complex documents born of various impulses: their creators are artists, but also collectors, ethnographers, curators, ideologues. Precisely what they depict, and what they are trying to say, is not always obvious.

Wojciech Wilczyk photographed selected works. His series *Blow-ups* (2016-2018) focuses on the perspectives of the creators as bystanders or witnesses. Wilczyk brings our gazes in line with theirs, looking towards the victims and perpetrators. In dialogue with the original artworks, his series completes the exhibition (see . Here he describes his reasoning for his photographic approach:

While working on the documentary series, *The Innocent Eye Doesn't Exist*, [-> Caduca] the subject of which were synagogues and houses of worship in Poland that aren't performing a sacred function, I decided on a topographical convention of documentation. To some extent, this series also has the features of visual typology, although due to the specificity of the objects, their nonuniform states due to, for example, destruction, and their reconstruction or adaptation to serve other than sacred purposes, we can understand it (which was also important to me) as a typological presentation *à rebours* (against the grain). To differentiate it from a typical photo album, for the book form of the project, I chose the format of a small guide or lexicon, where

photos of the objects are accompanied by descriptions of their histories, as well as records of conversations with people who observed my photographic process.

Photographing Józef Piłat's work, *The Jewish Shop in Dębska Wola* at the National Museum in Kielce, my attention was drawn to the method of presenting the figures. Although the sculpture was inspired or even commisioned by the then-director of the institution, its execution testifies to the artist's affective approach. The figures of the Orthodox Jews, women as well as two men, one older and one young, were sculpted with unusual assiduousness (it's clear that the woman is wearing a wig, which is a rare depiction in naive art). Observing Józef Piłat's sculptures, I resolved to position the macro lens as close to the faces of the presented persons as possible, so that they could be examined in rescaled sizes. In this way, we could see the artist's emotions. I decided to repeat this technique in documenting the other objects in my work for *TRACES* (fig. 1 - 5).

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Shooting in the field: The artist/researcher as an amateur photographer

Jani Pirnat

Accessing museum materials for research or artistic purposes can be quite a challenge. Once you find the objects you are after, there is the question of how to document your findings, for further analysis as well as for public circulation. In our fieldwork on death masks in Slovenian depots and archives [-> Casting Of Death], we found that our amateur photography *in situ* became an important part of the research process, but of what use could those photos be?

The procedures of accessing museum materials often depend on the status of the person trying to access them and their intentions for using them. When we, as the art group *Domestic Research Society*, contacted museums and archives in our search for death masks and data about them, we had a considerably good status. We had successfully taken part in a highly competitive European Union research tender, in collaboration with eminent scientific institutions such as the University of Oslo, Politecnico Milan, or Humboldt University in Berlin. As part of our umbrella project TRACES [-> Introduction], we created a credible platform for death mask research. In a so-called *creative co-production* team which included a research group of scientists from Slovenian heritage institutions (National Library, MGML and Modern Gallery), members of the DRS managed to access death masks in museum depots, galleries, libraries and memorial houses with little complication.

Knowing little about the topic due to a lack of Slovenian research in the field, we began by collecting data on death masks at 127 public institutions which we assumed may have some in their custody. Since TRACES was an internationally financed three-year project with an obligation to deliver results, it was necessary to strategically determine the possible scope, taking into account the available funds and personnel. As heritage professionals working in the limited territory of Slovenia, we already had a considerable amount of personal contacts with professionals in charge of museum collections and memorial centres. At first, we collected the information informally through these personal connections and through death mask records in the public domain. With basic informative infrastructure in place, we began

looking for permissions and started to organise meetings to formally visit the collections. Whenever a possibility to access a death mask arose, we ensured that as many credible scientists as possible were on the team. They were the ones who provided the objects with professional background, credibility, and historical circumstance.

Photography in the field

Every prearranged meeting was an unique event and difficult to duplicate. This is why the researchers' approach in the collecting and documentation phase is very vital. Researchers – whether artistic, sociological, anthropological, or otherwise, should, in our experience, avoid multiplying the obligations of heritage provider collaborators, as they are collaborating voluntarily and sharing their knowledge of the objects in their collections for free. When the research approach and the relationship with the collection gate keepers are more informal in nature, access can be less restrained and information more open and unrefined, which enables a deeper insight into the matter. At the same time, it is smart to think ahead about the means of documenting, the photographic approach and the data collection, so that the materials gained can be used for dissemination of the research project, which happens essentially in the public domain. Field work, such as visiting the heritage keepers, demands a variety of adjustments, depending on the occasion: several levels of accessibility of materials, the physical condition of the objects, different custodians, different layouts and material preparation, documentation, lighting and technical possibilities, personal relations, time of the visit and its duration, technical equipment, mobile phone photo resolutions, viewing angles and circumstances of the shoot, to name only a few. All of these impact on the results of amateur photography endeavours. The compulsive action of manically taking pictures of seemingly useful objects and information might seem adequate while it is happening. The photographic results may serve as an *aide de memoire* or visual field diary, and as a minimum they are crucial for keeping records on the research, since they mark the location and condition of the death mask. However, they are not very useful for dissemination purposes. Enormous amounts of gigabytes of photographs are not particularly helpful when it comes to publications and museum documentation. Most of our photographs from the fieldtrips are not sharp, are badly lit, awkwardly framed, or of questionable colour quality and shot in a hurry.

The mere quantity of photographs taken gave us a lucky photo shot now and then, which we could use for our online database of death masks or for public relations purposes.

Instant photography

What does a research visit with an attempt to make instant photos in a heritage preservation facility feel like? Due to the need for controlled preservation conditions, death masks are usually stored in basement or attic depot labyrinths of public institutions, and that is exactly where we, members of the DRS creative co-production visited them. Among the plethora of chambers, corridors, shelves, and cupboards and without the guidance of a depot worker or a curator, one is easily lost: even if we disregard the museum rules and public institution depot access protocols for a moment, the possibility of discovering death masks by accident is very small. The objects are usually scattered through several different records because of their dual nature: their material and technique place them into the sculpture department together with plaster casts, reliefs, portraits, and monuments, but it is equally likely for them to be listed as part of the local studies collection, having to do with important individuals of a certain time period. Their classification depends on the conservational conditions and the heritage keeper's collection policy. Every preparation of research material in the depot demands a considerable amount of searching for objects, based on the available museum documentation and inventarisation. Years of personal experience in depot work play a significant role, when the depot workers or curators remember where they may have seen a certain death mask. With their connection to death and the deceased, death masks carry enough aura to make people remember their distinct location in the immensity of the collection.

Most collection keepers prepared for our prearranged meetings by placing the death masks nose-up on a big working table. The death masks thus lay in front of us, some mounted on wooden, velvet, or marble consoles, some framed and some not, cast in various materials, such as plaster, bronze, or wax, but most of them with no additions for formal presentations stacked in crates and boxes, packaged for safety in straw, polystyrene, or bubble wrap, with inventory marks in all sorts of places.

The space, lighting, limited access to objects, the preservation conditions, the amount of time available, the dynamics of the visit, subtle inquiries, the informal approach to exchanging as much information as possible – all of this set the tone for a much more successful research

visit than a formal one involving lighting equipment, tripods, a professional photographer, and a bureaucratisation of the process. Trying to remember as much as possible, we as researchers spontaneously reached for phones and cameras and took pictures of the presented objects, the very act of taking pictures immediately creating a distance between us and the museum informers.

Realising that not much material about death masks was to be found, we were most interested in gathering information from the curators and depo personnel about death masks and the phenomenon of casting death masks and, therefore, we weren't focused too much on the quality of our snapshots. Our amateur photographs of the masks were to be used internally as a visual diary, with the oral permission and in direct agreement with the responsible personnel of course, who allowed taking pictures of the situation. In the following stages of the research, however, a need arose for more professional photo shoots of selected death masks, which would allow for the use of the resulting photographs in public presentations and for inventory documentation. Because the conditions in the institutions vary due to the difference in funding, every use of photographs in public media, research blogs, personal, and public social media could result in debate and critique within the museum profession. That is why it is important to agree on a set of ethical principles within any research group, which regulates how and when photographs can be published, who they can be presented to and who is part of the decision-making process for publishing.

One of the prospective results of our project had been a data collection on death masks in Slovenian public institutions, which was to be published in the long-term online archive Sistory, developed by the Institute of Contemporary History. For this purpose, impulsive amateur photography did not suffice: we needed quality documentation. This led us to recognise a need to connect with a professional photographer, experienced in museum documentation, inventarisation, and museum publication, in order to maintain a certain quality of our visual material. Wishing to produce useful visual documentation, complying with higher durability standards, we invited the photographer Matevž Paternoster and together with him tried to create a prototype model of standardised documentary photography of death masks in the controlled environment of ŠČIT conservational centre photography studio of Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana [-> Shooting like a Pro]. This also allowed us to experience the difference in output between our amateur documentary photography for

research purposes only and professional museum photography of the same death masks, but intended for 'permanent' public use.

Photographs: Dometic Research Society archives, 2016 – 2017, photos taken with Samsung SM-T210 tablet, HTC Desire 825 and Huawei KIW-L21 mobile phones.

Shooting like a Pro: A museum photographer's perspective on a study on death masks

Matevž Paternoster and Jani Pirnat

Photography and sculpture possess different characteristics in terms of temporal and spatial dimensions. Every photographer trying to represent the documentary 'truth' of the sculptural is faced with the challenge to convey three-dimensional objects through a two-dimensional medium such as photography.

The purpose of a death mask as an object is to symbolically prolong the presence of an important deceased member of society, and as such, this object unites the material and the symbolical continuance. The material continuance of a sculpture or a relief is gradually weathered down with the passing of time and constantly changes its appearance due to its specific durability and the place in which it is kept. When we face this condition *in situ*, we have no insight into previous stages of the object's appearance. We can try to ignore the current condition and idealise the mask as it might have been in the past, but this is just our imagination. A photograph, however, itself being prone to decay (analogue photography to material and digital photography to technological decay), enables us to witness a past moment. The photograph can never replace the object itself, but what it can do is to become the basis for evaluating the material condition of the object's past. If there is a need for it, it can be reinterpreted in the present. Documentary photography of a certain item's condition is an inevitable tool for conservators, restoration specialists, curators, and other history and museum researchers alike. The mere inventarisation of museum items requires some sort of standardised photography. Other museum projects, such as publications, catalogues, exhibitions etc., demand a consensus of writers, editors, researchers, and photographers to maintain a standard and to unify the expected effect of photography on its target audience. This usually means making a compromise between everybody involved. There is no exact recipe for photo shoot settings for specific types of museum items. Every one of them has a particular character and demands a particular approach, just as every museum, as a client ordering photos, has a particular character and particular demands.

Within our creative co-production team *Casting of Death* [-> Casting of death], impulsive amateur photography of death masks in museum depots and memorial centres resulted in a series of blurry, badly lit, awkwardly framed photographs of questionable colour quality and

low resolutions [-> Shooting in the field]. This experience led us to recognise our need for a professional photographer, experienced in museum documentation, inventarisation, and museum publication, in order to maintain a certain quality of the visual material. We connected with the museum photographer Matevž Paternoster. He took over the professional photographic documentation of our work in the controlled environment of ŠČIT conservational centre photography studio of MGML.

Domestic Research Society proposed a death mask photo shoot with the following guidelines: visible materiality of the item, recognition of the cast person, a degree of documentary usefulness, and a degree of usefulness for potential publications and exhibitions. These provisions turned out to be very wide. Paternoster, although being faced with a relatively mundane documentary task, needed to decide which approach to use in each individual case. In order to fulfil ours, the client's vision, he decided to conduct a study; the vision in this case being a study of documentary death mask photography for the needs of Domestic Research Society's involvement in the European TRACES project. Here, anthropological, quasi-observational, realism was present again. DRS dictated the photographer (observed subject by DRS) to perform a particular task, in this case doing a study of death masks photography, asking of him to pretend that he was conducting the documentary photography of the same items for somebody else not related to TRACES. So, the very sincere photographer's position to independently carry out the commission was being compromised by DRS guidelines and their interference. After the work was done, we interviewed Matevž Paternoster. In the following, he discusses the challenges of our project on death masks through the lens of his many years of experience as a museum photographer (fig.1 - 3).

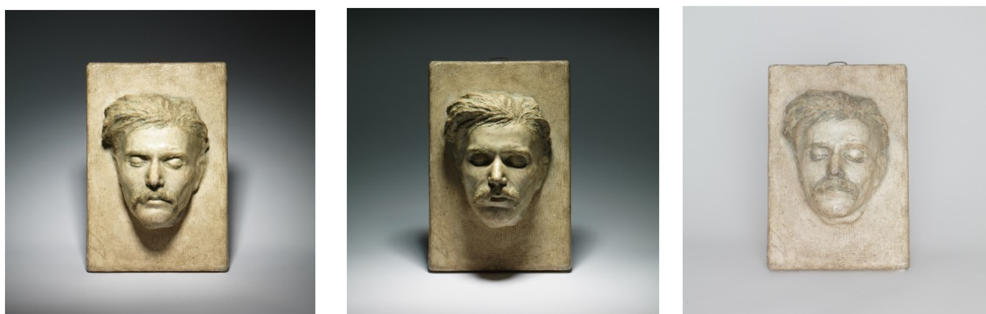
Jani Pirnat (JP): Could you describe the technical aspect of the environment and equipment in which you photographed the death masks?

Matevž Paternoster (MP): The space surrounding the objects should be neutral. The backdrop depends on the object, but with the masks I mostly used a white backdrop with a slight grey gradient, which occurred as a result of the weakening of light. That is how you extract the colour component. Depending on the reflectivity of a certain object, the use of an either black or minimally reflective white backdrop is possible. The latter makes the object pop out, becoming more noticeable, so the viewer focuses on it more easily.

The only light source used was a Profoto flash and that remained the same throughout the study. The intensity was regulated depending on the expected depth of field, and the light formers were altered. This is a way to direct the light from above to mimic the angle of the sun, as this is the most natural way to light a human face. With professional lighting equipment, we are able to alter the light rays' angles of incidence, as well as reflections and the sharpness of contours.

To ensure constant conditions, the masks were fixed to the background. When we compare several photos of the same mask, we discover a sort of typology, an animation illustrative of the changes in expression and interpretation of the face as the consequence of light modulation. One could keep a photography diary as well and document the layout, light positions, backdrop, conditions of the photoshoot, and later reinterpret a past photograph through this information. This way, the working conditions could be recreated at another point in time. These comparisons are useful in conservational procedures and in the logging of a museum item's condition through time.

The camera used was a Hasselblad (H4D 50MS). The lens is a medium telephoto lens with 210mm focal length, the equivalent of the 135mm Leica format. Photography settings are derived from portrait photography and engage a slightly flattened version of perspective, which is more appropriate for the motive of a portrait (fig. 4 - 6).



JP: We can compare the materials used for death masks, for example the economist Kotnik's death mask, cast in plaster and embedded in a plaster base, or the musician Slavko Osterc's plaster mask without base on one hand, and the politician Albert Kramer's mask, cast in bronze on a marble base, on the other. It is one thing to take a picture of the politician, artist, or scientist represented by the death mask on a personal level with all their characteristics and physical features, but another to interpret the mask as a museum artefact, a means to document history. Is a certain neutrality required in photography as well, given that you did not know the portrayed person? If someone is trying to document a posthumous portrait, is it their place to decide the person's character? Is there a type of 'political correctness' at play in this kind of photography?

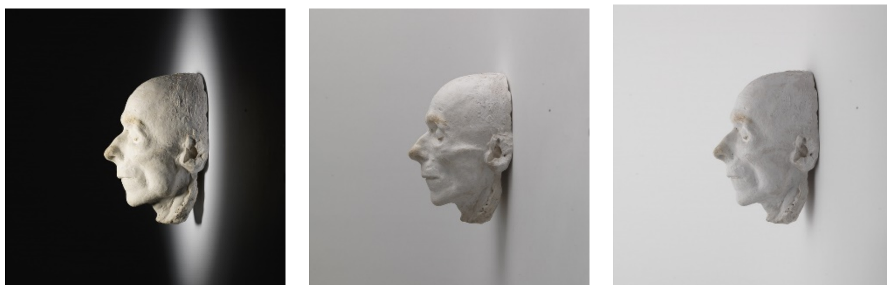
MP: The photograph might be the only thing left of the museum item, if this item is damaged or not available in the future. That is why it is necessary to try to produce valid information and not to distort the current reality of the item. As we know, photography as a medium is subjected to manipulative processes and can be easily changed. It is important to point out that the approach to documentary photography should be as neutral as possible and the author should not be in the spotlight. From my perspective: I am often trying to exclude myself from the process or yield totally to the purpose of documentation. There is no place for the ego here.

In my experience, viewpoints often start to merge. When the curator prompts me to work, one of the first questions to him/her is: "What is the basic topic – the context?" Depending on that, we decide on a viewpoint – a visual code. Every individual perceives the contents differently, so a dialogue is initiated to look for a compromise. This is how the same object can get two or more different interpretations, all depending on the context. In case of death masks, one must decide whether the subject/person or the object/mask is more important. This decision is the drive of the process and, vice versa, that process spurs the decisions. Therefore, it is not necessary to invent a generic prototype process of documentary photography. However, a repeatable process could be determined for a specific object type.

But in spite of the documentary approach, every death mask is a case of its own. In the search for a certain topology of documentary photography, we often look for a compromise.

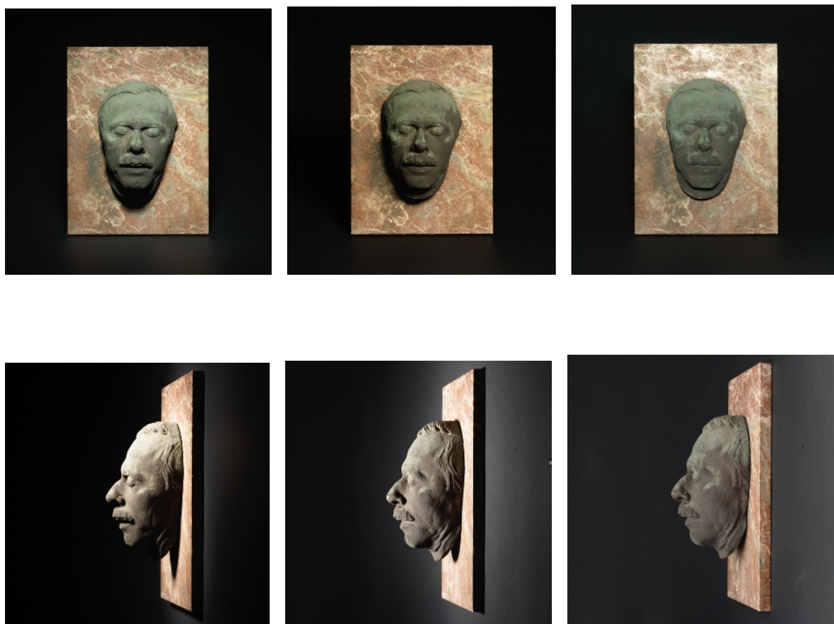
JP: What about lighting and angle experiments?

MP: The goal of the experiment was to understand what light, as the source of radiation, and later the modulation of light and shadow can create. It demonstrated how, by altering the direction and angle of the rays from a single light source through light formers, the character of the portrayed object is affected. In one case, a beam of light is directed as parallel as possible to produce sharper core and cast shadows, in another, the angle of light incidence can be widened to produce softer, more diffused shadows. Of course, there is a whole spectrum of variations between these two extremes. During the experimentation, one should pay attention to the object, as the smallest change in the position of the light source can drastically affect the interpretation. The face can become flattened if the light falls parallel to the viewing angle, while, on the other hand, we overcome all contour stylisations when the contra light falls from the opposite direction. At the same time, the experiment tested the concept of a single light source, which is a principle known from nature, as we only have one sun. One light, one problem; more lights, more problems.
The lighting study was created exclusively to present the options to the DRS and to look for a common point of view on how to interpret the death masks. Is it more importantwhat the person looked like physically or are we looking for an object, a casting in space. In terms of documentation, both aspects are of value (fig. 7 – 9).



~~*Fig 3. Lighting study of the composer Slavko Osterc's death mask (1895 – 1941). Material: plaster. MGML collection.*~~

Plaster is relatively photogenic, manageable in terms of light, and the core shadows of plaster are produced very easily. Modulation of light positively affects the object. Bronze, on the other hand, is a darker material, absorbing most of the light, and demands a more potent light source. If we try to achieve a similar experience of plasticity as with plaster, this creates a 'harder' light and more contrasts. If we set a certain 'reception' of the photograph for plaster, it is completely useless with bronze and adjustments are needed, especially because of the core shadows and the texture of the bronze death mask (fig. 10 – 15).



In the particular case of the Slovenian politician Albert Kramer, the bronze death mask is presented on a marble base which, because of the direct contact, catches the cast shadow. In visual terms, it is more dramatic and calls for individual treatment. That is how one is faced with the challenge of solving this effect *in situ*. With a light reflector, a part of incident light was returned to the object and, as a result, the additional lighting softened the cast shadow and alleviated its intensity. Generally, I try to relieve museum items of their shadows. That does not mean to eradicate them completely, but to soften them and emphasise the object in the least invasive way for the viewer. A simple example of this is lighting the death mask

from below, which produces a theatrical horror effect, which is not the purpose with documentation. Besides all this, the personal relationship between the client and the photographer changes as well. Today, you see it in a certain way, tomorrow in another.

In the realm of documentary photography, one can also approach the death mask by employing technical points of view: top, side, and front view. We also know these from police files. But as direct an approach is, in my experience, quickly broken by anomalies, such as a certain museum item's specific characteristics, the condition of the object, the base, whether the mask is secured on a base or not, how it is placed into space etc. The object sometimes does not allow its placement in specific positions and prevents the standardised procedure. The other possibility is of course post-production and digital manipulation of the photograph, which is often used for commercial purposes, but in my opinion, due to its lack of credibility, retouching is not an appropriate method for museum documentation.

JP: So, the shadow collar produced on the marble base of a top-lit death mask should be visible?

MP: From my perspective: yes, absolutely. However, as an element it could potentially be disruptive to the interpretation. Another option is physically dismantling the museum item, if the rules, the responsible people, the condition of the item and the professional technical equipment allow doing so. The situation is similar with framed paintings. Is the frame part of the artwork or not? Moreover, what to do when the frame covers a significant part of the motive or the signature?

JP: But there has to be some difference between taking pictures in the depot with a mobile phone and a professional studio photoshoot. Could you describe the basic characteristics of the latter?

MP: Besides having a professional camera and lenses, much can be achieved by controlling other elements as previously mentioned; to simplify, this means neutral backdrops, studio space and even lighting, comparable to natural light on a dry cloudy day. The light source should create a soft plasticity without exaggerating contrasts. A medium telephoto lens should be used to improve the photogenic properties of the object. A slight colour calibration in

terms of ensuring constant studio conditions, which help to avoid colour misinterpretation, is an advantage. The digital file should be set to maximum quality.

JP: What should the digital photo file format be?

MP: In the times of analogue photography, there were positives, diapositives, or negatives, in colour or in black and white. You could come back to the beginning and decide again and again, depending on the specific use of the photo. Today, in digital times, we have the RAW file or digital negative, which is in some ways comparable to what used to be the analogue negative. Every camera producer has their own raw file format, which can be challenging in terms of how fast technology develops, for example when trying to transfer from and to digital archives and between different devices. For the most part, the client wants a useful file, which would have already been corrected and processed. In this case, the digital negative is only a starting point and is often discarded, which I find quite problematic. The digital negative is a source of an enormous amount of data and allows for repeated interpretation, which can never happen with an already manipulated and infringed file.

JP: What is usually handed over for documentation?

MP: A previously prepared file in standard .tiff file format of maximum quality. In the case of a digital negative, it would be useful for the photographer and the content custodian to keep the file record open, so all of the steps of digital manipulation are visible and reversible. This way, all decisions could be re-evaluated. In the case of Albert Kramer's death mask, the previously mentioned shadow collar could be removed, while at the same time it is kept in the original file to show it existed.
The final photo file handed over for archival documentation is agreed to be 45x45cm in size, with a 300dpi resolution, in Adobe RGB colour space, with all of the layers flattened, which means the processing steps will not be visible. The format will be .tiff compressed to .zip. This is the standard internal agreement, derived from available archive space and use.

JP: What is the role of a colour chart in this context?

MP: It helps to ensure a high level of colour reproduction. This is a very technical area, where you use the camera producer's colour charts to white balance and, at the same time, to get information about most colour shades. These industrial etalons, which, by the way, have an expiration date after which the colours alter, so they need to be changed regularly, help us to establish basic parameters, which then serve in all of the steps of the photograph's use, but mostly for online purposes and in print etc. This information is generally attached to the RAW file but is lost when transforming the file to lower resolutions. To comply with standards, these parameters should be in place and should not be missing.

In museum documentary photography, my principle is to create everything in the process of taking pictures. That is why I avoid postproduction. In spite of museum photography being exposed to similar procedures as commercial photography, I am trying to stick to the basics. The visual image of the contents can be severely altered when trying to recreate the desired effect for public use, and it makes me wonder about the visual literacy of clients and users. To make a museum item look like a commercial one can be problematic. How does the visitor experience the exhibition and the artefacts? What impression do the layouts and the lighting make? Is it the photographer's task to recreate this atmosphere through the photograph? The viewpoint of the photographer, taking pictures of an object in space, can be quite different from what the visitor, curator, or museum worker sees and feels when exposed to the original.

Reflexive photography and the transformation of shock – an interview

Tal Adler and John Harries, with Harriet Merrow

This text is based on an interview, which took place via Skype on 11 October 2018, between John Harries, a senior teaching fellow in Social Anthropology at the University of Edinburgh, and Tal Adler, an artist and researcher with the Centre for Anthropological Research on Museums and Heritage (CARMAH) at the Humboldt University of Berlin. The original interview lasted about an hour and half. Harriet Merrow, a student assistant at CARMAH, transcribed the interview, resulting in a document of over 11,000 words. This transcript was edited by John Harries and Tal Adler, with input from Marion Hamm, to bring it down to approximately 4,000 words. Much has been deleted, headings have been inserted and some work has been done to render our conversation more readable.

For the purposes of this conversation, John, the anthropologist, was the interviewer and Tal, the artist, was the interviewee and the subject of the interview was Tal's work as an artist and his reflections upon that work. By the time of the interview, we had, however, known one another for more than 2 years. We came to know each other by working on the *Dead Images* project, which was part of a larger project, funded by an EU Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, entitled TRACES (Transmitting Contentious Cultural Heritages with the Arts).

A short description of the project and the project's team is available in part 1 of this companion [-> Dead Images], but for the purposes of orientation: *Dead Images* was the work of a core team consisting of Linda Fibiger (an osteoarchaeologist at the University of Edinburgh), Joan Smith (an artist and teacher at the Edinburgh College of Art), Maria Teschler-Nicola (a physical anthropologist and former director of the Anthropology Department at the Natural History Museum of Vienna) and Anna Szöke (an art historian at the Humboldt University of Berlin), as well as Tal and John.

At the heart of our undertaking was the ambition to print and exhibit a very large panoramic photograph of a cabinet displaying over 8,000 skulls at the Natural History Museum of Vienna. The exhibition, including the printed photograph, was planned over two years. It was installed across three studio spaces at the Edinburgh College of Art and opened to the public

at the end of June 2018. It closed at the end of August, having been seen by over 1,500 visitors.

As discussed in the interview, we realised from the outset that this was a problematic photograph and much of our thinking, talking, and planning was concerned with how we may display a problematic photograph in a thoughtful, respectful way, which did not transform it into a mere spectacle, but rather provoked critical thought, reflection, and conversation about photography as a medium and media for engaging with contentious and difficult histories.

So, the *Dead Images* exhibition did not simply show the photograph but was built in such a way that the encounter with the photograph was preceded by a series of four videos, edited from interviews which Tal conducted with 22 people from various backgrounds. In an adjacent studio was the *Information Lounge*, which was designed as an interactive exploratory space where visitors could find more information about the gathering of skulls shown in the photograph, give feedback on the exhibition, and enter into conversation about the issues raised by the project. In another space, a *dark room* was constructed, in which there was a multichannel video installation, based on Tal's conversation with Wolfgang Reichmann, the photographer of the Anthropology Department at the Natural History Museum of Vienna, concerning their photographic archive, which is also discussed below.

In some ways, therefore, the photograph was at the centre of our work but in other ways it was the means and medium for creating a space for conversations about the problematic legacy of skull collecting which is materialised in the craniological collections still held in public institutions in Europe. The exhibition, as well as associated events (such as artist tours, a conference, lunchtime talks), provided a forum for these conversations. But conversations also preceded and were enfolded into the exhibition.

There were many such conversations: between members of the core team, but also with many others, some, but not all, of which were videoed by Tal and became the basis for the video pieces integrated into the exhibition. Some of these people are named in this interview. One is Margit Berner, a curator with the Anthropology Department at the Natural History Museum of Vienna. Another is James Riding In, a Professor of Criminology and American Indian Studies at Arizona State University. Another person who is mentioned in the interview is

Karin Schneider, an arts education researcher with the Zurich University of the Arts, who is also involved with TRACES and has previously collaborated with Tal on other projects.

This piece is, therefore, a document of conversation that sits within a history of conversations solicited by the *Dead Images* project in which we reflect upon what it is to photograph that which maybe should not be photographed and to bring that image into public view.

The shock of encounter

John Harries: So, just to kick off, you've told this story to me before, and to many people, about the skull collection at the Natural History Museum of Vienna and the photograph you created — a panoramic photograph of a portion of that skull collection displaying more than 8,000 skulls, which are on shelves in a corridor in the Natural History Museum of Vienna — how did you come to take that photograph?

Tal Adler: So, what I didn't tell yet, is that when I first encountered the collection, it wasn't because I was looking for it, and I didn't know it was there. My interest was elsewhere. When I first started living in Vienna, in 2009, I told a friend, colleague, Karin Schneider, about my interest in Natural History Museums. Karin asked her friend, Margit Berner – a curator of the anthropology department at the Natural History Museum of Vienna – if we can go and visit the depot, the storages. And Margit Berner agreed to give us a tour. At that time, I was only thinking about stuffed animals, yeah? I was engaged with a long-term project about human-animal relationships and Natural History museums. I thought she would take us to the storages and we'll see all these elephants and stuff. However, the first place Margit Berner took us, and it was also the last — she took us directly to the skull cabinet, and…

J: Did she take you to the skull cabinet to show you…? Or was it just in passing, or…?

T: Definitely to show it. So, it was something like, Karin Schneider probably said, "I have this friend, Tal, from Israel. The artist. He's interested in Natural History museums." And Margit Berner said, "Ok." And straight, without any introductions or anything, took us straight to the skull cabinet. It was a very long cabinet with glass doors, built into the wall of the corridor of the anthropology department, stretching from the floor up to the high ceiling. Inside this cabinet, on shelves, thousands of human skulls were organised, one next to

another, and in three rows to the depth of the cabinet. Many of them had inscriptions and numbers on them and on the little paper trays they were sitting in.

Needless to say, I was shocked. I was *really* shocked. It was … you know, it's huge. And all these skulls... And I think I wasn't prepared for that. It was also that I never saw skulls like that before. In Israel it's not common to have, you know, Catholic displays of human remains. And if I saw a skull, whether it's in a film, or as a symbol, I never thought about it too much. I guess I always had an idea of a kind of a generic skull, in which the skulls looked the same, more or less. Like, when you draw the symbol for poison, or for pirates — you know, very simply, with the two holes for the eyes and the two bones crossed over it...

So, Margit Berner took us to this cabinet, and she started explaining. And she had a lot of content that she wanted to deliver. You see, Margit's main research interest is their difficult collections – the colonial and the Nazi heritage of the collections at the Anthropology Department. And so, I already had this huge shock of seeing these thousands of skulls, all the way up to the ceiling in front of me. And then she was bombarding me with information about colonial times and Nazi times and how the skulls were collected. And it was a crazy experience. A very, very strong experience that stayed with me for a long time.

Of course, as an artist, I wanted to do something with it, about it, on it, but I didn't really know what. Most of my previous projects, in a way, dealt with blind spots. Things that are hidden, things that are bothering, and things that maybe many people don't know but should know about or should discuss. And here it was, you know, this huge, crazy thing. So, that's how it started.

Photographing skulls

In 2012, I created a panoramic photograph of the 30-metre-long cabinet in which the skulls start from the first inventory numbers up to 8,549. It's the same cabinet that Margit Berner showed Karin Schneider and me back in 2009.

And when I photographed it, I knew that it's going to be a very problematic photograph. It *is* a very problematic photograph. Because what struck me in the beginning – the first time I saw the skulls in this cabinet, back in 2009, was the objectification of lives. *This* was for me the

big shock. And then, I thought, "Ok, but when I'm photographing them, I'm creating another object. Maybe I'm objectifying them more. Or again. Do I have a permission to photograph them? Do I have a permission to exhibit it?" But I really wanted to figure it out.

And so, that's why I did photograph the cabinet, but I didn't exhibit the photograph for the next six years.

J: Now, just taking us back to the actual making of the photograph: Tell me a little bit about the technicality of making the photograph.

T: Ok. So, first of all, there was a decision to photograph the cabinet. Yeah? I had to think and to decide that I really do need, or should, or want to photograph it. And again, from the beginning, I knew it's a challenging, dilemma-provoking photograph. So, I had a lot of thinking about it: What to do with it, and how to exhibit it, if at all?

I thought about this initial shock that I had when I first encountered the collection, and what was shocking about it: While Margit Berner was talking about the history of the collection, I slowly came nearer to the glass doors. I started looking very closely at one of the skulls, staring at it, examining its features, the shape of the eye sockets, cheek bones, jaws... Then, I started staring at the skull next to it. I clearly saw how different and unique each one was.

So, for me this was the 'ah ha' moment. That I saw different individuals on the same shelf. Not objects, not generic skulls, but faces. People. And then I just looked up and I saw these masses! They were stacked there, like books on shelves. Like objects. Thousands and thousands of them.
So, this was the shock. And I thought, ok, if I want to convey this to the public and discuss with the public: Why are the skulls there? What should be done with them? Then maybe, through this experience that *I* had, maybe I should actually photograph the whole cabinet.

This is why it was important to have this high-resolution camera. I mean, the idea was that after I shoot the panorama in many separate sections, travelling parallel to it, and then digitally reconnect it, reconstruct it, I will be able to print a very detailed, life-size print. Three meters high and 31 meters long. And this is why it was very important to divide the shooting into so many exposures, moving the camera – and with this movement, also the perspective –

in front of each section and each exposure. It was a calculation of the resolution of the files this camera produces, the distance of the camera to the cabinet, the size of the images and how large we can print it. So, I made this calculation, and realised that, with this specific camera and 120 exposures, it would be a very, very detailed, super-photographic print – if I printed it life-sized.

And it might seem simplistic, but I wanted to – through the experience, or the *shock* experience that I had – to allow a broader public to discuss the very difficult heritage and history – histories – of such collections.

So, for me, it's quite different than a 'documentation of the space'. There are probably many photographs of this corridor. The museum allows guided tours to pass by this cabinet. And they don't forbid photography. So, people photograph this cabinet with their phones, or with their cameras and sometimes also share it on social media. And of course, I could have just gone there and made one click, or two clicks, and that's it. And this might have been a 'documentation of the space'. But for me, as you said, it was a reconstruction. The first time I saw the panorama after it was stitched – digitally put together – it looked really weird, eerie. Almost like something was wrong with it. It took me a few seconds to figure out what it was: It was the repetition of the perspective!

You see, conventional panoramas are taken with the camera rotating on one axis, no matter how many exposures are made. I used the highly unconventional travelling or multiperspective panorama; which, by the way, also made it a real challenge to stitch as there is no software or algorithm to automate the stitching of this kind of panorama. In addition, before the shooting I removed the cabinet's dusty glass doors that are also layered with a protective foil that obstructs the viewing of the skulls.

So anyway, stitched together, this panorama created a new, *very* different way of seeing the cabinet, which for me felt almost schizophrenic at first and took me a long time to get used to.

J: But of course, as you said, it was a reconstruction. It is a photograph of the *real* cabinet. Was the aim to collapse that distance between the image and the cabinet of skulls that is in the Natural History Museum of Vienna? Or did you want people also to think about and

contemplate that relationship between the image before them and that which preceded the image, which was the cabinet of skulls and your encounter with the cabinet of skulls?

T: I think there are two things that are interesting here.

One is about details. What happened to me, when I came close to the skulls, I started to look at details. And suddenly I saw faces. I saw individuals. Subjects. And at the same time, I also experienced the masses, and the anonymity these individuals were placed in. This dissonance, in a way, was the shock.

So, it was very important for me to allow for details.

The second thing is, what also happened to you, when you went to Vienna and saw the cabinet. You start walking along the cabinet. You take a few steps backwards, and you come forward. And you continue to walk. Even though there are 'only' skulls there: Another skull, and another skull, and another skull... But still, people walk along the cabinet and look at the skulls. Because these skulls are actually people. And so, that's the reason why I wanted to have *this* kind of panorama, that allows walking along it. And looking up. And to, all the time, see it front of you. And see details. You can always, at any point, come closer and see more details. And see the person that is there as a skull now. And you can move backwards and see the entire cabinet. See the masses.

And so, you actually *see* this phenomenon, this chapter in the history of science, of collecting skulls, in masses.

So, I think the combination of these two things, to have this realisation that on the one hand we have individuals here, and at the same time we have a mass-grave. A violated mass-grave, because they are not buried there. They are put on shelves. So… It's an extreme situation. This cabinet is extreme. No matter if I'm super excited about it or super upset about it, it's clear that it's extreme.
So, I wanted to allow the visitors to really *think* about the individuals through the details of this big thing, and to be able to encounter all of them.

Problematic entanglements

J: Just to think a little bit more about the photograph itself, and indeed photography more generally as a media and a medium for bringing difficult histories, or histories that societies and individuals perhaps are reluctant to encounter, talk about, acknowledge, to light. Would you think that photography as a medium and a media has a distinct role to play in that work? Or does it have qualities and affordances that distinguish it between other medium and media for undertaking that work of bringing situations and difficult histories, contentious histories, before the public?

T: Yes. So, if you remember the panorama, there are these wooden doors in the middle of the cabinet. At first, I didn't know what's behind them, but before I completed the panorama I didn't want to ask too many questions that might compromise my chances of pursuing this project. So, when I was shooting the cabinet, I included these wooden doors and exposed them in sections, just as I did with the rest of the cabinet, although for me they were a kind of disturbance and I was considering not including them or deleting them later on.

So, after the panorama was finally stitched, in 2013, I went back to the museum with Anna Szöke, who at that time had just joined the project as an art historian and curator, to visit Maria Teschler-Nicola, who was the head of the Anthropology department. We showed her a small print of the panorama, and Anna asked her general questions about the collection. Then, before leaving, I asked her what was behind these… What are these doors actually? And she said, "Oh, come I'll show you" And we went from her room, down to the skull cabinet, and she opened the main door, and this was the second 'shock' or moment of realisation for me. That was very, very important also for the evolution of the project. Because behind this door was the original photo laboratory – the darkroom – of the Anthropology department. This is where they produced and developed and printed all their photographs or the films that they had made. And behind the two narrower doors on both sides of the laboratory door, were hundreds of glass plate negatives, stored in their original wooden boxes. Mainly anthropometry, type photography… Very problematic photographs. So, we're talking about late 19th, early 20th century photography. Very intrusive, violent, unethical... And I saw it and I was completely blown away. Because these closed doors that appeared in my photograph represented the history of the entanglement of photography with this kind of racist science, in a way. This objectification of people, either through numbering and classifying their bones, or by photographing people as specimens to racialise them. It was all there, behind these doors.

And I thought, you know, 'Exactly!' This validated or re-affirmed my decision to use photography as the artistic medium for this project. To create this panorama, to print it life-size, and to talk about the role of photography. But then it also enabled me not to use the panorama as 'a document', but as the thing itself.

So, the project not only talks about collections of human remains and their implications, but at the same time, it's about photography. About the history of photography and how it's entangled with the history of anthropology and racism in science. And colonialism. And genocide. And the Holocaust.

Other perspectives

J: In the exhibition itself, the viewing of the photograph is preceded by, and mediated by a series of videos edited from the interviews you did with a wide range of people: from Native American academics and activists to curators of the Natural History Museum of Vienna. But why was it important that before the public actually encountering the photograph, that they would hopefully encounter and sit through and think about this series of videos edited together – created by editing together a series of video interviews? What was the thinking behind that?

T: What we realised early on, in talking about the project, or planning it, was that we wanted to use multi-perspectivity. So, not to have either my experience or Margit Berner's experience, or Maria Teschler-Nicola's experience mediated, for example, but to allow the audience to understand the very complex condition of these collections. It's not only about repatriation, but it's also not only about human evolution. It's about many other things, about the history of photography, even. Right?

So, when people go to the exhibition – whatever they decide, it's fine with me. I didn't want to force anyone to first see the videos and then see the panorama – if at all. But it was important for me to have the videos very present and important, so that *if* you decide to see the panorama, I really wanted people to look at the videos as well.

And this is also, you know… It's been a few years that I've been working around this photograph, from 2012. And in this time, I spoke with so many different people. And the ones whose opinion mattered a lot were the people who said that they might be offended by the photograph. Because, it's fine if people are happy about it and enjoy the photograph. It's all fine with me. But if I know that some people can be offended, I have to be extra-careful. So, I have to make sure that I don't make these mistakes that offend people who are living today. We have already offended the dead. But at least I have a responsibility for people who come to the exhibition.

As I said, it was very important for me that visitors also see the videos, or at least some of the videos. And the point was to not let the panorama serve as a spectacle. The best example for this was what James Riding In, professor for American Indian Studies at the Arizona State University, said in his interview. I asked him – what I ask everyone – "Do you think the photograph should be exhibited?" And he's uncomfortable with it, and he says, "Well, you know… if this exhibition will help to—," and he talks about helping repatriation processes and help museums realise that they should return ancestors to their descendants, to their communities. He says, "If this exhibition manages to do that, then I say, Ok. But again, I have to say, there is something very wrong about it as well."

So, there might be reasons why to exhibit it. But we also have to acknowledge that, for some people, it's very, very uncomfortable and bothering. And that's why I wanted to have the videos: to display the spectrum of issues with these collections and the conflicts around them. But also, that it's not only about repatriation, and it's not only about those skulls that were taken unethically during colonial times. It's also about science and the quest for understanding who we are, where we come from, how did we live in the past? Maybe it can shed light on how we live in the present and in the future... Medical research, and so on. So, this is why I also interviewed the staff that works at the Anthropology department and other scientists who work with other kinds of bones, on other kinds of research. Not to keep the panorama only as an art spectacle, but to explore the complexity of this issue. It's a conceptual art project and it has different elements that have to fit in, within this concept.

Burdensome images

J: Do you think there's a risk, more broadly, with photographs and photography, and particularly photography as a medium for mediating difficult histories? That the photograph can become a mere spectacle? … What I'm referring to, because it's a well-rehearsed argument around photographs – particularly of human suffering which invite an empathetic, and through that an ethical response. But you're saying that – I don't want to put words in your mouth – that, even though they may do so, there is a real risk that those photographs are not properly contextualised or understood. That they actually reproduce various forms of violence that you are seeking to critique. Is that a fair concern, do you think?

T: Yes. And also, I think, on a very pragmatic level – and this is why I really wanted that we take people's phones and cameras away – because it's very, very easy to photograph something, and then it's all over the place. In seconds.

J: Why is that problematic?

T: It's a problem because of context. It's always a matter of context. Because if we put a lot of effort and thinking in saying, "Look, some images could be offending." And we *interview* people that talk about *their* experience with these images, and with displays of human remains in a museum, and how problematic and offending it is, personally, for *them*. And we say, "Yes, we hear you. We understand you. We will work around it, to respect you." You know, I establish relationships with my interviewees. And it's almost like a kind of a promise, because I tell them that I'm planning to restrict the viewing of the panorama and that I'm honestly interested in their opinion and critique… And *then* I allow people – because of negligence, maybe – to photograph this thing that we worked so hard to contextualise and so much was invested in this research, you know… and then people can just post it all over.

This is what I meant when I said it's a question of context. I mean, people can now go, tomorrow, to the Natural History Museum, photograph it, and upload it. And they do it! But in our case, we said that it's very important for us, how we control the image and the feelings that this image evokes for some people. Then of course, it's a problem for me if people use *this* image – *my* image – *with* the name of the exhibition, and then post it, and offend the people that I'm supposed to take care of: My interviewees, and my audience who cares about it.

J: And finally – and this is verbatim a question you asked many people: What do *you* think of the photograph of the skull cabinet? Is it OK to photograph the skulls? Should it be displayed? Would you like to see it? And would you recommend seeing it?

T: Yeah. So, it's tough, you know. So, I did ask people this question, because I really did want to know. And I can't say that I have a definite answer. And as I said before, things changed for me during the process of working on the project, also in relation to this photograph. I mean, I have a love-hate relationship with this image. I do. On the one hand, it's a great photograph. Also, as a photographic challenge – it's probably the largest multiperspective-panorama in the world. So, on one hand, I'm impressed by it. And on the other hand, I'm burdened and troubled by it.

So, it's a difficult question. I think it was OK to exhibit it in the way that we exhibited it, together with the conference, which was very successful, mainly in the way it encouraged scientists and curators working with human remains to reconsider their practices. And for that, it served its purpose.
It also – when we did the workshops and the guided tours – people were really touched by the exhibition. And I don't know if we would have been able to do it without the panorama. Sometimes I think, OK, the next time we do this exhibition, I don't want to have the photograph. We do everything, but without the photograph. We build the big wall, and there's nothing on the wall. And sometimes, I think maybe it won't function without the panorama. So, I'm still – just like James Riding In – I'm split.

J: We'll leave it there.

T: Yeah.

J: Thanks very much.

T: Thank you.

Dialogical photography

Martin Krenn and Aisling O'Beirn

If photographs capture moments in time, they also take time to make. This 'making time' is often so much more interestingly protracted than mere exposure time. Rationale and conditions for making a photograph need to be negotiated and put in place. In our project in Belfast [-> Transforming Long Kesh/Maze], a dialogical approach was central. We worked with participants who had first-hand experience of the former prison Long Kesh/Maze, where most people imprisoned as a result of the conflict in Northern Ireland were held. Hence, our approach to photography became dialogical: We used object photography with participants as a method for exchange and collective reflection.

Photographically *re-staging* artefacts and artworks from the prison with participants, allowed us, working with our participants, to distil lesser-known narratives about the prison [-> Restaging the Object]. Using a mobile photographic studio and working in locations selected by participants, we collaboratively positioned, labelled, and photographed the artefact while recording participant statements. Participants were highly involved in this photographic process, discussing, titling, and dating the object according to their relationship with it [-> Fragile Trust] (fig. 1). We printed labels on site to position within the image frame before photographing the object. Thus, naming became integral to the re-staging process. The practical and conceptual tasks of making a photograph opened up dialogues, which we recorded. After a process of editing and consultation, participants' statements evolved. The statements, often autobiographical, reflect respective participants' relationships to the objects, as opposed to being merely descriptive. Participants were thus active agents in the image and text making process, allowing lesser-known or previously unknown narratives about the prison to emerge (fig. 4 & 5).

Throughout the project, we strove to avoid the reiteration of pre-existing, ideologically laden narratives. Sometimes this process threw up surprises. When photographing loyalists' objects, a participant told us that he had made a jewellery-box cottage (fig. 2) but hadn't brought it as it was damaged. Retrieving the cottage from his attic that morning, he discovered that a mouse had eaten the render. An incident that might initially be considered an impediment to

this project actually yielded nuanced information about the relationships between makers, materials, and acts of creation within the confines of prison. Prisoners had to be resourceful and porridge was frequently used to make a rough pebbledash render. We offered to repair the cottage and were trusted to do so by its maker. We photographed the damaged cottage and, in repairing it, gained a heightened awareness of the material process, inventiveness, and time needed to make such objects. We then returned the repaired cottage after re-photographing it (fig. 3).

This dialogically photographic process prompted us to ask participants about objects of importance that no longer exist. In recalling a long-forgotten 'thing', participants actively formed new images which resulted in new objects crafted by O'Beirn and photographed by Krenn. In constructing them we re-appropriated participants' accounts, material methods, and processes traditionally used to make prison art. As with repairing the cottage, the experience of making these objects highlighted the need for resourcefulness, time, patience, and concentration.

This led to working with participants to make new objects to articulate personal narratives. The 50+ Group, under the umbrella of Tar Anall, an organisation dedicated to the welfare of republican ex-prisoners and their families, worked closely with us to make new objects. This group of older, politically engaged women used to visit male relatives in the prison and still meet regularly, sharing a close camaraderie. Their female perspective and cohesiveness gave another, lesser-known, perspective on this all-male prison. In workshops, they made four new objects – a minibus and taxi – referencing years of going on prison visits, whilst two models of prison structures – a Nissan Hut and H-Block – harked back to particular periods in the prison's history (fig.6). In so doing, they used lollipop sticks and matchsticks with great tenacity, employing techniques and materials traditional to prison art. These objects were photographed in their unfinished as well as finished state to document their transformation. This dialogical process became photographic, linguistic, and material. Over the 3-year period of the project, participants used material artefacts as apertures, shedding light on lesser known perspectives, against a background of ongoing political stagnation and uncertainty.

‘Record smile‘ or: Measuring devices in our back pockets

Melanie Proksch

The photo I will reflect upon was only meant as a documentary snapshot [-> Shooting in the field] in the course of our fieldwork on contentious heritages in Carinthia [-> Performing heritage]. It was taken at an exhibition in St. Jakob im Rosental (Šentjakob v Rožu), a bilingual town in the Southern part of Carinthia. The title of the exhibition was *Vermessungsamt/ Geodetski Urad,* or survey office. It dealt with the measuring of the citizens of the town in 1938 by scientists from the University of Vienna and a variety of newly-established Carinthian research institutions, who had a clear proximity to Nazism (Gotthardt 2018, S. 4). The remit of this so-called research project, led by anthropologist Karl Tuppa, was to prevent territorial claims on the part of Yugoslavia. It was to prove, on the basis of racist parameters, that Slovenian-speaking Carinthians were more similar to German-speaking Carinthians than to their Yugoslav neighbours, and that therefore, the Southern part of Carinthia clearly was on “German soil” (Koroschitz 2018).

The photo shows an installation on the front facade of the former cinema, which served as venue for the exhibition (fig.1). It consists of carefully arranged black-and-white photographic portraits. These originals were taken of the citizens of St. Jakob in the course of Tuppa’s research project without any reasons given, let alone asking for consent. The curators found it important to display photos on the outside of the venue, so that today’s citizens could look for images of their parents, grandparents or other relatives independent of the limited opening hours of the exhibition. To achieve this, a row of hinged panels was installed across the façade, similar to shutters. Each panel displayed fourteen enlarged portraits of St. Jakob citizens in two vertical rows on both sides.

However, the snapshot shows more than merely the installation. The image can be viewed in two layers. The overall shot of the installation in portrait format forms the base layer. A smartphone display is clearly visible in stark contrast to the rather dark and blurred background. The smartphone, a Samsung Galaxy S8, is held sidewise. On the right hand side, the thumb of the owner is visible. On the photographed smartphone display, the panels with the enlarged black-and-white portraits of the measured citizens appear once more: Head and shoulder close-ups of women, children and men of all ages taken in normal perspective. The display of smartphone itself forms the second layer of the image. It shows a variety of control elements and camera functions. On the left, we see the icons for choosing options for the preferred shooting mode and the symbol for switching between front- and rear camera. On the right, we see the white shutter button and the red icon for

switching between photo- and video mode. Other functions, such as various filters, stickers and stamps or the gallery are hardly recognizable due to over-exposure. What really sticks out, however, are the bright yellow circles in different sizes that have formed over the faces of the portraits. This is the face recognition function of the Samsung Galaxy camera. As Cole, moderator of the Samsung community platform explains: “It's a feature of the camera focusing. It zeros in on the facial features in order to capture the picture more clearly. You cannot disable this feature“ (Samsung 2018). Face recognition allows for much more than just image composition or capturing sharp images, as diverse many manufacturers assure. Complex algorithms analyse motifs in a flash, compare them with similar patterns over a large number of measuring points, and thus guarantee autofocus (Clauß 2019). Facial recognition generally works by measuring biometric features and storing the raw data that was generated when the photograph was taken. These algorithmically generated abstractions of the photo are stored in templates. The algorithms used for generating and matching the templates vary from manufacturer to manufacturer. They are subject to strict secrecy, since such data can be processed by different systems and thus offer different possibilities for reading and interpretation (Meyer 2014). For instance, a face-recognition algorithm intended forsharp snapshots could also be used for racial profiling.

Facial recognition algorithms allow for seemingly objective classifications of physical features, some harmless, some less so. However, algorithms are themselves culturally produced, in line with the discourses and power-relations of their time. Paläontologist J.S. Gould’s radical critique of sciences’ claim to objectivity also applies to perceived objectivity in the digital realm. In his book “The Mismeasure of Man”, he explains that scientists’ data collection is stimulated and determined by their own interpretations: „Their work was more refractory to exposure, but equally invalid for the same reason: prejudices led through data in a circle back to the same prejudices - an unbeatable system that gained authority because it seemed to arise from meticulous measurement“ (Gould 1996: 83). Scholars such as Stuart Hall (1996), Etienne Balibar or Immanual Wallerstein (Balibar/Wallerstein 1991) have pointed to the cultural construction of difference to distinguish ‘us’ from ‘other’. They show how culturally produced difference can be generalised and normalised to appear ‘natural’ and thus (re-)produce racist discourses. The anthropological measuring exercise in St. Jakob, 1938, illustrates how physical features where constructed to prove a racist system of human classification, and to naturalise a racist ideology. Objectivations, as exposed and detourned in the installation in St. Jakob, may not have been invented by Nazism. However, neither did they come to an end in 1945. As smartphone users, we may find the autofocus camera convenient: ‘Record smile’. Or are we carrying the (mis-) measure with us in our back pockets?

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Casting of death: A crafted exhibition

Marion Hamm

We went from Klagenfurt down to Ljubljana to see the CCP3 exhibition, which was clever, inspiring and a bit cheeky. Already the poster, "Casting of Death", was a departure from death masks as an object of study. It showed not a mask, but a photo depicting the enlarged structure of a cast in plaster, the material quality of the thing rather than the thing itself. The image was so "material" I wanted to touch it, to feel the chalky touch of plaster. No hints as to what to expect in the exhibition, unless you knew the name of Viktor Gojkovič, who collaborated with the Domestic Research Society.

The exhibition itself was in the Match Gallery at the square of the French revolution. Small rooms painted white. It was a bit like an altar-piece, in three parts/rooms. The central room, a bit like a foyer, visualised the database of death masks in Slovenian institutions put together by CCP3 in different ways. You could look at photos of the actual death masks, sorted by profession of the dead person. Or you could inspect a chronological list of the names of the death-masked people in Hapsburg days, the Yugoslavian kingdom between the wars, and post-war Yugoslavia. Or, third possibility, you could watch a video clip with information on those celebrity death masks which exist in several castings.

The room to the left of this centre-piece took the visitor to the present day, it was set up together with the Red Cross. In the middle, on the floor: A mannequin used to practice resuscitation. On the wall: A cast of the death mask of "the unknown of the Seine", who had come to some prominence in the early 20th century. The connection between mannequin and cast is briefly explained. Then, to the right of the centre-piece, in a separate room, you can watch a video of sculptor Viktor Gojkovič in his studio, explaining how he makes death masks, of whom, and what it means to him. And then, behind this, as a surprise, something like a shrine. A small room, with special, warm lighting, displaying some of the death masks made by the sculptor. Faces in plaster or bronze, hands, displayed on plinths or in wooden frames. Photography is not allowed in this room. The three pieces/rooms are aesthetically connected by two 'how-to' drawings: One on how to resuscitate someone, and another one on

how to make a death mask. The Domestic Research Society highlighted that the exhibition is just one step in their research process, not a final product. And in fact, by displaying images of the death masks, they managed to identify one of the unknown masks thanks to a visitor. Interesting is also the way the Domestic Research Society marked their collaboration with Viktor Gojkovič, by including him as a collaborator in the public materials: Not an exhibition about him, but one with him. Altogether the Domestic Research Society have an interesting approach to co-production: They built an impressive network of archivists, librarians, and artists who all contribute to the research on death-masks, because they somehow bring their own interest in the topic.

Finally, the contentiousness: I think this aspect gives the work a special kick. What's contentious about a bourgeois practice of national self-affirmation? Why the frisson when we look at the casts in the hidden room? For me, the exhibition highlights how experiences of body, life and death are intermingling with the construction of national identities. You can't get one without the other. The death masks are not simply about "national identity", nor are they simply about changing cultures of dealing with dead bodies (sanitation, exclusion of death in present practice, etc etc). Interestingly, the reviews on the exhibition were all positive, which raises the question whether something can be contentious if there is no angry debate in public.

Edited reprint from DRS blog: http://ddr.si/en/the-casting-of-death-exhibition-a-quick-impression/

Part 5

(Un)-Learning Contentious Heritages

Relations between learning, and arts and knowledge production in Creative Co-Productions

Nora Landkammer and Karin Schneider

This section of the *companion* addresses sites, forms and processes of learning in relation to contentious or difficult heritage. The heading of the section itself alludes to the fact that learning, particularly when engaging with challenging and challenged histories, cannot be understood as simply an addition of new knowledge, but includes re-visiting the knowledge one previously attained, challenging and re-assembling one's own mental frames – it also means engaging in a process of unlearning (Spivak 1996; Fals Borda/Rahman 1991; Castro Varela 2007). As educators, experienced in museum and gallery education, and researchers whose lens is shaped by postcolonial theory, work on the history of Nazism and representational critique, we are interested in understanding and developing critical educational practice. Our work often takes place in the context of practice and action research settings. In the TRACES project, our role as educators/researchers was threefold: we had the opportunity to collaborate with five different trans-disciplinary teams who engaged in *Creative Co-Productions* focused on case studies concerning contentious heritage, accompanying the projects in terms of community engagement and learning; we conducted a study on how conflict plays out in education at different sites of contentious heritage, observed various guided tours and also workshops, mainly in a German speaking context, and interviewed educators; we also worked with the educational team at the Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt on joint action research concerning how to address coloniality in education in an ethnographic museum. This section unites accounts of reflexive practice that resulted from these collaborations, written by our colleagues, about learning experiences in the Creative-Co-Production they engaged with, by ourselves and by a colleague from the Weltkulturen Museum. This multiplicity of voices and perspectives – both in terms of geography and disciplinary background – reflects the conviction that informs our work, stemming from experiences with action research frameworks: that meaningful knowledge about the practices of engagement and learning is situated knowledge, produced in context by those involved. Before entering into the reflexive pieces, in this introduction, we wish to discuss in more detail what the setting of *Creative Co-production* meant for learning and engagement.

An understanding of learning in multidisciplinary co-productions

TRACES proposed a shift *from intervention to co-production* when dealing with contentious heritages. This change of relationship was, first and foremost, directed at the way artists are approached by heritage institutions such as museums and heritage sites, or approach these institutions themselves. Instead of interventions, which are temporary and defined by coming from the outside, co-productions allow for more long-lasting and multivocal engagements with contentious heritage. Yet, this shift does not only relate to the institution, but also has important implications for learning processes and public involvement.

Early on in our research, we conducted interviews with all five co-productive teams. It became evident that these team members began their work with a wide definition of learning. As one colleague stated: "I don't want to think about it like about a piece of information given from one person to another, like a class[room] situation. This is not what we are doing, because we also don't have the information. We are also in an education process ourselves. We are learning at the same time".[1] The aspect of reciprocity, that can be related to Critical Pedagogy (the figure of the Learner-Teacher/Teacher-Learner as developed by Paulo Freire (2005 [1970])) appeared to be common ground shared by many of our colleagues. Researchers and artists saw their role as 'discussion facilitators'[2] rather than aiming for a clearly defined educational goal. A clear outcome of the conversations was that the artists and researchers saw themselves as learners. Additionally, they envisaged learning happening between multiple subjects, and not in a binary relationship such as the examples of artist-public or teacher-learner. Instead, they emphasized relationships with different stakeholders, publics and not least the multidisciplinary collaboration within the co-productive teams themselves, as a way to "educate each other."[3] When education was spoken of, this often referred to the institutions involved. As one curator stated: "Employees of the museum will come to get some insight. So, this is also a group that will be getting an upgrade, or an educational gain."[4]

These initial visions of learning do not only signify evidence of a common commitment to collaboration and participation, they also signify that *from intervention to co-production* goes beyond the artist-institution relationship. It affects interactions with further partners beyond

the initial team members and those envisaged as being the public. This understanding of mutual and multi-vocal learning processes expands traditional ideas of education, of research and art production processes alike.

An integrated perspective on learning – a necessity and a contradiction

Whereas the TRACES team member shared a mutual and multi-vocal view on learning, this approach was not well reflected in the terminology that the TRACES framework used. The name of the EU topic was *Emergence and transmission of European cultural heritage* and, referring to the call, the project title is *Transmitting Contentious Cultural Heritage with the Arts*. For the learning processes envisaged by TRACES, the term 'transmission' is indeed misleading. To *transmit* as a verb is transitive, it requires that something be transmitted. It is also directional – think of a message being transmitted, energy transmitted in technics or signals in the body by neuro-transmitters – going from one entity to another. In relation to heritage, it alludes to historicity, the passing on of heritage over time. Transmission evokes the image of something (the heritage) that needs to be transmitted to another entity (the audience, visitors, public) by those who know how to do it (the artist, researcher, heritage provider, educator). 'Transmission' is not an apt concept to describe the relations of learning which the teams envisaged. Indeed, the idea of contentious heritage itself points to engagements that need to be multi-sided, as the term relates to conflicted ways of dealing with cultural heritage. The idea that heritage is contentious fosters communication and interaction processes.

Education and stakeholder involvement was the title of our work package in the project. Education, though an important aspect of the project, in its clear disciplinary sense, also fails to capture the multi-sided and reciprocal relations of learning that the project intended to stimulate. Stakeholder involvement, as a concept appears to be compelling for describing the involvement of (groups of) people who have an interest – might it be professional, due to what they consider relevant in their identity, geographical closeness or biographical experience – in the heritage at stake, and should have a say on it. Yet, being a term derived from economics, it also refers to a market relationship. Literally, stakeholders refer to those constituencies without which, apart from the owners (shareholders) a company can not

survive. It is therefore also to be questioned if joint responsibility for heritage can be addressed using the term stakeholder.

The trans-disciplinary model of co-productions that TRACES followed meant the integration and intersection of forms of engagement and participatory knowledge production, that come from artistic traditions, research models, and understandings of education, which the people involved brought into the projects. Instances of learning, in this sense, are not confined to the activities traditionally assigned to museum and gallery education. Based on our research collaboration with the TRACES teams, we want to describe instances of learning that cross the traditional role division between artists, curators, researchers, and educators:

Involvement and consultation during the research process: creating opportunities for learning, whilst at the same time informing and guiding the research.

Collaboration as joint learning: building up a working relationship and negotiating the goals and outcomes of the project as a learning process. A focus can be on heritage institutions and their staff, who can be perceived as learners themselves through their engagment in co-production. This can be described as 'inreach', a term used for institutional learning coined by Susan Kamel in reference the common concept of outreach (Kamel/Gerbich 2014).

Participatory artistic practice: creating settings for engagement in producing the artwork in the context of creative co-production. Particularly in developing forms of engaging communities that start from the community's interest and follow the ethics of co-developing research results, the debates from arts and education increasingly intersect. These intersections create a field of practices where a strict division between art, research and education is no longer applicable. "The dividing line (…) is obscured, partly consciously, partly incidentally as part of an evolutionary process." (Institute for Art Education 2013, 21).

Public programmes and education as research: providing tours and workshops for visitors within settings that foster joint inquiry, as an opportunity for the public to learn about the topic, and for the project team to learn from the participant's perceptions and viewpoints. Devising educational offers, not as outcomes of research, but as sites of production of pedagogical knowledge, has a tradition in action research methodologies in education. Deriving from the *teacher as researcher movement* (Stenhouse 1975), action research

approaches in museum education[5] take a different approach to that of visitor studies, in which the public is the object of research: it is rather the pedagogical action itself, including the educator her/himself, that becomes the site of inquiry.

The learning instances described here depart markedly from conventional project setups in museums and other heritage institutions, where research leads to an exhibition or other form of public showcase, which is then used for learning programmes. Instead, we describe opportunities to create instances of (mutual) learning in interactions with communities and individuals, at the beginning, during, and at the end of a project. Learning does not only occur as a separate activity that is added on to the project's process after conclusion, but is intrinsically connected with research and artistic practice.

This integrated approach to learning in cultural production has been brought forward in the museum sector by collaborative museology (Phillips 2003; Golding/ Modest 2013), in the arts by socially engaged artistic practices (Lacy 1994, Kester 2004, 2011, Helguera 2011) and in research by participatory research models in education and community work (Fals Borda/ Rahman 1991, Carr/ Kemmis 1986, Wöhrer/ Arztmann/ Wintersteller/ Harrasser/ Schneider 2017; in gallery education e.g. Engage 2006/2008, Landkammer 2012). In the art field, this discussion has gained momentum with the advent of what has been termed the 'Educational Turn' (Rogoff 2008; Schnittpunkt 2012, O'Neill/ Wilson 2010, Another Roadmap School 2016), a development, over the past decade, of increased attention towards pedagogy by artists and curators. It is in these intersections where we see particular potential for learning in multidisciplinary engagements with contentious heritage.

However the integrated practice regarding learning, the intermingling of tasks and roles between research, artistic practice, and education, also has a problematic side, and has led to specific tensions. If public engagement and learning are understood as part of the researcher's and artist's work, education might become less defined as a specific area of competence where a specific workforce needs to be available for it. The integrated view of learning thus depends on artists and researchers having facilitating skills and pedagogical competences, and being willing and able to put energy into interaction with communities and the public. To do this simultaneously to the stressful tasks of writing up research results or producing exhibitions, is a considerable challenge. In the context of the aforementioned educational turn, a paradoxical effect has been described: an increased attention to learning and pedagogy

in the art field has led curators and artists to understand their practice as educational, often based on a critique of dominant models of schooling and pedagogy. But this increased attention, in practice, can lead to a renewed marginalization of pedagogy as a specific expertise, and hence to a marginalisation of education as a profession in the cultural sector. It can lead to a division between radical and experimental artistic/curatorial formats and the supposedly less glamorous day-to-day work of educators, and a neglect of education traditionally provided to ensure access to cultural production and its institutions (for these effects see Mörsch 2009, 2011; Rodrigo Montero 2010, Schnittpunkt 2012).

To avoid these effects, creative co-productions need careful planning concerning which members of the team bring in pedagogical competences, and how the work – integrated into the process – will be distributed. For projects that intend to sustainably challenge the way contentious heritages are dealt with institutionally and publicly, it would make sense to develop education and learning with different constituencies in the process, not at its end. This is not to be seen as a separate activity to be added to the research and artistic production, but can be devised as an integral part of the production of knowledge and of artistic practices. The trans-disciplinary collaboration should be viewed as an intersection of the current models for learning and interaction that have been developed in the fields from which the collaborators come: participatory practices in the arts, collaborative models of curating, and participatory research. While we advocate an integrated approach to learning, this practice also needs the inclusion of competences in facilitation and pedagogy which those involved in collaborative projects engaging with contentious heritage need to include. From this perspective, the various contributions in this chapter also provide evidence of productive contradictions in the collaborative processes embedded in our research itself – the manner in which we had discussions with professionals involved in heritage management, artists, researchers, and curators, about their experiences when engaging in learning processes, the ways in which we provided, and invented together, various forms of self-reflection about these processes, including long-distance communication, analysing sessions of observation protocols, and collaborative text writing. From this perspective this chapter also provides an insight into our own learning processes in regards to how to work together and how to question one's own practice.

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[1] Interview with TRACES Creative Co-Production team *Dead Images*, 9.2.2016
[2] Interview with TRACES Creative Co-Production team *Transforming Long Kesh/Maze*, 4.8.2016.
[3] Interview with TRACES Creative Co-Production team *Awkward objects*, 29.4.2016
[4] Interview with TRACES Creative Co-Production team *Casting of Death*, 27.4.2016
[5] See for methodological background e.g. Landkammer 2012.

Picture series Workshop on “Transforming Long Kesh/ Maze”

Martin Krenn, Nora Landkammer, Karin Schneider and Aisling O‘Beirn

The postcards resulting from ‘Transforming Long Kesh/Maze’, a collaborative social sculpture by artists Martin Krenn and Aisling O’Beirn, show objects that record the dispersed presence of Long Kesh/Maze prison in Belfast. Aisling and Martin produced a set of 64 postcards, each with a photograph of a particular object on one side and on the other an owner/maker’s personal statement that depicts its history and personal significance. The objects and stories steam from members of different, sometimes historically antagonistic groups of ex-prisoners, relatives, former visitors and guards of the prison. Hence the postcard set itself displays a personal yet multi-vocal approach of this conflicted history and provides material for workshops on multidirectional memories and story telling.

The postcards were activated in a workshop facilitated by Nora Landkammer and Karin Schneider (TRACES Workpackage education research) at the project’s exhibition “Dispersed Presence” by Martin Krenn and Aisling O’Beirn at PS² space in Belfast, October 2018. The participants of this workshop – artists, students, art teachers, many with some kind of relationship to this history – connected different images and stories in an associative “game of dominoes” style to interact with and reflect on a multi-vocal approach toward these conflicted histories.

Communities past and present: An old synagogue brings new life to a town

Alexandra Toma in collaboration with Nora Landkammer

On the former boundary of the old town lies the synagogue of Mediaș (fig.1). Its presence and beauty are imperceptible, locals and tourists often pass by without seeing it. But the synagogue, built in 1896, was once the home of a prosperous community [-> Burdocks]. One can only imagine how people celebrated holidays and life within the walls of the Temple, as it was called when it was first constructed, how many Jewish children studied in the former school, or what flowers and trees once grew in the beautiful, hidden garden. But by the beginning of the 1990s, the last people from the Jewish community had left. And so the synagogue, the building adjacent to it housing community offices and employee residences, the school and the garden were left behind, uncared for.

In 2014, a call for volunteers asked people from Mediaș to come to the synagogue and help clean up the garden (fig. 2). Years of abandonment had turned the courtyard into a jungle and also a trash bin for passers-by (fig. 3). The clean-up was how I first set foot into the former Jewish community's space. It wasn't just my civic sense that drew me to participate. Mostly I acted out of curiosity, to finally see the old synagogue and everything around it. So together with a group of around 30 other Mediașers (probably driven by the same sense of curiosity), we cleaned up the synagogue's garden. As the evening drew to a close, volunteers began to go home and so did I. But over the next days, I began visiting the place more often and also began to volunteer to help process what is now called the *Mediaș Jewish Archive*.

At that point I began to learn more about the Mediaș Jewish community, but also about the culture and the religion that comes with it. I discovered a new world by going through the old documents and books, by listening to old stories, and by helping the then-site manager, Anda Reuben, originally from Bucharest, organise events for the Jewish Holidays. The idea was to bring life and a new community to the old synagogue, not necessarily a community united by religion, but rather by a common goal of reviving the space and learning about other cultures.

In 2015 my involvement at the synagogue became official as I was appointed assistant manager. As someone with a degree in finance and with the working experience in this field, my position had more administrative aspects. But as everyone does when part of a small team, I also took over other tasks such as giving tours and helping to organise various events. In 2016, I joined Julie Dawson and Răzvan Anton in the project *Absence as Heritage* [-> Absence as heritage] which was part of the larger EU-project TRACES.

We aimed to impact the town's cultural life and together with Anda we organised events for Jewish holidays; for a time a small group of people came to learn Hebrew. However in 2017, she resigned and I assumed the position of site manager. It was not an easy task, coming from a completely different background, but on the other hand, being from the town and having local connections was a great advantage. My entire experience at the synagogue can be described as 'learning on the job'. I've learned new things about a different culture, a different religion and about the history of my hometown and its diversity. But these were all acts of conscious learning. In time, I realised I've learned more by being in contact with people, seeing them discovering a new world (be it in their hometown or during their travels) and noticing how others, like me, began to be more involved in our project. And also, on a personal level, I've learned new things about myself. In a way, I am also a result of this project.

Past community

> *Welcome to the synagogue of Mediaș. As some of you may know, Mediaș used to be a Saxon (Siebenbürgen Sachsen) town. Until the mid-19th century, Jews in Transylvania were not permitted to live in towns, except for Alba Iulia, so they lived in the surrounding villages, with a very few exceptions. But around 1850 the first rabbi, David Bäumel, came to Mediaș from Bohemia and with his arrival the town's Jewish community began to form. Around 1896, the present synagogue was built and as the community became more prosperous and with the help of some wealthy members, a Jewish school with a 'modern' mikvah were constructed in the 1920s. The house next to the synagogue was also community property and was used for offices and residences for some of the community*

> *employees. During the Second World War the community survived and after the war refugees from northern Transylvanian as well as Bukovina arrived, increasing the Jewish population. But then in the 1950s and the 1960s most of them emigrated to Israel and other parts of the world. So by the beginning of the 1990s only a small part of the community remained and after the communist regime fell and the borders were open, the remaining Jewish families also left.*

This is a sample of a commonplace tour about the community's history. Most of our visitors are tourists from Israel, Germany, Austria and Poland, but also from Mediaș and other cities from Romania. And so the questions arising during and after this presentation are numerous and vary. But some questions are almost universal and some assumptions are general.

One assumption is that today there is no Jewish community in Mediaș because the community was deported and killed in the Shoah. There are always surprised faces when I explain that the community survived. When the exhibition *Liminal Portraits. Stories from the Margins* was on display most reactions were of amazement, but I was also surprised to see that some tourists just read the first few sentences (in which one gets the general information: Jewish girl – German regiment – synagogue – 1940s) and didn't continue to read, because I suppose they quickly catalogued the story as the usual tragic story that one would read in this situation – when in fact the ending and the 'characters' don't follow the usual course of action[1] [-> Liminal portraits].

Another frequent question regards the synagogue and why it hasn't been restored. The question is almost always posed thus: "Why does the synagogue look like this? Aren't Jews rich? Why aren't they doing anything about it?". The anti-Semitic 'rich Jew' stereotype is familiar but I have been surprised to see this preconceived notion held even by visiting Israelis, who often advise me to 'just' contact American or Israeli Jewish people, who will 'definitely' pay to restore the synagogue. Others ask why we don't just get the money from the EU, as if it was a matter of sending an email to Brussels. Though most visitors mean well with such suggestions, they unfortunately have no concept of the administrative and logistical framework required to fundraise such an enormous amount.

As for Romanian tourists, they are always in awe when visiting the synagogue. In Romania the synagogues are often closed or, if not, it is still difficult to go and visit one. So the opportunity to enter a synagogue and see what lies behind the walls is interesting for both the local community and people from other towns. The older generations from Mediaș know the space as the 'local baths' – at some point the Jewish community split the mikvah and part of it became the public bathhouse with an entrance fee. They also think back to the house next to the synagogue as a sort of 'shop', where people could purchase wine (kosher wine was provided by the central Romanian Jewish Federation) and cigarettes, so called 'luxury products' that were hard to come by in communist times. But most of them didn't enter the actual synagogue and so I often hear the statement, "I've lived here for 40 years and never knew what it was like inside."

The younger part of the Mediaș population is unaware of the synagogue's existence and its history. People pass by the building on a daily basis and they do not know what it is or what it once was. If you happen to be in a taxi and told them to take you "to the synagogue, please!" – they would not know what you meant, let alone where the building was. One funny anecdote relates to this: during the first summer of the TRACES residency with both Julie and Răzvan, we had regular calls made to the taxi company. Once, after a few weeks had passed, one of us ordered a cab and gave the address "number 43 Kogălniceanu and the dispatcher responded "at the synagogue?" – and we felt we had made a small victory, the synagogue had been put back on the map.

Over time such small shifts in local consciousness have happened more often. Teachers started bringing students to the synagogue for their history or religion lessons or to visit the exhibitions, local people bring their visiting friends and families and they are mostly open to learning about the community that once lived there. Presenting the history of Jewish life in Medias to people is a good experience, though it wasn't always easy.

Representing a past community

After my colleague resigned and I was the only one giving tours, I was surprised and at times felt uncomfortable when people asked me if I was Jewish or simply assumed I was. Mediaș has a

very diverse religious life for a small town, there are at least ten denominations, the majority of people today are Romanian Orthodox though historically the Saxon Lutheran church, Hungarian Catholic church, and the Romanian Greek-Catholic church were all a significant cultural presence. Still, it is not common to inquire after one's religion and so now hearing this question on almost every tour felt awkward. First, I am not a religious person and it felt strange to ascribe an identity marker to myself, with which I do not strongly identify, at the same time I felt out of place by presenting a religion and culture to which I did not belong. Not only that, but as one might guess, I am not a specialist in Judaism, Jewish history or even giving tours. When I realised that some people assumed I was Jewish because I work at the synagogue, I felt a sense of guilt, that I was deceiving them in some way.

Linda Martin Alcoff has concisely summarised the problem of representation that lies behind my discomfort:

> The recognition that there is a problem in speaking for others has followed from the widespread acceptance of two claims. First, there has been a growing awareness that where one speaks from affects both the meaning and truth of what one says, and thus that one cannot assume an ability to transcend her location. In other words, a speaker's location (which I take here to refer to her social location or social identity) has an epistemically significant impact on that speaker's claims, and can serve either to authorize or dis-authorize one's speech. (…) The second claim holds that not only is location epistemically salient, but certain privileged locations are discursively dangerous. In particular, the practice of privileged persons speaking for or on behalf of less privileged persons has actually resulted (in many cases) in increasing or reinforcing the oppression of the group spoken for (Alcoff 1992:6f)

This discomfort caused me to begin questioning my own position there, both professional and personal. On the one hand, there are the projects that focus on making the Jewish history of Medias more visible, on the other there are projects to create a new community in the space of the synagogue. Where do I fit into this?

Last year a group of high school students asked me for help with an oral history project they were doing. They were supposed to interview people from different minorities and collect stories. I was asked to represent and talk about the former Jewish community. As I tried to explain to them that I am not Jewish, they responded that since I am the one working at the synagogue and dealing with the history and archive of the place I can still help them. So I accepted this position and, in time, I realised that the synagogue is part of my hometown, the synagogue's history is part of my hometown's history. And so even though I am not Jewish I am part of my town and so in one way the Jewish history is also part of my history and by learning about this history I've learned to cherish it and in some ways to pass it on. Most people in Medias are proud of the diversity of the town – Romanians, Saxons, Hungarians, Rroma, and once upon a time, Jews were also a part of Mediaș. Once I came to this realisation, I have been better able to understand my position at the synagogue and in the Absence as Heritage team and no longer feel as uncomfortable; this has also helped me integrate our work better into the town's present community.

Present community

The main activities at the *Casa de lângă Sinagogă* are the projects. First it was the Mediaș Jewish Archive project (fig. 4), then the Tapestries restoration and Mediaș Jewish Library project and now the TRACES project 'Absence as Heritage'. With all these projects we focused on involving the locals in our activities to the extent possible. We did this by organising various events, by asking them to volunteer and help us and eventually by being open to their own ideas. At first the events consisted of celebrating Jewish holidays like Rosh Hashana and Hanukkah, even Pesach and Sukkot. In time more people joined us and slowly another community was built and we created our own small new traditions. For example for Hanukkah people gather at the Casa de lângă Sinagogă, the German Church Choir comes and sings traditional Hanukah songs, we eat donuts and celebrate together (fig. 5). It's a wonderful experience to see people of different beliefs, ethnicity and age coming together to celebrate and support the history of the place and our project. These are also the people who help us clean the synagogue, who work in the garden when spring comes, and who create new events.

For one of the projects, creating the Mediaș Jewish Library, students from the local high school volunteered to help us create a database of all the books written in German and Hungarian. While they worked you could see them learning new things and discovering a new world that had been 'hidden' in their own town. Some of these volunteers still come to the synagogue and always help when we need extra hands and are interested in our projects. At the opening of our exhibition in summer of 2018 (fig. 6) these students stayed all evening to help serve wine and clean, you could see that they also felt part of the team. And when a teacher brought the entire class to see the oral history exhibition titled "*... but we brought it back ..": Objects, Paths, Stories*, one of these same volunteers spontaneously started giving them a tour and explaining to her colleagues things about the exhibition and how they should engage with it.

Working with students has become one of our main activities, the context includes workshops with our TRACES artist-in-residence Răzvan Anton [-> Fading Studies], theatre camps, volunteer work and other projects with our collaborators. In the project *The Future of Memory: Resistance* we collaborate with another organisation from Romania. The main purpose is to talk about the Holocaust in Romania and how to learn from past mistakes in order to improve our present and future. In spring 2018 we held a three-day workshop with students from local high schools using art (Răzvan worked with them using materials from the archive) and performance techniques (with an actress from the Bucharest Jewish Theatre). The first day consisted mostly of talking about the Holocaust, discussing what the students had learned about it in school and how to deal with this history and use it in the present.

In talking about these subjects and listening to what the students said one realised how little they have learned about it in school and also how the people around them talk about this history. At one point in the conversation, one student remarked, "I know the Germans did bad things, but I wish we had remained allies with Germany during World War II. Because at least they were gentlemen, not like the Russians. And look where Germany is today!" We adults were shocked but even more shocking was that it was clear she was repeating something she had heard elsewhere, probably at home. It was clear she was quoting this and had not fully processed the meaning. This moment made me realise how easy easily we accept information from others and

so often don't process it, especially when at a young age. When presenting the synagogue and the history of the Jewish Community, many difficult topics can arise and it is not always easy to deal with certain subjects and their contentiousness. For example a history teacher told his 8th graders that although General Antonescu did bad things during the Second World War, he was also a patriot. How does one tell these students and volunteers that not everything they hear in school or at home might be true? And does one teach them to keep an open mind and not take everything as an absolute truth? For this is not only Mediaș's present community, but also the future one.

Events like concerts, movie nights and other activities create an opportunity to make the place more visible to the local community. After a Friday evening movie night, conversations about the space and our work there begin. This leads to people coming to visit the synagogue and the exhibition and bringing their friends or visitors to the synagogue. Very often, word spreads and other people, either locals or visitors, come up with their own ideas for events and different activities. This is how the now famous *seara de film* (movie night) came about - a friend introduced me to a Greek man working in Mediaș, who wanted to pass on his love for films to others, especially young people. Now almost every Friday, Christos comes and gives a little lecture in the *Casa de lângă Sinagogă* about film noir and other classic films. In Mediaș, where our last public movie theatre shut down four years ago, this is a rare treat. Besides movies, a lot of concerts and theatre plays have taken place in the space and most of these events were the idea or desire of someone else (fig. 7). Many young people in our town want to create and do something either educational or cultural, but they lack the infrastructure and the means to do it. Thus, in a way, the *Casa de lângă Sinagogă*, has become a platform where these ideas can come to life.
Rather than working with a community – a thought which always implies that this community exists as such – I experience our work at the *Casa de lângă Sinagogă* as a continuous process of creating a community (fig. 8). A community, not defined by identity markers such as religion, language or ethnicity, comes into being by involvement in common activities. They work rather as a network rather than as a homogenous group. The researcher and educator Javier Rodrigo Montero from Spain has described the idea of cultural projects that practice collective learning as a network, which is a way to understand our practice:

> The power of this networked pedagogy doesn't rest on ownership or centrality, and much less so on originality or structural profoundness of knowledge, but it emerges in its dispersion and decentralization: by how the knots in the network use it and how it circulates and produces new and unexpected relations. The network approach to learning, therefore, isn't contained in persons or institutions, but it flows and emerges in its capacity of connection and interrelation (Rodrigo Montero 2010: n.p, translated from Spanish by Nora Landkammer).

Recently a young couple that owns a wine store in Mediaș and also enjoys creating events and trying to bring the wine culture back to Medias (which used to be famous for its local vineyards) contacted us to work together. More precisely, they wanted to move our movie night (which is advertised through the *Casa de lângă Sinagogă* facebook page) to their shop for one evening and present a documentary film about sommeliers and wine. This collaboration has continued and now the couple often join our events and support our activities at the synagogue. Together we managed to reach other's communities, which did not necessarily overlap before, and thus bring in more people and more ideas. A network is being created. Where local institutions failed, individuals managed to find a way to bring life not only to a place, but to their town.
But as open minded as one can be, some ideas cannot be implemented. The entire space comes with a history and its own community, both past and present. For example, although asked we will never have a punk concert in the synagogue's garden. One of the values that unite us as a community at the *Casa de lângă Sinagogă* is to honour the place and its history and a punk concert would not do that.
Still, we are also learning in this regard. Once, when approached by a local group who wished to perform a concert in our spaces with a 'famous Romanian-Israeli' musician, we agreed, only to discover as the concert began that it was a Jews-for-Jesus group, with a program of music trying to convert the audience. We have learned from this experience and are more careful to vet the agenda of potential partners before agreeing to a collaborative project.

It has also not always been easy to include other communities in our projects. For the oral history project we also wanted to collect stories from the Roma community, but this proved more

difficult than with other local minority groups. To a community that is discriminated against and ignored, it seemed suspicious to them that a group of people would be interested in their stories and want to put them in an exhibition. Nevertheless, with time it worked. Creating community does not only mean the connection and networks that develop easily and naturally, but also involves effort and building trust. It is a wonderful experience to see people coming together, united by a common goal, to learn together how to create a community that includes rather than excludes, that values education, culture, diversity (fig. 9). But still some boundaries are needed, limits that protect and define this growing community.

DIY Community

I don't know if there is an actual recipe for creating a community. I believe it is something that comes naturally and grows over time. A few things made our *Casa de lângă Sinagogă* community possible (fig. 10). First, there was the physical place with the potential to be the home of a community and, if you are lucky, to possess the magic that our synagogue does, where you come once and cannot leave it again. This space is presented as a platform for new ideas and projects, but also must keep barriers so as not to harm its history and values. Second, people with a vision and drive to make a change are needed. In our case, people came from far away to start these projects, to revive the old synagogue and to teach others to value what they have in their own town. Then, slowly a core and eventually a network can be created and this network can be used to bring in new people and create new projects. In the end, what started as a project to bring life to an old synagogue, became a project to bring new life to a town.

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[1] The story presented was recorded by a woman in the 1990s, she was sixteen at the time of her story, in the early 1940s. The main plot describes how members of the Jewish community were saved from apparent execution by Romanian Iron Guardists due to the intervention of a German army commander who was stationed in Medias.

In search of the individual story: Learning from collections of human remains

Anna Szöke

Introduction

Dead Images is a creative co-production of the TRACES project with the aim of facing the complex and contentious history, politics and ethics of collections of European human skull collections [-> Dead Images].
The *Dead Images* exhibition was created, not only to raise discussions on many levels – in public, within the scientific community, between museums practitioners and heritage communities - but also to try out new formats of engagement with the topic of human skull collections. The exhibition was planned as product and process at the same time (Butler/Lehrer 2016). A testing ground or, what the anthropologist George Marcus might describe as an experimental research site (Marcus 2010), to learn and understand together with the visitors how and whether we can (literally) face uncomfortable pasts. One of these engagement tools was the *biographical tour* - and the subsequent usage of *biographies*- during which fragments of the life and death stories of individuals whose skulls are held at the anthropological department of the Natural History Museum Vienna (NHM Vienna) were discussed. We were guided by the following research questions: How do visitors perceive human skulls? How does biographical and contextual information change the visitor experience?
Here I reflect on the conceptual and practical challenges of trying to trace the biographies of some individuals skulls kept at the NHM Vienna in order to create the biographical tours. In doing so, I will draw on my personal encounters with visitors during the tours to analyze this particular format.

Museums of Natural History, museums of 'world cultures' (formerly and sometimes still known as ethnographic museums), anatomical and medical museums, universities, and also other institutions in Europe and beyond, house collections of human skeletal remains. The systematic collecting of human skeletal remains for scientific and pseudo-scientific purposes was an integral part of the discipline of

physical anthropology, which became established in the nineteenth century in Europe (Turnbull 2017). Vast quantities of human skeletal remains, especially skulls from those who were regarded as ‘primitive people’, were collected as ‘scientific’ data, often under violent circumstances and unequal power relations. The variability in physical traits was linked to intellectual and cultural qualities and prompted to a hierarchical structure between individuals (Peers 2009). European scientists and travellers benefitted from and used colonial power structures to obtain crania. Many ended up in the display and archives of European museums and other institutions till around the mid 20th century. In the post-World War II period fields such as craniometry dwindled in significance and the collecting of recent human skulls became less central to scientific research. Institutions holding these collections avoided proactive public discourse and so the confrontation with their colonial and painful past.

In recent years, critical discussions around the authority of the museum (Bennett 1995; Hall/Maharaj 2001; Boast 2011), the curating of “difficult exhibitions” (Bonnell/ Simon 2007: 65) and the politics of display (Macdonald 1998) have pushed museological discourse further. A proliferation of exhibitions and projects engaging with difficult and violent pasts of museums collections, calling for ‘decolonizing the museum’, can be noted. Today, collections of human remains and objects from formerly colonized are receiving increasing attention (Rassool 2015; Herewienie and Jones 2016; Savoy 2018). So does the recently released report by Felwine Sarr and Bénédicte Savoy call on the French government to repatriate thousands of cultural artifacts obtained under French colonial rule or illicitly in Africa. To continue a reflexive and critical discourse, we, the curatorial team, want to ask: How can we avoid singular narratives in order to be able to encourage spaces that encourage reflexive engagement in museums? What are the potentials of transmitting violent and painful histories in exhibitions?
When discussing collections of human remains, we are not only confronted with their collecting history but also with the inherent dilemma of human remains of being subjects, ancestors to the living and objects, physical remains of a deceased person, to different individuals at the same time (Peers 2011).

The Dead Images exhibition

Dead Images was initiated by the artist Tal Adler in 2009 and subsequently became an ongoing artistic-research project. In 2016 the project was developed further into a Creative Co-production [-> Creative Co-Production] and incorporated into the EU funded project *TRACES – Transmitting Contentious Heritages with the Arts: from Intervention to Coproduction.*

Dead Images focused on two collections of the Anthropological Department of the Natural History Museum Vienna: the osteological collection (human skeletal remains) and the photographic collection. Parts of the osteological collection, over 8000 crania, are housed in a wooden cabinet in one of the corridors of the department.

Within this cabinet, the majority of the department's historic photographic collection is kept. Both were collected under similar ideologies, to measure, classify and racialize humans. Through a series of workshops, lectures, a conference in conjunction with an exhibition and close collaboration between Maria Teschler-Nicola (Natural History Museum Vienna), Linda Fibiger, John Harries, Joan Smith (University of Edinburgh), Tal Adler and myself, Anna Szöke, (Humboldt University Berlin), the *Dead Images* team tried to explore, transmit and critically analyse the history, politics and ethics of such collections. Collaborating for five years with Maria Teschler-Nicola, I specifically worked on the complex history of the NHM Vienna's skull collection, in order to create new engagement possibilities for diverse audiences.

In the summer of 2018, the exhibition of *Dead Images* (2018) was opened at the Edinburgh School of Arts, Scotland (fig. 1). The exhibition was architectonically divided into three spaces. After entering the exhibition, the visitor was faced with a large wooden construction on which a video installation was mounted. The installation invited visitors to experience multiple voices in the form of three films: video-interviews with practitioners, curators, activists, scholars from diverse backgrounds, all dealing with the remains of individuals in museum's collections. These videos were composed in a way that suggested that the interviewees were having a conversation amongst themselves: contradicting, but also complementing each other. In two of the films, all statements circled around narratives that surfaced current debates and conflicts about the holding of these collections (fig. 2).

The space then opened up into a section with a bench and a monitor. Here, the wooden construction formed a side-wall of the space, leaving a small opening which allowed entering the section dedicated to a photograph. This multiple-viewpoint panorama by Tal Adler depicts in life-size one of the wooden cabinets at the anthropology department of the Natural History museum, housing around 8500 human skulls. The panorama was mounted on the rear side of the construction carrying the video-installation. Due to ethical concerns and conversations with descendants of individuals whose skulls are kept in the cabinet, specific individuals were removed from the panorama [-> Shock].[1] The museums of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa does not support the depiction of Māori and Moriori ancestors. Respecting this policy and ethics, specific parts of the panorama, in which those individuals were visible, were masked out.

Opposite the entrance to the panorama, the visitors entered a second room. This information and engagement space was only accessible through the main room and was architectonically clearly separated. For me and my co-curators the *info space* was an integral part of the exhibition, giving room to further information and reflections on the subject of human remains. It included the *unfinished library* and diverse options for visitors to leave comments and impressions and have face-to-face conversations with a member of the Dead Images team (fig. 3) Additionally, materials from the project *facing (hi)stories. Selected Biographies from the Natural History Museum Vienna's Osteological Collection* tried to surface fragments on the history how some crania of individuals became part of the NHM's collection. It tried to do so by presenting these stories in the form of individual brochures, available for the visitor to read (fig. 4).

The info space became simultaneously a social space as used by Haley and Millén, 2015. I would argue for not only understanding it as a physical space but for a space which was created by communicative processes that allowed a) to discuss the unsettling encounter with the topic, b) for personal narratives to surface and c) for visitors to subsequently reflect on ones relationship towards the subject. This hypothesis results from the collected empirical data of the exhibition and will need further investigation.

Critical engagement with biographies as a research tool

One of the main challenges of the *Dead Images* exhibition was how to deal with the inherent complexities of human remains and their collection. One of the engagement possibilities at the info space was the section that tried to provide limited contextual and personal information on 15 individuals of the collection. We called them *facing hi/stories* (2018). These - admittedly incomplete - biographies were presented in A4 brochures, hanging on an abstract geometrical grid of the skulls cabinet, indicating on the grid the individual's location in the cabinet, respectively in the panorama. Visitors were invited to take and read these biographies.
The curatorial team took an active choice in limiting ourselves to historical archival material found at the Natural History Museum and various European colonial archives and current research. We noted that in many cases, more historical context and information was available about the collectors than the individuals whose remains are held in the museum until today. Our conceptual decisions caused some uneasiness. How could we involve descendants of these individuals fully in a collaborative research process? What kind of information was available on the collected individuals? How could we use the absence of information in European imperial/colonial archives for further reflection at the exhibition? And, why did we feel the need to stress the individual story?

We wanted to address the dilemma of the subject/object position of human remains. We followed Peers' argument that "human remains themselves are so wrapped in social meanings that they appear not only to act as extensions of persons, but as powerful social agents engaged in ongoing social relations: their social lives continue well beyond death. People learn to respond to human remains in certain ways and to participate in certain forms of social relations with the dead, just as we learn to respond to and have relations with the living. These patterns of behavior vary within any society and in accordance with the definition of the dead." (Peers 2009:79).
When looking at the panorama of the skull cabinet, one encounters an almost incomprehensible mass of orderly shelved individuals in the museums architecture. Individuals who seemingly lost their identity and subjectivity by being reduced to a collectable object and entering the museums classification system. By shifting the focus from their material status to emphasizing fragments of their life and death

stories, perhaps we initially wanted to 'rehumanise' the individuals. The term was coined by Ciraj Rassool (2015). Rassool reminds us of the work by Lytton Strachey and Virginia Wolf. "In their critique, both (…), posed a paradoxical connection between death and biography. They pointed to the tension between posthumous memorialization and the attempt to 'grasp' the life as lived, expressed in a language of monuments, statuary and epitaphs. Here, the biographic and the funereal were intermeshed, with the biographical subject identical to the dead." (Rassool, 2004: 32) For composing the biographies a multilayered research was required. The biographies try to embed the individuals in fragments of their historical context, personal and social histories during life and after death, by actively acknowledging the gaps in the archive as the result of the imperial/colonial lens. In highlighting racist practices we wanted to concentrate on the interwoven structure of Austrian collectors and their collaborators in the European colonial project.[2]

We divided each biography in different sections:
A short overview on the Natural History Museum Vienna and its osteological collection, information from the NHM's inventory book, historical/contextual information, and questions for reflection such as Is it ethical to use human remains of deceased who have not given their consent? Is it OK for a researcher to use collections of human remains when they were collected under questionable circumstances? We also added a reduced form of *osteobiographies*[3] These were brief physical descriptions of the individuals from the perspective of a physical anthropologist. Such descriptions are created by a contemporary physical anthropologist or bio-archeologist before any wider research is conducted. As we explained in *facing hi/stories*, individual labeled as Inv. Nr. 312: "The results of such analysis would usually be presented in a much longer format and present extensive engagements with the life-history of each individual as recognizable from the contextual analysis of their skeletal remains" (facing hi/stories 2018: 1) Suzana Milevska suggested to think through my historical investigations and curatorial approaches as microhistory. Conceptualizing the biographies as microhistory, each individual's story enabled to grasp the different factors: political, social, intellectual, cultural processes that contributed to the formation and continuation of scientific racism, racisms and inequality. In this sense, the biographies underlined the entanglement and reciprocal affects of micro- and macrohistories on each other

(Milevska in conversation 2018; Milevsak 2016). The individual and the individual's remains transcend the borders of materiality, fusing overlapping temporalities and biographies together.

Visitors were explicitly invited to question this type of biographies.[4] With the biographical tours, the *Dead Images* team developed an active research format that aimed to create a space for critical and reflexive thinking by incorporating some of the biographies from the section facing hi/stories. But mainly, I was interested in exploring if and how the biographies triggered an attitudinal change in the visitor. For each tour I selected three biographies for discussion: one from colonial context, one from the Bronze Age and one individual whose name was known. The selection was subject to practical boundaries too. In order to literally face the individuals' skulls in the panorama, they had to bee located no higher in the cabinet than the visitors eye-level. Each biography contained a reference to the inventory number the individual received when entering the classification system of the museum.

In the first two weeks of the exhibition the biographical tour was offered daily from 3:30pm till 4:30pm. The tour was deliberately constructed in such a way that room for improvement was allowed and adjustments to the tour script could be made in response to feedback after each session. I started the tour by giving a brief introduction to TRACES and elaborations on the project *Dead Images* including some background information on the osteological collection of the NHM Vienna. I then informed participants that the tour included viewing a photograph of human remains. If any participant had chosen not to view it, they would be offered an alternative. This would have meant remaining at the section with the video installation or the info space. Interestingly, none of the participants refused to see the image.[5] Participants were then asked to encounter the panorama in a self-aware state, to reflexively record any changes in feelings. I also anticipated not to have conversations while approaching the panorama. This never happened as too many questions popped up immediately and I did not manage to create an environment to note and re-ask the question once the observation was done. Outside again, I shortly discussed how visitors felt and moved on to reading the three biographies from the above-mentioned varying contexts. Before reencountering the panorama, now with specific contextual information on individuals, I requested participants to face the individual whose

biography they heard. I specifically recommended to reflect if it made a difference to them to see the panorama and the individual's image with some knowledge around it. Was there also a contrast between the three biographies? It was interesting to see whether these clusters of information evoked sudden feelings or any kind of changes in their attitudes towards the display of the panorama and the ethical concerns around it. Particularly, I was keen to see what occurs when we identify an individual with her name.

Facing Josefa Nowotny: Responses and reflections during biographical tours

The initial tour was given to a group of 4 women, who were probably in their 30's to mid 40's. After a few minutes at the panorama, finding myself answering questions about the physical shape and color of the skulls, I gathered the group outside to listen to some of the stories of the individuals. The individual labeled as Inv. Nr. 312 triggered very different associations. Josefa Nowotny, in the museums classification system Inv. Nr. 312, was approximately 30 years old when she died on the 6th of December 1868. She came from a little town called Protivanov, in today's Czech Republic. In 1877 her skull, part of a major collection by Augustin Weisbach[6] was given by the K.&K. ministry of war to the K.&K. natural history museum. Participants were astonished that a person's name was known. One of them immediately thought about a friend who had the same last name. When she was being told that Josefa was from the Czech Republic, I noticed a slight change in her voice. Her friend was equally from that region in Europe. A moment of unexpected discomfort arose. Instinctively I tried to neutralize the situation by telling the participants that Nowotny is a semi-popular name in Czech Republic as well as in Austria.

On another day, a participant connected again personal experiences with Josefa Nowotny's last name. The participants were sitting on one of the benches at the exhibition space, while I was reading the biographies of the three selected individuals. This time Josefa Nowotny was associated with a person from the Roma community. According to the participant of the tour, Nowotny is a fairly common last name in the Roma community. In both encounters Josefa Nowotny prompted very personal stories

and associations. They were also particularly interesting, as how different information and I would argue particularly the name allowed an association to "real people". Thinking through naming processes, Kripke argues that it "is in general not the case that the reference of a name is determined by some uniquely identifying marks, some unique properties satisfied by the referent and known or believed to be true of that referent by the speaker" (Kripke 1972:106). Rather, the name is passed on by tradition from link to link – a causal link between the initial use of the name and a subsequent use by others is created. We, the participants of the tour become part of the linking process, referring to the chain of created references (in this case, by the physicist who noted down her name). This referencing enables us not only to perceive Josefa Nowotny as Josefa Nowotny - perhaps a process of re-humanisation for some - might also enable personal associations to surface. We could also reflect on that Josefa Nowotny is a European name and comes from a very familiar context to some. During the tours visitors were faced with individual skulls who had their names written on their forehead but these did not trigger any of the reactions described above. Perhaps because these individuals were also beautifully decorated with painted flowers. In fact visitors were more fascinated with the esthetical impact as with the occurrence of the name.

Visitors felt regularly empowered to share their personal stories with a present CCP4 member maybe because of how the social space was set up, and perhaps even the choice of exhibiting *Dead Images* at the Edinburgh College of Art and not in a museum space might had have played a significant role. Between a pair of slightly shabby looking beige sofas with flower patterns and a white wall with an abstract grid of the museum's cabinet with the biography brochures hanging below them, visitors would stand and read the information on the individuals. On one occasion, a visitor, a man in his mid forties, remembered that he used to have a skull under his bed. To a certain extent discomforted by his own account, he laughed and reassured that the skull "was given back to the owner" and "(the owner) then donated it to a university collection". After reading several biographies, Josefa Nowotny stood out for him and he went to look at her on the panorama.

The exhibition also received repeat-visitors, one of them an elderly man, who visited the exhibition at least four times. On our first meeting, he did not have time to

participate in the biographical tour but engaged in a long conversation about the idea of highlighting some of the stories of the individuals who were kept at the Natural History Museum. He decided to read the biography of Josefa Nowotny- specifically because her name was known and then to look for her skull on the panorama. He recalls his encounter as "different than before not knowing her name". He could not explain why he felt like this. On his fourth visit to the exhibition he mentioned that, he "really liked reading the biographies", at which point, he had almost read all of them. The man was fascinated by the fact that "we had the names of some of the individuals." He did not mention any personal connection to Josefa Nowotny. He also "appreciated the fact that we were showing also the dark side of the collection."

One of the tours was attended by Karin Schneider who observed the tour and took notes. Two younger women in their early 20's joined the tour. I started with a brief introduction, and then took the group to the panorama. After a few minutes we went to sit close to the video-installation on benches to listen to three biographies which I read to them carefully. After some questions, we went back to the panorama to look at Josefa Nowotny's skull and the others. We then started to analyze the differences between not-known and known pieces of Josefa Nowotny's identity. My colleague noted that for her "…it is astonishing that I tried but did not feel anything knowing that this is Josefa." Several visitors had similar reactions. Sometimes they 'confessed' in an apologetic way, that they did not feel anything when looking at the image, even with the knowledge about her name. One of the participants elaborated on her emotions towards Josefa Nowotny. "The information didn't change my feelings in a way, because I did not regard the remains as persons. But their circumstances are bothering". She asked me "Should they all be reburied?"

Conclusion

To conclude I would like to reflect on the idea of creating and using biographies for the engagement program of *Dead Images*. The tradition of biography has produced a variety of forms of this genre (Averintsev, 2002). Generally, biography is "characterized by a focus on the individual and personal content, and by an attention to the individual life-course. It claims to combine in itself the truth of the facts and

features of the inner worlds of the individual. Therefore, in the light of its mission to cover "the total reality of individual existence (W. Dilthey), biography combines the individual's life-course and inner world." (Polyakova, 2014: 2). It also follows a linear narrative. The biographies that we created for the exhibition and the "biographical tours" did neither follow a chronology nor other commonly used structures of biographies. As I have argued the biographies can be conceptualized as microhistories, to show the reciprocal effects and entanglements between micro- and macrohistories.

Through actively highlighting the gaps in the imperial/colonial archiving system, we focused on the absent heritage - the missing story. While going over thousands of archival entries, I had noticed that the individuals who were classified as non-Europeans had no information about their personal identity - the name. Contrasting this, I included in the biographical tours a biography of an individual who's name was known. She was labeled as a central European woman. As my audience research in the context of the biographical tours had shown, her biography triggered very personal responses from audiences. Did she become a subject to rehumanisation by us actively naming her? Or would just the giving of the biography be another possible dimension of humanisation? As for now, the same tool that enabled us to empathize and identify with Josefa Nowotny, fed into creating a stronger counterpart – an *other*. For future engagements with biographical tours it would be interesting to test if othering took place when biographies from individuals of different geographical backgrounds including personal names were used. Further it should include a reflexive discussion with participants on the construction of these biographies itself.

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[1] For a more detailed reflection on the ethical discussions within *Dead Images*, see Adler and Harries: Reflexive Photography and the Transformation of Shock – An Interview in this volume.

[2] Around 10 percent of the Natural History Museums osteological collection is considered to be obtained under ethically questionable circumstances according to the former director of the anthropology department and *Dead Images* team member Maria Teschler-Nicola, who investigated the collection history of these individuals (Teschler-Nicola 2013).

[3] Osteobiography: a term introduced 1989 by Saul and Saul, refers to the life history of a person imprinted in the human skeleton.

[4] Some would argue that these biographies should not be written without a collaborative process with heritage communities. Collaborations have been established but couldn't be included at the exhibition in Edinburgh. I hope there will be future opportunities to do so.

[5] After watching the videos of the exhibition, some visitors choose not to see the panorama of the skull cabinet.

6 Agustin Weisbach (1837-1914), Austrian physician, at the Imperial Royal Austro-Hungarian National Hospital in Istanbul and medical director of the 15th Army Corps in Sarajevo. He collected skulls and used 'the opportunity' (Khull-Kholwald 1915) as military doctor to carry out investigations on nationalities of the empire, which he published extensively. Weisbach mostly documented name, profession, physical characteristics, where the persons came from and the date of death, of the individuals whose skulls he kept. This could indicate an interaction with the person prior to his death or point to an interaction with a person who knew about the deceased person. It is questionable whether Weisbach had obtained consent from the individuals to use their bodies for his investigations or not. Also, Weisbach applied the colonial classification system on European population to emphasize physical difference and so to contribute to forming 'national types'.

Invisible Threads: How Museum Education Can Amend Curatorial Narratives

Stephanie Endter

> *When decolonising thought is at issue … then invisible mending is necessary. Gayatri C. Spivak describes this form of education as the weaving of invisible threads into an already existing texture. The resulting pattern is not determined in advance: the process of weaving never ends, and the weavers are at once the workers and the material to be worked on (Castro Varela 2007).*

This text sketches out an attempt to weave such (invisible) new threads into an exhibition at the Weltkulturen Museum, Frankfurt by means of public, guided tours[1] and in collaboration with their participants. The aim of this is to create a space for discussing collection policies, as well as the embeddedness of exhibited objects and the museum itself in colonial history, and for raising questions about the hierarchical representations of human beings, even in cases where the exhibition itself does not address such issues. This strategy is based upon an understanding of museum education that views itself as constituting an independent means of accessing an exhibition, which does not just passively reflect the narration proposed by the exhibition's curators, but also takes a stance on it.[2] The tours were given as part of the exhibition *The Common Thread: The Warp and Weft of Thinking*.[3] The exhibition, curated by Vanessa von Gliszczynski and co-curated by Max Carocci, Dr Mona Suhrbier and Dr Eva Ch. Raabe, was described in the museum's newsletter as follows:

> The Common Thread *reflects on and presents the culturally diverse techniques of textile production, taking as its point of departure the museum's Americas, South-East Asia, Oceania and Africa collections. Most of the 400-odd tools, fibres, fabrics and other objects will be on public display for the first time, including an ikat scarf laced with silver thread from Java, a pre-Columbian coca pouch from the Andes, a Maori cloak – which is a status symbol – as well as finely-knitted plush raffia fabrics from Central Africa.*
>
> *The exhibition also features works by artists and composers created in response to the textiles, their symbolic power, meanings and contemporary connections.*

> *Tobias Hagedorn and Raphaël Languillat, two young composers from the Frankfurt University of Music and Performing Arts (HfMDK), translate Indonesian fabric from the Weltkulturen Museum's collection into modern tapestries of sound. Artists Maren Gebhardt and Ruth Stützle Kaiser's installations visualise the relationship between textiles and the digital world. Taking inspiration from plaited baskets in the Americas collection, North-American artists Shan Goshorn and Sarah Sense highlight the poetic relationships between text and texture as well as aspects of their own indigenous identities. Young people from Frankfurt produced their own film about alternative textile manufacturing methods.*[4]

I will now give a brief imaginary walk-through of the exhibition, in order to make the subsequent written comments more easy to follow:[5]

On the ground floor, each room was dedicated to a phase in the process of manufacturing fabric. To kick off the exhibition, a number of German and English sayings related to textiles had been painted in red on the central wall of the foyer, such as '*umgarnen'* (to ensnare, lit. wrap yarn around), '*Knotenpunkt'* (hub, intersection, lit. knot point), 'thread of life', 'warp and weft of thinking', and so on. Directly in front of it stood a vitrine displaying various raw materials and fibres as well as worked threads and laces from the museum's collection.

In the doorways to each room short texts introduced visitors to the room's theme. Starting from the entry area, in the first room tools for working on fibres such as spindles, beaters and combs were on display. The adjoining room was dedicated to dyes; its vitrines including both natural and artificial dyes. In addition to a variety of dyed fabrics and some photos of the dyeing process, there was also a photo from 2012 with the slogan 'colour of the season', depicting of a river covered in pink foam in the Philippines: an image of how textile manufacturing pollutes the environment. Two further rooms were dedicated to the topic of weaving. They contained a number of different weaving machines, fly-shuttles, a warp rack and lots of woven fabrics from the museum's collection. Subsequent rooms showed films about textile manufacturing techniques from the visual anthropology collection. On the basement level works from Ruth Stützle Kaiser and Maren Gebhardt's *Weben und Web* [*Weave and Web*] were on

show. Along the wall of the semi-circular stairwell leading to the first floor, photos depicting “the people behind the manufacturing process”[6] were mounted.

On the first floor, further manufacturing processes and textiles such as tapa cloth, mesh fabric and braided fabric were displayed. One room was dedicated to ikat and batik techniques, another to the development of patterns by weaving with differently-coloured threads. Also on the first floor, woven paper works by Shan Goshorn and Sarah Sense were on display, and visitors could listen to musical compositions by Tobias Hagedorn and Raphaël Languillat. In addition, the film *Sechs Bunte Fäden* [*Six Coloured Threads*],[7] produced by Frankfurt school students, was screening in another room, and visitors also had the opportunity to weave something with a backstrap loom themselves. The inclusion of co-curators from both within the museum and elsewhere, the inviting of artists to engage with objects from the museum’s collection as well as the inclusion of the film in the exhibition enabled a number of different approaches to the exhibition’s theme. But which *invisible threads* were needed in order to weave in postcolonial perspectives and critiques of racism and dominant forms of representation?

Preparing the threads

To return to my research question: How is it possible for an educator to shed light on the cultural assets and the institution of the museum itself from different perspectives, and to make its contested nature both visible and negotiable, when the exhibition itself doesn’t address this? As Muttenthaler and Wonisch have demonstrated, exhibitions also tell stories other than those created by the curators, and particular objects or displays have the potential to broach what is “hidden”.[8] Whether these things are hidden, forgotten or omitted, in their collection and exhibition policies, ethnographic museums operate within a tradition of epistemological violence, and I want to incorporate these issues into museum education. As preparation for this research[9] conducted as part of the TRACES project we held a number of joint research workshops. In the group we discussed what contentious cultural heritage means in the context of an ethnographic museum and how we can succeed in addressing this in an educational setting. As a museum educator I conceive of myself as forming part of the power relations and historical continuities that I seek to address. With feedback from colleagues and in close

collaboration with Nora Schön, a co-researcher on the project, I identified a number of different objects from the exhibition that suggested themselves as points where we could weave in postcolonial, anti-racist and other discourses critical of dominant forms of representation. To announce my tour I wrote the following text, which was published on the museum's website:[10]

> *A discussion with Stephanie Endter (Head of Museum Education). Further thematic threads will be woven into the texture of the exhibition through discussions with visitors. Objects from the exhibition will be contextualised from ethnographic, postcolonial, historical and anti-racist perspectives*.[11]

The catalyst for this approach was a text by Adriana Muñoz entitled 'The Power of Labelling' (2009). In it Muñoz, a curator at Världskulturmuseet (Museum of World Culture) in Gothenburg, Sweden, describes a research project at her museum involving the reinvestigation of the Niño Korin Collection. To this end, various researchers were invited to participate, one of whom was Walter Quispe, a Kallawaya medicine man. His knowledge enabled the museum workers to completely reclassify the collection. One of the research project's main points of focus was the prevailing one-dimensional knowledge that operates in museum contexts:

> *All the knowledge constructed around the collections is one-dimensional. The objects in themselves have multiple levels of understanding, physical as well as metaphorical, ideological, etc. However, with [a]one-dimensional level of information, all the information comes from the same paradigm (*Muñoz 2009, p 10).

Considered in the context of museum education, this means addressing an object through the multiple layers of meanings that are inscribed within it. This also includes meanings that are not present in the curator's or museum's narrative.

Fig. 1. Image caption: Exhibition view of *The Common Thread*, Weltkulturen Museum. Photo: Wolfgang Günzel, 2016.

Seemingly inconspicuous labels

One of the objects chosen was a bundle of fibres and its descriptive label, placed in a vitrine in the foyer. The threads were approximately 40 cm long and light-coloured, and had been given the description ‘spruce-cone fibres’. On almost every tour, at least one of the participants raised doubts about this description/ascription. Actually the ‘spruce-cone fibres’ could be explained by a probable mistranslation. ‘Piña’, Spanish for pineapple, had been translated as ‘pine’, the family to which the spruce belongs. The fibres gave us the chance to discuss how objects come to be in the collection, which details and categories are conveyed and which are not, and how objects are administered. I encouraged the discussion participants to interrogate the things hanging on the museum walls and what they were told by museum representatives, myself included. On one tour this led participants to further doubt the truth of a number of other labels in the exhibition.

> *The participant asked me about another textile; we puzzled over whether the label could be correct. The participant smirks and says, ‘ah, maybe that too is one of the museum’s fairy tales.’*
>
> *Then in the next vitrine she doubts the veracity of a ‘pre-Columbian’ textile because it seems ‘unused’. We talk about the black market and I explain to them what I have read about illicit excavations, laws and their effectiveness and say that there certainly are a lot of counterfeits, but that I’m not aware of any such things among the exhibition’s textiles.*[12]

The error on the fibres’ label not only made it necessary to rectify the museum’s ‘truths’, it also allowed us to broach controversial topics.

Fig. 2. Image caption: Exhibition view: *The Common Thread*. Weltkulturen Berlin. Photo: Wolfgang Günzel, 2016

(Not) all spindles are created equal

At another ground-floor vitrine, predominantly filled with spindles, I expanded our examination of labels by considering the supposed neutrality of language.

One of the other researchers observing the tour recorded the sequence before the vitrine as follows:

> *Next room: spindles. Stephanie explains that the emphasis in the spindle vitrine is on* cultural comparison*, i.e. that European spindles look very similar to non-European ones, that different people arrived at similar things, that here too there are sensitive objects in collections … Stephanie explains that the delicate spindles date from the* pre-Columbian *period, and that such objects often come from graves. One must always inquire into the provenance of such objects; many of them made their way into the museum before laws pertaining to this process were passed.*[13]

Expanding on the curatorial narrative of cultural comparison, I began to discuss the issue of "sensitive objects in the collection", here the pre-Columbian spindles. The spindles and their labels[14] allowed me to bring up multiple issues at once: the use of spindles and illicit excavations. The inclusion of the captions made it possible to introduce another narrative, thus to "use these 'threshold object as a springboard by which to organise the transition from a way of speaking that follows the curatorial narrative to one that questions the exhibition's subtext, without losing one's listeners in the process."[15]

For me it was important to use the example of the spindles to make the power of naming clear, so I asked the visitors what 'pre-Columbian' meant to them and together we considered its etymological meaning. This temporal descriptor refers to the time before (pre-) the so-called 'discovery' of America by Christopher Columbus in 1492. Considered critically, 'pre-Columbian' posits a Western 'year zero' in the history of the American continent; it expresses the dominance of European interpretations of history and historiography.

The topic of 'grave finds' likewise demonstrates how strong the normalising effects of names can be. For most visitors, the objects were simply archaeological finds, and they were amazed by their age and good condition. They didn't associate them with any other topics. So I instigated a change of perspective by asking:

Who actually did the digging? What do we know about the objects' provenance? And what are burial objects doing here in a vitrine in Frankfurt?

I likewise pointed out to the visitors that the illegal export of archaeological objects has long been a problem and that various countries, such as Peru in 1822 (Larson 2015, 143) and Mexico in 1897 (ibid., 171), legally defined all archaeological objects as state property meaning that the export of such objects has since been illegal. However, that does not mean that the rights of indigenous groups to archaeological objects are thereby taken into consideration. At this point, participants became interested in the provenance of the objects in the vitrine, which expressed itself in questions about the legality of their acquisition. From the label it is not clear when the exhibited objects left Peru.

Fig. 03 / IMAGE 04 Image caption: Exhibition view: *The Common Thread*. Weltkulturen Museum. Photo: Wolfgang Günzel, 2016.

What labels (don't) say

Another time I went into more detail about the effects of the labels. Photos hung in the stairwell depicted people engaging in the crafts pertaining to the various stages of textile manufacturing. I asked participants to look at the photos as they went upstairs and to pay particular attention to the labels. What do they say? And what do they leave out?

> *We go up to the first floor, Stephanie points to the photos and suggests that we should think once more about what the photos say and what it means to represent people in such a way. Stephanie suggests that she finds it problematic that (with only one exception) there are almost no names on the photos. A visitor says that we can however see very clearly how people themselves used the objects. I cannot exactly remember what the visitor said after this, but in terms of atmosphere I recall that she had been very positive up to this point – she did not object to Stephanie's critical remarks, but seemed irritated.*[16]

For the most part participants recognised the curatorial intentions of the images: they were supposed to depict "the people behind the manufacturing process".[17] For the

visitors then, the presentation was a success. No-one noticed that the people depicted had no names and that only the technique being practised was referred to, such as "felt manufacture" or "*Batik tulis* at the Batik Institute". The names of the photographers and/or the holder of the rights to the photo were listed on the labels. On one tour a participant responded that perhaps the names were not given for privacy reasons, which to my mind can be disproved by the fact that the identity of those depicted is already well-enough disclosed by the photos themselves. For me the more important question that arises is who remains anonymous and why, and who is referred to by name? The fact that photographers are granted individuality and authorship while those depicted are de-individualised is linked to traditions of representation in ethnographic museums, in which cultural others were/are reduced to nameless objects. The photographs served to document research objects in their traditional environment and to provide evidence of this research in the museum (see Heath 2017).

Upon hearing my contextualisation of the photographs, one participant remarked that the way the photos are presented in the stairwell emphasised this interpretation, as the placement of the photos made them somewhat decorative or illustrative.

Multidirectional connections

A further theoretical point of reference for my interventions was the US literary scholar Michael Rothberg's concept of "multidirectional memory" (Rothberg 2009). In his text, Rothberg thinks perspectives on the politics of memory regarding both the Holocaust and colonialism together. He investigates the question of what happens when different historical memories come into contact with one another. Does the one memory efface the other? What happens when the memory of slavery and colonialism is juxtaposed with the memory of the Holocaust? Is it inevitable that a kind of competition between victims arises, as many historians presume? [->Conflict Learning]

Rothberg suggests

> *that we consider memory as* multidirectional*: as subject to ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing, and borrowing; as productive and not privative. ...*
> Multidirectional Memory *considers a series of interventions through which*

> *social actors bring multiple traumatic pasts into a heterogeneous and changing post-World War II present (*ibid., 3-4).

It is more productive here to avoid understanding the different narratives of remembrance as competing with one another: "... pursuing memory´s multidirectionality encourages us to think of the public sphere as a malleable discursive space in which groups do not simply articulate established positions but actually come into being through their dialogical interactions with others" (Ibid., p 5).

When applied to objects in an ethnographic museum this approach means that a single object can provide stimulus for a number of different, co-existing and perhaps even diametrically-opposed narratives. And that the museum can be a place where, if multidirectional memory is taken into consideration, new connections between different historical events can be created through dialogue. In Rothberg's words:

> *When the productive, intercultural dynamic of multidirectional memory is explicitly claimed ... it has the potential to create new forms of solidarity and new visions of justice (*Ibid., p 5).

I what follows I want to apply the thought of multidirectional memories to my tours in the exhibition and to a sequence in front of the vitrines in the foyer. Along with the plant and animal fibres, it also contained a bundle of human hair. I wanted to use the hair to discuss the issue of *sensitive objects* in ethnographic collections in the context of debates over demands for objects to be returned to their traditional owners or contexts.[18] [->Individual Story] When is human hair 'profane material' and when is it subject to ethical considerations? I prepared a short text on the basis of the Deutsche Museumbund's *Recommendations for the Care of Human Remains in Museums and Collections*:

> *Many German museums and other collections are home to human remains from all over the world. ... Ethnographic museums/collections in particular also hold human remains in a variety of forms, for example shrunken heads, tattooed heads, scalp locks, mummies or bone flutes. In addition, human remains such as hair and bones can also be incorporated into (ritual) objects. Human remains*

are highly sensitive items in a collection. They can provoke intense emotions and can be of intense interest and concern to third parties. When dealing with human remains it is of fundamental importance to always consider issues pertaining to ethics and human dignity.

In order to weave in even more perspectives, I prepared 10 half-page information cards on the topic of hair. The little cards were printed with details from discussions with colleagues as well as results from newspaper, internet, and academic research.[19] This method was based on Teresa Distelberger's "multi-perspectival information" model from documenta 12 (Distelberger 2009). For her 'open tours', she created brief statements, each one sentence long, about two artworks that she handed out to participants to read before viewing the works. Distelberger was interested in finding out if the information on the slips of paper changed participants' views of the works. For me on the other hand, the cards would be used to interlace different discourses, to not merely recite them in a monologue, but rather to encourage participants to engage with the objects in a multi-perspectival manner via the texts. My goal was for us to learn together and to blur the boundaries between the educator as 'expert' and visitor as 'unknowing learner'.

During the tour, if anyone noticed the hair bundle while looking at the vitrine,[20] I asked the group if they would be okay with making a short detour on the topic of hair and handed out the cards.[21] I asked those present to take some time to read the text on their card. When everyone appeared to have finished reading them, I asked them if they wanted to share any information from the texts or their own thoughts about hair with the group. When I tested the activity for the first time in a curatorial setting, I noted down the following in a memo afterward:

After reading a text by a conservator-restorer about the difficulties of preserving hair and sharing this with the group, a woman suggested that for her hair had completely different associations, namely that during the Nazi era people had their hair cut off in the concentration camps to humiliate them and also so that it could then be put to other uses. Another participant, who was evidently holding a card about this, said that she had a text on the topic, but she placed it on top of the vitrine and said that she could not say anything about it and fell silent.

Another participant spoke up and said that hair from the concentration camps was used to fill mattresses, and yet another woman said that it was not only in the concentration camps that hair was cut off, but also in France, where women who had taken up with German soldiers had had their hair shaved off as punishment. The discussion quietened down. What else?

A woman said that she had a text in which human hair is described as a completely normal raw material. I said that that came from one of the curators and asked her to read it out. She did so. Then someone else suggested that human hair is already highly-charged, and seeing as no one else said anything, I tried to connect this to the idea of 'sensitive objects' and explained how ethnographic collections are often in possession of them. How this happens, what it means, provenance research, restitution, etc. – Nods. No questions.[22]

In the episode mentioned here it is clear that the exhibiting of human remains is acknowledged as potentially problematic. Although the association between hair and concentration camps is far removed from the specific object at hand, it still triggers something in the visitors. I introduced the topic by means of one of the cards, yet in this case the association came from a woman who had a card about 'hair and its conservational challenges'. By contrast, the participant with 'hair from victims of concentration camps and its industrial usage' on her card remained silent and placed her card on the vitrine. 'Mountains of hair in Auschwitz' is one of the images that has entered German popular collective memory. This association is more rapidly recalled than knowledge about the history of ethnographic collections, which includes that of the collection of human remains as part of the colonial exercise and demonstration[23] of power.

Remaining silent in such a situation also bears meaning. As a facilitator I found the silence unsettling. What was being expressed by this silence and the placing of the card on the vitrine? Perhaps the person felt uneasy about speaking to strangers in a tour open to the public. Yet it is equally possible that she did not want to say anything about this topic, or that her falling silent was an expression of dismay.

I asked myself if it is defensible to confront people with such difficult topics on a tour that is open to the public. My position on this is that the museum isn't obliged to be a 'comfortable place'. On a tour for adults that is open to the public, I can assume as a facilitator that most participants can judge their emotions themselves. By this I don't mean to suggest that sensitive topics don't need to be dealt with in a sensitive fashion. In this case, pressing someone about the reason for their silence would have been uncalled for. There could be many reasons for her declining to speak, perhaps related to personal histories, memories, experiences or even trauma.

Losing the thread?

I would like to take a closer look at the following passage from my memorandum, which I cited above:

> *Another participant spoke up and said that hair from the concentration camps was used to fill mattresses, and yet another woman said that it was not only in the concentration camps that hair was cut off, but also in France, where women who had taken up with German soldiers had had their hair shaved off as punishment.*

Is this a case of a productive exchange between memories[24] in the sense of 'multidirectional memory'? There are two ways of reading this passage. The first is that the memories are related to one another. The second is that the memories are opposed to one another, that the mention of the French women whose "hair was also shaved off" reduces the weight of the barbarity of cutting off hair in the context of concentration camps, and that here, knowledge serves as a possible diversion and allows competition between victims to arise.

The texts on the cards together with participants' associations unleashed a number of contradictions. Without the intervention of the facilitator, the situation remains unresolved and 'multidirectional memory' can't really be productive. In order to counteract the possibility of competition arising between memories, I believe it is incumbent on the facilitator to take a stand, to set participants' different memories in relation to one another, and even to explicitly mention the danger of competition arising

between victims. Only then can new connections between different historical events arise.

What now?

> *Regarding the general procedure, it is worth noting that the tour comprises of a mix of classical factual information and interrogating the approach/the museum (grave finds/photos). I had the impression that because of this it was always possible for visitors to get on board. I would describe this as a kind of gentle radical critique.*[25]

The discussions were brief meetings of people who did not know each other. They expected something resembling a classical "affirmative museum education" (Mörsch 2009) experience, that is, receiving knowledge from a museum representative. Upon being asked at the beginning of the discussion, most participants wanted to learn more about textile production methods and the objects exhibited. As a facilitator I took their expectations seriously and gave them detailed relevant information. But at the same time I opened up fissures that obliged participants to take a position. It was a matter of opening up questions and possibilities for negotiation rather than aiming for consensus.

Weaving invisible threads into museum education could therefore be described as picking up threads from the exhibition (narratives from the exhibition, the objects and their labels), linking them in a different way and weaving them further. For example, the fact that a space for discussion is opened up by inviting visitors to participate, or that more *invisible* voices were woven in. Historical knowledge, which played no role in the exhibition, can also be woven in and omissions can be pointed out. With their omissions and intimations, objects and their labels provide points of departure. They also have something to say; they are used as 'threshold object', not in order to speak about them, but rather to speak with them and with their untold stories.[26]

The conclusion to be drawn from this experience is that by fulfilling visitors' expectations (in this case that of receiving information about the objects exhibited and textile manufacturing methods), the educator can also create fissures and weave in other threads. In this way, visitors remain well-disposed toward the educator It is even

possible to create a to-and-fro between fulfilling visitors' expectations and the curatorial narrative on the one hand, and completely different, critical narratives that call the museum into question on the other, through questions such as "Who is speaking?", "Where do the objects come from?", and "Who is depicting whom?" In this case, "affirmative museum education" is the precondition for successful "deconstructive museum education" or even "transformative museum education".27

> *If the museum is a place that came into being through Europe's appropriation of* the world*, something that people today engage with critically, then it can also be a place where this European view of the world can be unlearned.*[28]

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[1] Public tours were offered several times a week and were included in the price of admission. The names and professional backgrounds and experience of the guides and possible topics to focus on were published on the museum's website.

[2] See for example Mörsch (2009) or Schnittpunkt et al. 2005.

[3] Exhibition *The Common Thread: The Warp and Weft of Thinking*, Weltkulturen Museum, November 17th 2016 - August 27th 2017.

[4] From the Weltkulturen Museum's newsletter for October/ November/ December 2016.

[5] It is not possible to incorporate all aspects of the exhibition in this brief description. The imaginary tour given here merely serves to give a brief insight into what my interventions were responding to. For more information, see the exhibition catalogue: Gliszczynski et al. 2016.

[6] Spoken by curator Vanessa von Gliszczynski during a tour for facilitators, 9th November 2016.

[7] Online: http://www.weltkulturenmuseum.de/de/vermittlung/projekte/8867 (accessed 10.01.2018)

[8] "Every statement, every representation excludes ... other possibilities, but what is shown and what remains invisible are inextricably linked. Museums thus not only create images that correspond to social norms and values; they also address what is hidden" (Muttenthaler/ Wonisch 2006).

[9] I transcribed four of the tours/ discussions in the exhibition from memory afterwards. An external observer was present for two of these tours taking notes.

[10] It is worth noting that no one actually attended a tour because of the announcement, so participants entered into the interactive education situation unawares.

[11] For the announcement of the text see https://www.weltkulturenmuseum.de/de/content/gespraech-der-ausstellung-2 (accessed 27.01.2018). In one of our collective meetings, I drew a colleague's attention to the fact that the announcement addressed an academic audience through its choice of words. While writing it, I had precisely this audience in mind, thanks to my experience of who normally attends public tours. Yet it is worth considering formulating the text differently, to try to address a different audience.

[12] Transcript from memory Stephanie Endter, 17.05.2017

[13] Transcript from observation Karin Schneider, 01.3.2017

[14] Label descriptions included among other things 'pre-Columbian spindles, Peru', and 'Spindle bowl, Mexico'. They were not described as grave finds. So-called pre-Columbian objects mostly come from graves.

[15] From the theory-memo 'Transitorisches Objekt' by Karin Schneider. The figure of the 'transitional object' arose out of a group textual analysis as part of a TRACES workshop at the Weltkulturen Museum held on May 16th, 2017.

[16] BP_KS_08032017

[17] See endnote 6

[18] See Recommendations for the Care of Human Remains in Museums and Collections, online: https://www.museumsbund.de/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/2013-recommendations-for-the-care-of-human-remains.pdf (accessed 16.01.2019)

[19] Kristina Werner, one of the museum's conservator-restorers, commented on the hair from a conservation perspective. In response to a query about the hair from one of the facilitators, Oceania Custodian and Acting Director Dr Eva Ch. Raabe wrote an email in which she evaluated the hair displayed in the exhibition as profane material. I also conducted internet searches with queries such as "Obtaining hair for wig manufacture in Indian temples", "Hair and its function for the human body", "Hair in the production of food" as well as "Hair in feminist discourse" and hair in the (anti-)racist discourse of "Good Hair, Bad Hair". I also prepared information about the topic of the "industrial use of the hair of concentration camp victims in the Nazi era", as I knew from previous discussions with visitors that this association often came up.

[20] Usually, somebody immediately remarked upon the bundle of hair. If this was not the case, a little nudge asking if we could only see plant-based fibres was of assistance.

[21] With the texts it turned out to be important that they were all of a similar length and were no longer than half a page. The sources were given with the text, so as to make clear the provenance of the information in each case.

[22] Transcript from memory Stephanie Endter, 11.2.2017

[23] To give an example, during the colonial war waged by Germany against the Herero and Nama peoples between 1903 and 1908, the remains of many people killed in the war, sentenced to be hanged or who perished in concentration camps were brought to Germany on so-called 'racial research grounds'. In many other countries too, the collecting of skulls, bones and hair can be traced back to colonial domination. Many such human remains are still held in part in research institutions, museums and universities. The overhaul of collections on the basis of their own histories as well as provenance research going back to the colonial period has become topical in recent years. Such research also addresses human remains.

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[24] Memories can be multifaceted, incorporating one's own biographical memories or collective memories that are handed on and appropriated as knowledge of past events.

[25] Concluding comments, transcript from observation Karin Schneider, 01.03.2017

[26] I would like to thank Karin Schneider for her helpful hints.

[27] For these concepts, see Mörsch (2009)

[28] Transcription: Statement by Nora Landkammer, TRACES Workshop 1, 11.10.2016

Enquiring with School Students into the Ownership and Restitution of Cultural Heritage: Museum Education and Non-Knowledge

Nora Landkammer

The attempt referred to in the title of this essay was made by Julia Albrecht, Karin Schneider and me, along with three different school groups, in the period from March to June 2017.[1] As part of our action research on education at Frankfurt's Weltkulturen Museum, we developed a workshop with the title *Was macht das hier?* (What's that doing here?), in which young people engaged with questions around provenance, ownership and claims to cultural property in an ethnographic collection.

This paper emerged from a collective process of reflection undertaken by the entire workshop team (see also Schneider: Transition points in this volume, Albrecht 2018 and the practical resources in Endter/Landkammer/Schneider 2018) [-> Transition points]. We have focused on the question of what it means to 'educate' when we are unable to transmit knowledge to the participants because that very knowledge is lacking. My text elucidates this programmatic focus for our educational work and contextualises our experiences.

In the public interest: debates over collections and the absence of museum education

Summer 2017. Feelings about the planned Humboldt Forum in Berlin were running high, including in the daily newspapers. "It's the colonial core of the Humboldt Forum that needs to be interrogated – and there's far too little of that taking place," said Professor Jürgen Zimmerer in an interview with NDR Kultur (Zimmerer 2017). Part of that interrogation includes discussing 300 years of collecting, "with all of the chicaneries and all of the hopes that are connected with it. That's us, that's Europe." These are the words of frustration Bénédicte Savoy used to articulate her demand when she left the commission.[2] Provenance research was called for, and was announced, but formulations vacillated between blanket designations of the collections in their entirety as plunder, counter-positions, and attempted appeasements

maintaining that the objects had only become "items of value" after being brought to Europe, or that the trading histories were so convoluted that they were "almost impossible to reconstruct" (Kohl 2017, n.p.). The issues surrounding the acquisition of ethnographic collections, their present ownership and possible restitutions make up one of the most controversial debates concerning ethnographic museums. This debate is also one of the most sensational in the press.

Alongside this is the fact that hardly any educational programs addressing the topic are taking place in the museums themselves.[3] In the course of my dissertation project I carried out a study based on interviews with education staff at ethnographic museums in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.[4] When it comes to the relevance of ownership and restitution as topics of museum education, the overwhelming majority of those I interviewed said that there was no educational activity aimed directly at the topic. This does not mean that the topic plays no role at all: "Restitution or provenance? Good question. Well, it plays a role to the degree that of course people often ask about it. Very often", explained one facilitator.[5] It is necessary, they added, that "the guides are as well informed as possible," so as to be able to answer these questions. But what does 'well informed' mean in a debate in which it is continually pointed out that it is no longer possible to ascertain how some objects made their way to Germany, and in which what is considered problematic is also an open question? Are specific cases of violent appropriation the issue, or do we need to talk about a much broader colonial context; the fact, namely, that – whether bought, donated or traded – cultural goods were removed and taken to Europe in massive quantities, thus coming to stand for Europe's efforts to take possession of the world? Certainly the interviews show that in particular cases and at the initiative of individual facilitators, the topic is being actively addressed.[6] But it is important to specify that although educational activities (and exhibitions themselves) often address the history of collections and even include an ethical dimension, the meaning of those histories for the on-going fate of the collection and the question of restitution is not addressed. "That happens far too seldom," including in exhibitions, said one facilitator.[7] At the same time, the same educator rejected fears that dealing openly with the provenance debate would hurt the museum's reputation:

> I don't think that by doing that we would present ourselves in a negative light, if we acknowledged that something like that is part of the history of our institution, that we often got access to such things, if I can put it this way, in unethical or immoral ways. … If you make a declaration like that, … you move away from the position of saying that here and now, you are representing the only possible truth (ibid.).

In this statement, open communication of ethical issues is associated with a transformation of the museum often demanded by new museology: from narratives that lay claim to truth to reflexivity and debate. In this context, education in museums can achieve what scholars in the field have called for time and again: by focusing in on the biographies of individual objects and complicating the simplistic 'here' and 'there' through the plurality of actors and the transformation of the meanings of objects, and also by questioning the use of juridical terminology (is a purchase legitimate when made within an unjust context?), it becomes possible to bring complexity into the debate, beyond simplistic dichotomies like 'it's all just stolen goods' versus 'everything here is legal'. Above all, education can come closer to the forward-looking view discussed by Christian Kravagna in his text 'Vom ethnologischen Museum zum unmöglichen Kolonialmuseum' (From the Ethnographic Museum to the Impossible Colonial Museum), namely that ethnographic museums can become "important institutions of memory and the politics of history, particularly in the German-speaking world, where colonialism is largely invisible" (Kravagna 2015, 96).

What's that doing here?

But what might education around ownership and restitution look like, in a concrete sense? How can it deliver the complexity that this topic requires? The workshop format *What's that doing here?* was an attempt to put education on the topic into practice through an enquiry-based approach[8] [-> Transition points]. The workshop focused on selected objects from the Weltkulturen Museum's African collection. In the course of a whole-day visit to the museum, school students made use of the provided informational materials, their own internet research, and an interview with the curator of the collection, Julia Friedel, to enquire into the objects' histories and

possible perspectives on them. They were tasked with carrying out research on an object and arriving at their own answer to the question: what should happen with this object in the future? The objects that we selected, together with Julia Friedel, were not only diverse in terms of their origins (they came from present-day Cameroon, Namibia, Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo), but also in terms of what is known about their origin and acquisition. Thus, one item in the selection was a relief panel from the Royal Palace of the Oba of Benin – an object, then, that forms part of the cultural property whose route to Europe following the plunder of the palace in Benin City as part of the Punitive Expedition of 1897 is widely known, and the subject both of extensive research and active and controversial debate among researchers, members of the present-day royal house, museum representatives and activists concerning the object's location and the possibility of its return. For other collection artefacts, for example an object described as 'Herero', there was almost no other information provided – only knowledge about the context, German colonial rule and the genocide. Another object that we chose, described as a 'ceremonial knife', made in the present-day Democratic Republic of the Congo, was also scarcely documented; indications of the use of ceremonial knives as means of exchange also muddied the clear connection of cultural objects with specific places. The objects testify to complex, multi-layered histories of collection – but above all they also confronted us and the students with the many questions that remain open, with non-knowledge.

Non-knowledge is not a specific concept. Rather, it is initially just the negation of a concept, the concept 'knowledge'. Many things can be contained in this negative concept: a lack of information, the fact that a question is undecided, *Unwissen* (lit. un-knowledge, a word that that implies a deficit on the part of the subject), ignorance (which suggests a decision not to know). Here I use non-knowledge as an open code with which to evaluate experiences generated through the workshop.

Education regarding questions to which the museum lacks answers: non-knowledge and postcolonial pedagogy

The fact that I am discussing non-knowledge here has to do with our point of departure in developing our workshop. It seemed obvious that the reason education

around the topic of ownership and restitution is difficult (and rarely occurs) is that it aims to raise questions to which the museum has no answer, rather than passing on knowledge that the museum already has. On the one hand this relates to gaps in knowledge, the provenance research that is lacking for many objects, their unresolved origins, the routes they have travelled, and the communication that has yet to take place with institutions and communities in the places of origin. On the other hand it concerns the fact that the foundations of the debate are a matter of dispute, and that the possession and proper location of the objects is an open question on which museums are trying to define their positions, and on which there is often disagreement, including within the institutions themselves.

Centering our workshops on the lack of knowledge and on disagreement was not only necessary in order to do justice to the subject matter, it was also based on our ideas on a postcolonial pedagogy in ethnographic museums. An approach that is critical of colonialism begins by questioning the place from which one speaks. "Who can claim the right to own and represent the culture of other people?" is how Sylvester Okwunodu Ogbechie (2013, 79) sums up the question that is at stake in museums and in each speech act that occurs within them.

The attempt to replace traditional narratives at ethnographic museums with new, critical ones gets caught in a contradiction. The notion of postcolonial critique as an unbroken transmission of knowledge, even if this knowledge is now critical knowledge, re-inscribes the museum as the place with the 'right knowledge', where a public that is mostly imagined as white and uninformed comes to be enlightened[9] [-> Invisible threads]. Thus the museum once again becomes the place where European perspectives define what is known about the rest of the world – and this is the crux of the colonial paradigm. Coloniality, after all, is about an epistemic violence that operates to produce subjectivities and knowledge (Quijano 2000). For us, then, it was crucial to interrupt both the museum's claim to the right to interpret, and our own position as its (temporary) spokespeople, and to focus on gaps and questions.

Our starting point, therefore, was the museum's non-knowledge. How is it dealt with in practice? What forms of non-knowledge are there? What dynamics are connected with it?

How do we come to know what we think we know?

An initial observation was that students themselves closed the gaps in the group's knowledge. We had started from our shared non-knowledge, which we wished to address in the research. In their contributions to the discussion, however, students demonstrated that they were not merely drawing on the research done directly as part of the workshop. One student was very well informed about the demands to return ancient artefacts to Greece, one group had visited the British Museum on a school trip, where they had heard about several controversies over cultural property. But if I speak here of the students' knowledge, I am also talking about less concrete prior information, about implicit assumptions on which the students drew. One example that came up in our workshops multiple times and caused me to reflect was provided by arguments regarding the safety of the objects. One group of students reasoned in the following way: "It should stay in the museum because it's safer there." A "cultural treasure" like this needs to be protected, argued another research group, saying that this can be achieved better and more comprehensively in Germany. A further group held that there "aren't any good museums or infrastructure" in the place to which the object might potentially be transported.[10]

The research materials that we made available in the workshop did not contain these arguments. They match reasoning that is often brought forward in discussions around ownership and restitution in museum discourse. In her article on the debates over whether to return ethnographic collections, Anette Rein presents the safety argument, that museums in the countries of origin would be "unable to guarantee the conditions necessary to keep the exhibits secure and to conserve them, to protect them," as one of three central arguments by which Western museums reject demands for restitution (Rein 2006, 45). Students did not hesitate to treat a higher level of security for the objects in Germany as a matter of fact, even when possible recipients in the objects' countries of origin had not even been defined yet, and thus nothing could be said about security measures.

What the students I have just cited believed they knew about museums in countries with which they are not acquainted, coinciding as it does with the justifications

articulated by museums, indicates that the 'security argument' has implicit recourse to existing regimes of knowledge regarding the states of 'security' and 'insecurity' in the world, to images of the African continent that are apparently strong enough to figure as certainties with which to respond to the open questions raised in the workshop. I would like to refer to this as a hegemonic effect, which perhaps reveals itself particularly clearly in a workshop setting that takes non-knowledge as its starting point. When facilitators leave the narrative open, it is easy to fall into the habit of applying schemes that present themselves as the implicit knowledge of a primarily European-educated group.

These hegemonic effects are related not only to the students' seemingly unquestioned assumptions, but also to the structure of the discourse around collecting and restitution that provided the occasion for our workshop. This discourse is focused on European museums, their collections, and the questions that are raised by them. The focus is not on museums in the Global South and their possible interest in European collections. This is mirrored in the current project-funding landscape, with several provenance research projects at German ethnographic museums currently receiving funding.[11] The 'Africa Accessioned' project, launched in 2014 at the International Committee of Museums and Collections of Ethnography (ICME) by museum representatives from Zambia and Namibia, is discovering which material culture holdings from the focus regions in southern Africa are preserved in which European museums, in order to enable access and initiate corresponding collaborative projects. Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe are involved, and the focus of the collaborations is on collections in Finland, Germany, Sweden and England. While funding is being directed to 'provenance' research – a concept that asks the question of 'where the objects come from' – the other side of provenance research, research on the question of 'where the objects are going', on the location of one's own cultural heritage, has so far taken place without substantial financial support (Silvester 2018, Jarling 2017).

This structure of the discourse also shaped our workshop: we inquired into the origins and futures of the objects from the standpoint of the Weltkulturen Museum. The materials did contain information about restitution claims, but none about the museum landscape in the corresponding regions.

Thus it becomes clear that the focus on non-knowledge necessitates a deconstruction of that which we believe we know, what we believe we do not have to know, and the way that this knowledge is structured. Unlearning is the term that usually refers to this in postcolonial pedagogy, mostly with reference to Gayatri Spivak. In order that it be possible to ‘unlearn’, “learning in general [has to become] visible as a result of hegemonic conditions, acquired knowledge and abilities have to become possible objects of reflection,” writes Nora Sternfeld in *Verlernen Vermitteln* (Teaching Unlearning), a text that takes up the concept for museum and cultural education (Sternfeld 2014, 10f.). ‘Unlearning’ also means ‘learning’; as Grimaldo Rengifo Vázquez, a Peruvian pedagogue from the tradition of liberation pedagogy, writes, unlearning knowledge means, “curiously, learning it anew” (Rengifo Vázquez 2003, 29).

Unlearning is a deconstructive operation. There were moments in the workshops in which unlearning took place in a way that could be seen and heard. Simply saying “we don’t know if there are museums there” challenged the students to do research. One group, which was looking into an object from Cameroon, googled for museums. They found the TripAdvisor list of the ‘Top Ten Museums in Cameroon’. They were impressed that the national museum was decidedly more imposing than the one in Frankfurt in which we happened to find ourselves.[12] [=> transition points].

Unsettling and unlearning

We experienced several light-bulb moments like that, in which new insights emerged by questioning knowledge and its gaps. But they tended to be the exception rather than the rule.

The workshop transcripts contain numerous sentences like these:

> “We don’t know exactly how the missionary got it.”
> “The motivation behind it wasn’t recorded.”
> “She says she doesn’t know and that’s the end of the discussion.”

> "The circumstances surrounding how the objects came here are unclear. It's an important piece. Why such an important piece was ever given away in the first place is unclear."
> "He says it's not clear whether it was stolen or exchanged, and says that that conversation can only be had with people in Cameroon. We're the wrong people to talk to."[13]

The passages cited from the transcripts, which document statements from the facilitators, the curator and the students, all concern the fact that something has not been made known, is unclear, that knowledge is lacking. Questions were solicited and the answer was: we don't know. What is already clear from the chosen statements is the dead-end character that these observations often have: "that's the end of the discussion", "we're the wrong people to ask". The transcripts describe moments in which all that remained for the students was a search for another question to pose to the curator, or questioning looks towards us facilitators. Feeling unsettled, falling silent, focusing on existing facts (the ambitious students), looking for alternative activities (the less engaged ones). Certainly not a 'successful' educational situation in which everyone feels at ease. Non-knowledge was unsettling and led to frustration.

These moments of frustration, silence, unsettlement and evasion are possibly more essential for processes of unlearning than the scenes we immediately recognised as scenes of insight, of revision of prior assumptions – even though the former didn't always feel so positive for me as a facilitator.

Because what was being unsettled here? The moments of helplessness had to do with the fact that dealing openly with the unknown and undecided meant that there was much more at stake than a concrete question to which an answer was lacking. What was also up for renegotiation were the assumptions both that a museum should inform people objectively and unambiguously how things are, and that scholarly enquiry is a neutral matter. The why, who and what of knowledge became historical and contingent. And ultimately, the students had reason to doubt whether the question we had posed regarding a suitable future for the objects was a question of knowledge at all, or whether it was a political one that depended on how much weight was given to the individual arguments.

Unlearning can be described as a ‘loss’, a process discussed from a psychoanalytic perspective by psychoanalyst and education researcher Deborah Britzmann in *Lost Subjects, Contested Objects*. In Britzmann’s description of experiences of learning from violent history, “meaning, for the learner, becomes fractured, broken, and lost” (Britzmann 1998, 118). If images of self and world are ‘lost’ in the course of learning, the process can be compared to ‘working through’ grief (ibid). When suppositions like “I’m sure it’s all above board”[14] – uttered by a student in the first workshop – become untenable in the face of gaps in what we know and the orders of things begins to unravel, it is not exactly a feel-good situation. Unlearning is more a work of mourning than a ‘eureka!’ experience – it calls on the facilitators to bear the fact that the situation is not perceived as productive or pleasurable.

Access to knowledge denied

The transcript of our workshop contains the following description:

> [A student poses the question of] whether colonies still exist. Participant [name] speaks once more: ‘I don’t think so, but there are countries that still have colonial names.’ Further cards are read out, a participant passes them around. Many participants seem listless, pieces of paper fly about.[15]

I remember the moment because it was an unpleasant situation for me as facilitator. It was a question that has answers. However, they are not simple. One could try it like this: territories still exist that are formally designated as colonies; most of them are islands, like the British Virgin Islands or New Caledonia. They can be called colonies because while they are not independent, their citizens do not enjoy the same rights as those in the ‘motherland’, as is the case with ‘overseas regions’ like Réunion, which belongs to France. However, the question is more complicated because that is a very formal definition of a colony. One also ought to include the fact that while many states are independent, their dependence upon former colonial powers has been preserved economically, or new forms of dependency or political interference have arisen. Such conditions are referred to as neo-colonial.

Now I did not give this answer, nor did the other facilitators say anything in response to the question. I gave no answer because I wasn't sure which territories connected with the classical colonial powers have equal rights status (overseas territories) and which do not. The only example that immediately occurred to me was Puerto Rico, which is governed by the USA but is not a state and does not have the same representation within the government that states do. What also prevented me from introducing this example was that it would involve a shift of topic and of period, requiring us to broach the subject of the USA as a colonial power. So I remained silent and all that arose in response to the question was the answer of a student who said that some countries are still designated by colonial names. That and the general listlessness that was noticed by the author of the written record.

I have already discussed the role of non-knowledge in our workshops on several levels. I have described the confrontation with a lack of knowledge as essential for unlearning existing assumptions about museums and scholarly enquiry. And I have described how initially-accepted gaps in knowledge – about museums and the African continent – can be interrogated. Gayatri Spivak has coined the term 'sanctioned ignorance' to refer to socially accepted non-knowledge. She speaks of a state of being uninformed that is not viewed as a gap in a person's education but, on the contrary, stabilises their position. The episode that I have just described makes it clear that instances of this kind of powerful ignorance were not only questioned but also perpetuated in our workshops. The student needed knowledge and she did not receive it. The answer I failed to give has to do with an ignorance of my own, but one that at that moment also allowed me to avoid complexity. A complexity that would have been just what was needed. Because the question of whether there are still colonies today points to the motivation to understand what colonial history has to do with the here and now – just about the most essential question that could arise from our workshop topic.

Ignorant schoolmistresses and exclusions

Non-knowledge became important during the workshop in yet another way. I'd like to turn to a concrete situation that arose the second time we ran it: this time the group

conducting research on the relief panel from Benin consisted of three girls. I jotted down my observations in the transcript:

> It seems as if their first language is German, or at least they all have very good oral skills in the language. They listen attentively as I introduce the research task and the worksheet, and they pose several questions regarding the procedure. One girl asks: "Should we read all of that?" and points to the many copied texts that are spread out across the table. I say no and explain once more that they are to use the questions to choose something and can also use the computer to search the internet. They can leaf through the texts in order to find out which one might be important for them and read it. I leave them alone.
>
> Later on: I come back into the room and find them sitting around the table with somewhat glum-looking faces. I ask how it's going. A student points to the text from the catalogue 'Being object, being art' ('Reliefplatte – Königreich Benin' in Sibeth 2009, 92f.) and says: "Miss, we don't understand it." There were so many words they didn't understand. I offer to help them. It begins with the title: 'RELIEF PANEL: Kingdom of Benin, Nigeria'. What's a relief? They have further questions regarding the first sentences of the text. They have underlined the words:
>
> 'Objects made of bronze and ivory from the former Kingdom of Benin in southern Nigeria are among the most important documents of African art. The first reports of the existence of this kingdom came from Portuguese seafarers at the end of the fifteenth century. According to tradition, the dynastic origins of the kingdom lie in the thirteenth century. Descriptions by European travellers followed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The accounts reveal that the Europeans were deeply impressed by the splendour of the capital, Benin City. The palace buildings made a particular impression on account both of their architectural design, with extensive atria, and their wooden palace walls and pillars, decorated with metal relief panels. These panels were produced by means of a technique known as lost-wax casting. The exceptionally impressive art of Benin was at the service of the *oba*, the king'

> So they don't understand the word 'dynastic', which means that the whole sentence is a mystery to them. I translate for them: "A dynasty is a family of kings. It means that the next king comes from the same family. Like with the Habsburgs." They look at me quizzically. "No matter," I say, "that's usually the way with kings, like with the Queen of England and Prince Charles and all of them." They nod. "So the beginning, when there was first a royal family there, was in the thirteenth century," I explain.[16]

Not knowing vocabulary was obviously not one of the things we were thinking of when we spoke of 'non-knowledge' as a starting point. An enquiry-based approach, in which the facilitators emphasise that they have no answers and let the students draw their own conclusions can resemble the figure Jacques Rancière (1991) describes as the "ignorant schoolmaster". With the historical example of Jean Joseph Jacotot, a French scholar in the eighteenth century, Rancière describes a teacher who instructs students who do not speak the same language as him. A translated book becomes a riddle for the students, who teach themselves the language. By means of this example, Rancière reveals the equal intelligence of all, as well as the emancipation that builds not on 'being taught', but precisely on the teacher's ignorance.

> Explication is not necessary to remedy an incapacity to understand. On the contrary, this very incapacity is the structuring fiction of the explicative conception of the world. It is the explicator who needs the incapable and not the other way around; it is he who constitutes the incapable as such (Rancière 1991, 6).

The emancipation narrative of this book, which has been widely read in art contexts in particular, neglects to mention two essential factors: firstly, it is still the schoolmaster who selects the book. The emancipation is therefore relative to the extent that the goal to be reached remains the same as in other pedagogical arrangements, namely that the teacher determines what is to be learned and the students' ultimate destination (rather than arriving somewhere else entirely, for example, by teaching themselves how to take school furniture apart rather than deciphering the book). Secondly: who the 'students' are (they are male, by the way), does not seem to be important to Rancière.

The instruction takes place at a university. The capacities that the students bring with them – not only the ability to read but also their possession of forms of independent learning – are filtered out when the experience is transformed into a universal theory of emancipatory learning. The ways these previous forms of knowledge build on the 'distinctions' that Bourdieu investigates (Bourdieu 1984),[17] which regulate access to knowledge in class-specific ways, go by the board.

If earlier I described experiences of contingency, the confrontation with the unknown, as essential for post-colonial unlearning, I now must add an equally essential objection. The thesis is untenable if students only see the gaps in their own knowledge. Dealing with non-knowledge proves to be a specific competence, indeed, a particular form of subjectivation: perceiving oneself as a 'researcher' engaged in deciphering a reality that although it is not immediately intelligible is in principle accessible to one's intellect is something that is rehearsed and learnt. This was revealed in relation to the different school groups that participated in our workshop. One of the groups had an established practice of project work and 'enquiry-based learning' that the students felt was easy to apply to our workshop. The way one group of students proceeded made it clear that we are talking about a capacity that is the result of training: the group listened to the explanation of the materials and asked: "how much time do we have? I'll set the stopwatch on my phone," before dividing up the research questions and materials for efficient processing. Others had rehearsed and learnt the idea that if something remains unknown, then the problem is them. The girls in the Benin group were unable to see the fact that there are gaps in what is known about the object, because they were unable to see past the gaps in their own knowledge. Retreating to the position of 'ignorant schoolmistresses' produces exclusions. Museum education that focuses on non-knowledge and unlearning ought not to neglect the facts that 'independent learning' and a tolerance for ambiguity are learned competencies for which relevant assistance needs to be provided. It ought not neglect the desire for learning and explication either. The girls had underlined words in the text that they didn't know and that we had to clarify. Clarifying terminology – or using the students' technique of going through the text and marking unknown words – takes time and attention, which needs to be factored into the workshop plan.

Focusing on non-knowledge makes learning and research obligatory

Reading our experiences critically, against the grain, and with the help of Rancière's story of the ignorant schoolmaster reveals first of all the exclusions that take place when an emancipatory experience of self-education is universalised. But our critique has to go beyond this. To stay with Rancière for a moment: by presenting himself as ignorant, the schoolmaster creates a very comfortable position for himself. He need not work and yet he nevertheless remains the schoolmaster. Nor does he render himself entirely obsolete. Instead he retains his position of power to the degree that he continues to define the learning goal and presumably is also paid. But no duty arises that would oblige him to do something about his own ignorance. The problem, thus focused, can be applied to our approach to museum education on the topic of ownership and restitution. Lacking information essential to the task of clarifying the possibility of restitution cannot be a permanent condition. Emphasising non-knowledge could contribute to a stabilisation of the status quo, a museum (and facilitators) who, revealing the gaps in their knowledge, sit back and justify themselves with the point that a lack of information means that everything stays as it is (and they continue to be paid). To some extent that can already be observed in the debate over provenance research: the argument that full investigation of the collections would be a large and expensive undertaking which, moreover, would in many cases be bound to fail on account of the state of the documentary sources, is treated as a justification for not beginning the research at all (starting with just a few pieces, for example).[18]

Accordingly, what took place experimentally in our workshops needs to be carried further. After the workshop, both the curator who was involved and the facilitators carried out research into questions they had been unable to answer. Knowing more the next time around is a necessary condition for an educational format of this kind: to have researched a collector, to have educated yourself further about an aspect of colonial history, to have located institutions in the regions of origin for further research. This does not mean relinquishing non-knowledge and disagreement as pedagogical components. The point is to push a continuous process of learning and research further. As Wayne Modest, director of the Research Center for Material Culture at the Tropenmuseum Amsterdam said at a conference on provenance research: "No matter how many unsolved cases and questions there are and remain:

every step to a proper provenance, every return, every step towards opening up and sharing, is a step" (Modest, in Schasiepen 2017). The horizon, perhaps utopian, of enquiry-based education on questions of the ownership of cultural goods in ethnographic collections stands and falls with its ability to contribute to finding individual and informed solutions for the future of the objects.

Conclusion: learning and unlearning

The education program *What's that doing here?* attempted to invite students to think of the current situation of provenance research and ownership conditions of ethnographic collections as an open issue, taking gaps in knowledge and disagreement as its starting point. In the present text, I have elaborated both on moments of insight and on problems arising from this approach. One of the consequences is that all parties involved draw on prior knowledge that is often one-sided and determined by colonial mentalities. Education means engaging with these reservoirs of knowledge that individuals bring with them. The focus on information and research that is lacking can lead to inadequate communication of essential knowledge and to us facilitators allowing ourselves ignorance where there is a need for information. Teaching what we do not (yet) know makes sense only if it involves a commitment to research and further education in dealing with collection objects. Otherwise non-knowledge could actually become yet another master-narrative for museums, providing a legitimisation of the status quo (Albrecht 2018). Finally, the open, enquiry-based approach can lead to exclusions if participants, seeking the reasons for why they don't understand and don' succeed in their research, look to themselves instead of looking to the way that research has historically been carried out, the way that museums are organised and the colonial configuration. All these issues point to the close mutual relationship between gains in knowledge and an understanding of the limitations of knowledge, between an emphasis on non-knowledge and the provision of information and tools. If the point is to join with visitors in seriously pursuing the question of 'What's that doing here?' in an ethnographic collection, education means generating a dynamic within this mutual relationship. If this dynamic gets going, then education about ownership conditions and provenance can do more than that which ought to go without saying for a postcolonial museum, namely informing visitors about the complex history and controversial future of collections. It can also lead to

an un-learning (a spelling that perhaps better expresses the interplay) that goes beyond individual objects and their histories. In the tentative, often frustrating engagement with the bounds of knowledge about the collection, it is possible to un-learn what ‘scholarship’ and ‘museums’ are, and for them to become visible as contingent components of a (post)colonial reality.

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[1] This paper was first published in Endter/Landkammer/Schneider 2018.

[2] See German weekly national paper Die Zeit, 22.7.2017

[3] An exception to mention here is for example the programme "Sich mit fremden Federn schmücken?" at Weltmuseum Wien.

[4] *Vermittlung in ethnologischen Museen: Eine Analyse gegenwärtiger Programmatiken und dekolonisierender Perspektiven in einem konfliktreichen Arbeitsfeld* (Education in ethnographic museums. An analysis of current discourses and decolonizing perspectives in a conflicted field of work), dissertation project, 2011-2019.

[5] Interview as part of my dissertation project, I03, 2013.

[6] One facilitator reported having read aloud from the journal of a researcher in order to give a sense of some of the ethical questions surrounding acquisition. Another adduces a concrete demand for restitution as part of their tours of a collection.

[7] I08_1, 2014.

[8] For our understanding of research in this context see Schneider: Transition points in this volume.

[9] On the tension between the necessity of transmitting critical knowledge and the critique of one's own subject position, see also Endter in this volume and Schön 2018.

[10] Transcripts from observation and memory, 3.3.2017; 15.5.2017; 13.6.2017.

[11] See, for example, 'Schwieriges Erbe' at the Linden-Museum Stuttgart and the Eberhards Karl University Tübingen (https://www.lindenmuseum.de/service-menue/presse/schwieriges-erbe/, accessed 26.12.2017), 'Koloniale Spuren im Übersee Museum Bremen: Afrika-Sammlungen als Gegenstand der Provenienzforschung' with the University of Hamburg (https://www.kolonialismus.uni-hamburg.de/koloniale-spuren-im-uebersee-museum- bremen-afrika-sammlungen-als-gegenstand-der-provenienzforschung/, accessed 26.12.2017). Further projects are planned as part of the Federal Cultural Foundation programmes: http://www.kulturstiftung-des-bundes.de/cms/de/presse/mitteilungen/2017_12_11_ethnologische-museen-und-stadtbibliotheken.html (accessed 26.12.2017).

[12] See transcript from memory by Karin Schneider, 15.5.2017; transcript from observation by Lea Sante, 15.5.2017. For more in-depth engagement with this episode as a 'transition point' see Schneider in this volume.

[13] Transcripts from observation and memory, 3.3.2017; 15.5.2017; 13.6.2017.

[14] Transcript from memory Nora Landkammer, 3.3.2017.

[15] Transcript from observation Lea Sante, 15.5.2017.

[16] Transcript from memory Nora Landkammer, 15.5.2017.

[17] On the critique of class-specific exclusion through free modes of teaching see Sertl/ Patzner/ Rittberger 2008 and Sternfeld 2005.

[18] Thus, for example, Karl-Heinz Kohl in a contribution to the discussion around the Humboldt Forum in *Die Zeit*, argues that in order to research the provenances of the collection of the Berlin museum, an entire staff would have to be hired, asking whether such an expense would be worth it given the poor state of the documentary sources (Kohl 2017).

Transition points in museum education: Moments of politicisation in teaching about history[1]

Karin Schneider

> The participants gather around the table with the objects. A student asks which ceremonies the object was used for. The curator says that she doesn't know, because, as is often the case, many details are lacking. The amount of information available depends on who brought the object into the museum. [I don't know if it is due to her answer, but the participants are suddenly very quiet.][2]

When reading the transcript, this description of the students becoming "suddenly very quiet" feels different to the silence that is associated with carelessness, or the 'exhausted silence' that is described in so many of the other transcripts of the opening sequences of the various sessions of the workshop *What's that doing here?* at the Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt:

> *Do you recognise [when you look at the copies of the index cards that we have handed out] the circumstances in which the objects were found? The facilitator looks around, saying that it is not about right or wrong, but only what you think.*
>
> *Two girls start to giggle, but then silence descends once again*[3]

Between the opening situation described in the second quote and the introductory episode with the curator, something had changed in the mood, the atmosphere and energy surrounding the question of what can and cannot be known about certain objects in the Africa collection at the Weltkulturen Museum. *Silence* or *quiet* are no longer linked to distractions such as giggling, and they do not convey feelings of perplexity or denial when I read them. Instead, they function as signs of attentive concern - at least in the view of the note-taker, and for me too, as I write about these events and attempt to draw conclusions from them. In this article,[4] I am interested as an educator in any moments that generate such shifts in workshops. I designate these as transition points[5] of

museum education, ones which can result in moments of upheaval, such as when conflicts emerge between participants in relation to their positions on the subject at hand, leading them to express their true opinions *without being prompted* and perhaps even also engage in vigorous arguments. I imagine these transition points as thresholds that cannot be passed through without faltering a little. What is interesting in educational work is that while such thresholds cannot be intentionally integrated, they also do not emerge by chance.

What's that doing here? A research day and its setting

The workshop *What's that doing here?*, which Julia Albrecht, Nora Landkammer and I developed together, aimed to engage school students in a discussion about the origins of objects in the Weltkulturen Museum in Frankfurt, and thereby in debates around restitution and in interrogations of the colonial histories of these objects. As Nora Landkammer mentions in her article, our desire was to engage with the complexities of histories and debates [->Enquiring]. To this end, we considered it necessary to start with concrete histories about specific objects and then develop questions about them. The goal was to go beyond generalised judgements and statements in order to discuss the question of repatriation and the histories of collections. We designated the workshop itself as a 'research day'. In doing so, we evoked particular expectations in ourselves and presumably in the students and teachers as well, expectations which are also connected with the desire to find out things that we don't already know.

In my search for transition points, I focus in on micro-sequences within the workshop and use workshop transcripts and statements to analyse what effect these points had on the development of the discussion. In order to be able to contextualise these within the progression of the workshop, I will also briefly sketch out the structure of the research day and the overall framework of our documentation and my analysis.

A central element of the introductory sequence of the workshop was the contextualisation of our central research question within the history of German colonialism. Using a timeline (which we later changed to an illustrated handout[6]) we asked students questions about their knowledge of colonialism and provided them with the most important key facts.[7] Using photos on copies of index cards, students chose the

objects from the Africa collection that they found most interesting, and working groups were then formed based on these choices. In the small groups that we supervised, the students were given the opportunity to research the history and background of the objects they had selected, and prepare questions for Julia Friedel, the curator of the Africa collection. To set up the interviews, we prepared documents such as text extracts from catalogues, secondary literature and critical statements on the question of repatriation (for example in the form of YouTube videos as well as a list of links for independent internet research; for more on the issues faced in this research phase, see the text by Nora Landkammer [->Enquiring].). The interview with Friedel took place among the Africa collection where she had arranged the objects that the students had researched. Following the interview and visit to the collection's storage facilities, the working groups reconvened and discussed their positions on the question of what should happen to each particular object in the future: should it be returned? Should it be exhibited? Where and how? Each viewpoint was subsequently discussed in a plenary session, contextualised by the facilitators through examples from the Argument Box[8] and then made into a poster with the heading *Museum Consultation*.

In total, three workshops were carried out with three different school groups, whose members were aged between 16 and 18. The selection of the class groups was determined by the teachers with whom we were able to establish good contact, as well as which groups were interested in spending an entire school day in the museum and were also able to organise this. Based on our experience in museum work with school groups, such interest and availability often occurs in privileged educational contexts, ones in which particular value is placed on enquiry-based learning, project days and activities to foster creativity. In order to avoid developing a programme that would be oriented exclusively towards the needs and opportunities of such schools, it was also important for us to also include students from a range of socioeconomic and educational backgrounds and to take them into account in our analysis. In the first workshop, participants came from a private Christian secondary and grammar school (*Realschule* and Gymnasium), while in the two following workshops, a comprehensive school and a comprehensive (cultural) school (*Integrierte Gesamtschule*) took part.[9]

We carried out research on all three workshops. This comprised collating detailed reports of facilitators' perspectives as well as (in the second and third workshops)

attending workshops as participant observers and the creation of observer reports. Finally, Julia Albrecht conducted a reflective interview with curator Julia Friedel. The interviews with Friedel conducted by the students were also partially recorded and transcribed, and there is also a transcript of one of my groups from the third workshop. During the workshop implementation period, the education team skyped regularly, in order to reflect on their experiences in the individual workshops. These sessions were recorded, and served both the analysis and the practical reflections, which resulted in on-going adaptations to the workshop structure and materials.

For this reason, my central research question comes less from the immediate experiences of my work with students in the context of *What's that doing here?*, and more from the later reading and coding of the various records and transcripts. Immediately following the workshops themselves, I was often too exhausted to get a sense of what had actually happened in them - at least, that was the case after the second workshop. After the third workshop however, I was left with an immediate sense of profound surprise: following our visit to the storage facilities of the Africa collection and a (relatively tedious) interview with the curator, the opening sequence that I personally felt to be agonising (see transcript below) led to a fierce, engaged, and even emotional discussion among my small group. This was only a short period of perhaps 20 minutes of a much longer five or six-hour workshop, but it exhibited aspects of every form of museum education that Nora Landkammer and I had termed "conflict learning" [->Conflict Learning]. But who created this site of conflict learning? How did we get there from the moments of giggling and silence and torment that occurred at the beginning? It is here that I would like to speak about transition points. Another reason that I chose this term was that it suggests that there is no antagonistic break between such disparate moments in an educational activity, but rather that a shift occurs, after which a group shows an interest in discussion, engagement with their task, and a desire to learn.

What remains to be understood is what actually happens in such moments. So what is it that causes a small group of extremely bored students - at least for a brief moment - to suddenly become extremely concerned with the question of what should happen to objects in a German museum, objects which have ended up there due to colonial relations of power and violence. Put more abstractly: how do moments of research and politicisation emerge in history educational work whereby history can be understood as

something that concerns *me* as an individual, and makes me want to acquire knowledge about it so that I can take a *personal* stance on it? Marking out transition points enables us to cease trying to make the entire workshop into a *research* activity,[10] and instead to identify those outbreaks of inquisitiveness that arise in specific moments within it.[11]

"That's also why we tortured you like that (laughs)": change and the link between boredom and the desire for knowledge

The first school group came from a privileged educational context: a private school which is also explicitly oriented towards open and independent forms of learning, which is exactly what the students and teachers expected at a research day.[12] These experiences and expectations regarding enquiry-based learning were not as prevalent with the other two school groups, or at least that was our impression.[13]

In our Skype sessions between the first and second workshops, we suggested that the idea of open and independent research (in the form of instructions given to working groups or in the form of students independently developing their own questions) was working well for the students who were used to such forms of learning at their private schools, while for the students from the *Gesamtschule* and *Realschule*, the invitation to carry out research seemed to present a structure that was less familiar and therefore possibly unproductive and overwhelming[14] Nora Landkammer describes how some of these differences became evident in the group discussions in this volume [->Enquiring]. In our reflections on our own practice, we also concerned ourselves with the debate occurring in the field of critical art education surrounding open forms of learning. In a text that has now virtually become canonical in the field, *Taxispielertrick* Nora Sternfeld (2005) invokes Bourdieu in interrogating the very openness posited by forms of open education, pointing out the inherent social exclusions that they conceal: "Bourdieu shows that the move towards spontaneity and the concomitant devaluation of knowledge transfer and of the teaching of specific techniques can lead to a situation where … class-specific distinctions are reinforced" (Sternfeld 2005, 23).

In our own accounts of the research day, we saw a mirroring of this ambivalence towards independent research in education. These methods are conceived as having an emancipatory function, but for students who are not used to being addressed as

researchers, they can act as barriers to learning.[15] Our descriptions of the private school students backed up the presumptions we expressed in the debrief sessions (I have emphasised the statements that reflect these impressions):

> "The group work is proceeding with *great interest*: the teenagers appear to be *well-acquainted with this kind of group work, and work independently*."[16]
>
> In contrast, the descriptions of the first group of the other two classes contain references to *boredom*:
>
> "Though the others are looking for something on the internet, they are *unsure of what they should be doing, which has led to a lot of restlessness*. I am happy that we will be doing the interview soon."[17]

The presence of 'boredom' is quite clearly expressed in the transcript for the opening sequence of the third workshop (I have emphasised the statements that are suggestive of boredom):

> The group seated themselves *somewhat reluctantly* on the felt floor covering. (There were *a few yawns. Looking around*, the group is a bit *worn out*) … "You have an object and a date. Can you see a connection?" Silence.[18]
>
> The handout that Julia had made about colonialism still seems somewhat abstract and academic, and as we went through it, time really *dragged on*. What I noticed above all was one boy who I felt was *particularly unmotivated*…
>
> As I started to lead my small group in group work, there was also *no motivation* to think about questions for the curator. We looked at a catalogue from the Reitburg Museum in Zurich together and read out an extract about the Kom throne.
>
> *In this instance, and for this group, even this didn't seem interesting…*[19]

Despite this, this sequence and the handout about colonial history distributed at the beginning played a role in one of the later group discussions with my group (one which was hardly to be expected given the boredom that had arisen in the opening sequence).

An excerpt from the record (including parts of the transcript) refers to the discussion after the interview with the curator, in which the students spoke about the Kom throne from Cameroon:

> During a discussion about the Kom throne from Cameroon, a student asked: "What happened? Did Germany take it over?" The facilitator replied: "Are you asking about the colonial history of Cameroon?" Student A: "Yes! […] if they ruled over the country, then they would have been able to take everything…" […] Student B [reading from the handout that we had previously distributed]: That was from 1884 to 1904, and the throne was taken in 1904." Facilitator: "Yes, yes." Student A: "So that was while Germany occupied it." Facilitator: "Exactly." Another student [very quietly and pensively]: "So we can assume that they simply took it." Facilitator: "Well, you always have to look very carefully… but that's also why we tortured you like that (laughs) with that potentially boring opening sequence"…[20]

According to the transcript, this sequence was followed by a collective contemplation of the handout. The facilitator explained more about the time period in which the object being discussed, the Kom throne from Cameroon, was taken to Germany. At this point, a number of issues relevant for both the practice and reflection of museum education become apparent that can also shed new light on how we perceive the facilitator and the different school groups in our analysis. In terms of practice: if there is a "difficult starting point" (as the teacher also agreed), if the students are "taken out of their comfort zone", this does not mean you can draw conclusions about the effects or necessity of such a situation for the subsequent sequences. Even if students get bored in an opening sequence, knowledge compiled in these sequences can be called upon in a following one and be used productively and autonomously by the students. In the example mentioned above, both for the students and for me as the facilitator, the need for a historical framework only became evident once the students had developed a desire to learn something about the specific object that they had chosen. This desire first emerged as a result of the educational activities, and it was only at this point that the implementation of the opening sequence became productive.

On the level of analysis, new lines of questioning can be developed as a result of the outcomes of such sequences. Offers of enquiry-based learning in museums require that

participants have acquired the skills that allow them to pose questions, express their own opinion and carry out independent research. If it is clear that research skills must be learned and that this only tends to happen in privileged educational institutions, this can lead to a situation where open educational programmes lead to the exclusion of those who are not familiar with these formats. Initially, we took the silence that we noted in the session transcripts and the *restlessness* and *boredom* to be indicative of this exclusion. Following a comparative reading of the individual transcripts, however, it became evident that despite their differences, there were instances of boredom and disinterest in all of the groups, as well as engagement, discussion and concentration (although they may have occurred at different points in the workshop), and that furthermore, instances of boredom or being overwhelmed could lead to productive outcomes at other points in the workshop.

Having had more experience with texts or working in groups, as was the case with the first school group, did not definitively lead to a distinct enquiry-oriented approach in the sense of a critical and engaged debate. The students who were used to enquiry-based learning, who knew what was expected of them, displayed less resistance to the processes that we suggested. In contrast to the two other sessions, however, their discussions at a later point in the workshop were not as heated, controversial, or engaged (at least in my group). As such, the 'transition points' of museum education also clearly refer to a shift in our perception of the individual school groups in the process of our analysis.[21] This does not lead to an erasure of the difference between social and educational status, however their impact can be transformed. It is possible that the resistance to our predefined modes of action carries the potential of a fundamentally critical attitude. At a later point in the workshop, this resistant attitude can shift to a position that is critical of the content. My interpretation of a number of transcript excerpts suggests that in the sequences triggered by transition points, social differences no longer necessarily appear as deficits.

"Woah, dude, our knife!" - object identification and the performance of "institutional ignorance" as a transition point

> [Sequence from the opening situation, an elaboration on the background of colonialism]

> Karin gets involved and asks whether they know what an ethnographic showcase or colonial exhibition is, and the students turn and look at her. *From somewhere in the group, I hear "…as if I would know" and all of the students begin to laugh*.
>
> I hear a lot of noises; there is whispering and giggling, and I struggle to concentrate…the students seem to be a bit distracted too.
>
> Many participants appear lethargic. There are worksheets flying around.[22]

In at least a couple of the groups, however, the mood changed noticeably following the interview with the curator:

> Even if the interview was not overly lively and I had to ask many of the questions myself, the students *seemed very engaged* afterwards.
> [A girl who was working on the Kom throne argues strongly for its return.] The boys that had the throwing knife are less moved: Why make such a fuss? What is the problem, really? The objects are in Germany now, it doesn't really matter. The girl who worked on the Kom throne is upset. *And before I know it, a war of words breaks out between two boys and two girls.*[23] [->Conflict Learning].

A similar shift occurs in the third workshop: "*Everyone is speaking over the top of one another*, and I try to say something as well, but can't make myself heard and so I let it continue, I guess because I feel the students' thoughts need to be heard."[24]

One transition point is the interview with the curator that occurs as part of the visit to the collection and the students' encounter with the original objects. Following the interview, there was a redistribution of knowledge, which also caused a shift in terms of who had something to say. Once again, when it comes to educational practice in the museum, the importance of our productive collaboration with the curator of the Africa collection cannot be overstated. The way we worked together to choose the objects to be studied,[25] her interest in hearing the discussions around controversial issues, and her readiness to openly and frankly answers the students' questions were directly responsible for the interview and the encounter with the objects being able to act as a transition point. This also means that for future workshops with this kind of focus and structure, similar

collaborations should be sought out, incorporating curators in the programme who are interested in contributing to an interrogation of their collections. In the following sequences, I would like to show that the 'institutional voice' embodied by the curator can make a valuable contribution to such an educational situation. A contribution which sheds light on the contradictions and dominant regimes of the institution, creating situations that can act as transition points, triggering or initiating instances of enquiry-based learning.

With the interview format, the relations between knowledge and non-knowledge, questions and answers take on a new structure. While in the opening sequence it was the facilitators who asked students questions (to which it was unclear whether the students were supposed to be able to answer them), now the person being questioned was the curator - that is, a voice that was presented to the students as a representative of the institution, as an authority on the collection and the objects that comprise it. When such a voice now states that they don't actually know something, this takes on a very particular meaning that can then reshape the rest of the workshop. I designate this as *specific, institutional non-knowledge*, and would like to elucidate this using some sections from a transcript of the interview with the curator.[26]

> Student: "Were there attempts to find out where it came from? And how it got here…?"
> Curator: "[Both pieces were brought to the museum by the missionary Reinhold Rohde, but there is] *no information that tells us: this is how it happened*. Research was done [on whether missionary Reinhold Rohde had bought or stolen the object], but *there is no information [about that]*."
> Student: "There's some kind of material around its neck; do you know if it has some kind of meaning, it really stands out …"
> Curator: "Yeah, *I am not entirely sure* whether it was also the case with the throne; there were a number of objects, and many were generously wrapped in pearls, and this is because pearls came to Africa with the Europeans, they were used in the trade of slaves (and palm oil) …"[27]

At transition points, therefore, a shift between knowledge and non-knowledge takes place: in our transcripts, non-knowledge at the start of the workshop with the second and

third school groups is marked as “hesitation”, “silence”, and “restlessness”, while in the subsequent group discussion, the specific non-knowledge exhibited by the representative of the institution in relation to the object sparked heated debate among the students. Why?

In the opening sequence of the workshop, by testing the students’ prior knowledge (about the colonial past) and providing them with new knowledge about it, we referenced familiar elements of classroom learning while working with materials that were familiar to them from an educational context, such as index cards, texts, and worksheets. In contrast to how these are normally used in schools, however, our materials employed open-ended and unanswerable questions, and in the opening sequence we asked the students unclear questions and encouraged them to declare their non-knowledge. This may have produced a moment of dissonance in the students. Though these references might have transported them back to the classroom setting, the fact that the materials did not conform to their normal use at school (this was certainly the case with the classes who were less familiar with open learning settings) may have incited confusion. The moments in the transcript that I designated with the code ‘boredom’ in this article could also refer to this tension between being transported back to the classroom (the request for knowledge is also associated with this: “What do you know about colonial history?”) and the incomprehensible requests to “research” or “express yourself freely”.

In contrast, the interview situation saw another constellation of knowledge and non-knowledge emerge, along with another denotation of the game of question and answer: here, the curator presented herself as someone who, despite having a lot of general knowledge about her subject area, in particular about background histories (such as the history of the trade in enslaved peoples), openly admitted that she could not really answer the questions that the students wanted to ask about the history of this specific object.

This all seems to fit together nicely enough while also being strangely abstract, if we fail to more precisely identify *what* exactly is not known and how it can come to be that a very well-informed curator does not have this knowledge, even though she goes to great pains to acquire it.

> I stayed *below* (in the storage facility) and Julia *came straight over* with her group. *The students made a beeline for the table and seemed curious*. I heard "*Woah, dude, our knife…*". They *wanted to touch the object*. The curator allowed one participant to *investigate the dagger* (another record of this moment mentions that she gave them gloves for this) and she *explained a bit* about it. The *participants asked* the curator about the collector, and again she said that there was *very little information* about them. The longer the chain, the more *information is lost*, and therefore the history of the object is sometimes difficult to obtain. The curator *explained* that the object had belonged to the Herero, and subsequent questions made it clear that *the participants didn't know anything about the Herero*. Julia Friedel (the curator) *provided some information* about the history of the Herero and the genocide.[28]

The change in the dynamic of the workshop (this being the second one) is even noticeable in the language of the transcript and is also described through the change of location: we find ourselves "down below", with the objects that had previously only been seen in pictures and described in texts. The objects produce a desire to touch and this can even be realised, as we are in the storage facility rather than the exhibition, and the curator has given her permission. At this point in the transcript, the word *research* takes on another meaning, one that is connected to what we are doing with our hands at this moment. Explanations relate directly to the objects and our sensuous contact with it.

As soon as the general historical information is connected with a specific object, the students seem to be interested, and the curator responds eagerly: she speaks about the genocide committed against the Herero by Germans, and that it is a part of history that is necessary to know in order to be able to understand the specific, institutional non-knowledge about this object. In the course of a "long chain" of changes in ownership, specific knowledge about this object was lost, and at the beginning of the chain there is murder; a genocide. That is important to know: that the non-knowledge of the institution surrounding this object and the questions of the students regarding it are directly connected with this history. This history is the basis for that non-knowledge, which has lost its innocence or its 'school-like' dimension: becoming bored or struggling with the material is no longer an innocent category of possible student behaviour. Anybody who

does not know anything is somehow implicated in this history, this murder and its possible denial or minimisation - a history with which there was a sensuous connection for the students in relation to “our ceremonial knife”, even before they found out about it.

I am not suggesting that the students are aware of this or that they would necessarily agree with this viewpoint. However, I would like to propose that the dramatic change of mood that occurred at some points - as depicted above, a bored silence transforming into another kind of silence, or previously sleepy students becoming really angry and confrontational - could have something to do with them sensing that non-knowledge has lost its innocence, or at least feels different and more uncomfortable that their own non-knowledge that they know so well from school. Precisely because such objects are focal points for a range of interpretations, museums are ideal places to enter into such negotiations around interpretations, as museologist Bernadette Lynch notes:

> The museum object is amenable to symbolism; acting as symbol, it can unlock experience and thus become an immensely useful device as the focal point for projective imagination in storytelling and memory work, for discussion and debate and for participatory drama. The object helps unlock experience and becomes the catalyst for communication, for intercultural understanding and sometime resistance. (Lynch 2011, 156)

For this, however, in our workshops, a resonance had to be created between the voice of the institution and the objects on exhibit. When the voice of the institution displays its ‘specific non-knowledge’, this allows the students to perceive their own non-knowledge differently. Rather than perceiving it as a personal flaw, as just one more thing they don't know and can therefore ignore, they can now experience their non-knowledge regarding the histories of the objects in the museum as something that is informed by colonial histories of violence; a topic that in the first section of the workshop they perceived as *so boring*. At this point, the object also begins to speak. As something that bears witness to these histories, it provides a continual reminder of the existence of knowledge that was destroyed in the course of this history. It does this through the mere fact that it is now in a German museum and since it was not seen as necessary in the past to generate this knowledge, it is now impossible to do so.

By picking out an object, researching it, and then later encountering it in the collection, the students also came to identify with the object to a certain extent. In some cases, this also produced a feeling of being implicated in this history, and therefore having to take a stance on it. The transition point, therefore, is created as a result of a specific interaction with a specific object. It emerges in the tension between the desire to understand the history of the object and the realisation that the voice of the institution cannot simply fulfil this desire. The mood of the group changes and becomes more serious, more engaged, and more confrontational. Perhaps the students began to sense that knowledge, even when it is desired, is sometimes difficult to obtain, and that the history of this non-knowledge is connected with violence and ignorance. As soon as the students invoke the subject of the workshops and begin to ask questions about the origin and possibilities of the object's restitution, non-knowledge becomes tied up with the question of the object's origin, and itself becomes an explanation for why the object cannot be returned. In this sense, the reference to non-knowledge becomes an explanation for the students, even if it is an unsatisfactory one:

> One participant (who had become angry in the preparatory stage - K.S.) asked why the throne has not been returned if it was such an important object at the time? The curator explained that *lack of knowledge was one of the main reasons*. If it was a fair exchange or a gift, then it would not be given back, *but it is unclear whether the exchange was legitimate or not…* The museum is expending an increasing amount of energy on these issues. *Even the designation as a 'gift' can (sometimes) be brought into question*. With some objects, it was *later determined* that they were brought here *under somewhat suspicious circumstances*.[29]

In this question and answer session with the students, Julia Friedel emphasised that provenance researchers were necessary in order to be able to make advances in this area; researchers who would undertake the laborious work of investigating these histories. Of course, as the curator explained, such work costs money, and it would therefore be a political decision to finance these; such a decision must also be made by the government, and this is already happening in a number of places.[30] Here, non-knowledge is presented as a justification for why things are not returned. Any potential return would require their provenance to be clarified, which would require government support. This

problem cannot seem to be solved by the museum alone. It is clear, even if not directly addressed, that this would also necessitate collaborative efforts with bearers of knowledge from indigenous communities, curators and researchers in the relevant former colonies. At least in the curator's explanation, non-knowledge and non-change exist in a mutually dependent relation, through which non-knowledge acquires a political dimension that goes beyond the museum. The transition point occurs when the conceptual horizon of the specific educational setting is extended. As a result, as previously intimated, non-knowledge and knowledge are re-configured. To begin with, during the opening stages of the workshop, the students associated non-knowledge with their own sense of being overwhelmed or with the classroom setting. Their own lack of desire to know, expressed through giggling and boredom, might also have been a sign of their rejection of the demands placed on them in this section. Now, however, non-knowledge comes to be connected to the violent destruction of knowledge in the course of colonial dispossession, and the 'desire not to know' appears as a justification for non-restitution. Through this, the students are confronted with a new situation: 'Wanting to know' can become an act of solidarity or resistance, and 'not wanting to know' can symbolise the status quo.

Here we also see a transition point, where their 'student position' shifts, which unsettles them and calls upon them to take a stance in a new way. Through the curator's openness about various instances of non-knowledge and reference to political contexts, perhaps it can become clear to the students that with the acceptance of non-knowledge as a possible position in relation to colonial history (even if it is just out of boredom), they have already taken a stance in some sense, and one which justifies the status quo of the collection policies of the institution. To me, it seemed that this was a stance that a number of students (such as those in my second and third workshops who engaged in heated arguments) no longer wanted to take. At this point, at least these students began to sometimes get involved in the business of questioning the legitimacy of non-knowledge, and thus became researchers and adopted a political stance. Of course, my speculations regarding this point in the workshop are hypothetical and interpret the students according to a specific set of assumptions that are informed by my own hopes, desires, and perhaps even my own memories of being a student. What is certain though, is that the combination of openness, abundance of historical knowledge, the lack of knowledge about specific aspects of objects' histories due to a dearth of sources and the

portrayal of political contexts that occurred in the discussion with the curator introduced "turbulence" into the workshop. The simple expectation that might usually prevail in such a situation - that a concrete question addressed to an expert would result in a simple and concrete answer, and that this exercise would have little to do with any kind of political reality - is completely called into question. This leads to some students being made to feel unsure of their previously ambivalent or cautious position, while others feel that their originally critical or resistant attitude has been validated. As to the question of how these educational transition points manage to transform elements of a workshop into moments of research (in the sense of questioning what one is told) and/or politicisation (in the sense of taking a stance), we can say that the interplay of the curator's open display of institutional non-knowledge and her introduction of the political dimension of this non-knowledge with the students' own performances of non-knowledge (through the display of boredom, through giggling, yawning, and silence…) caused them to realise that they were also palpably implicated in this discourse, and at certain moments felt called upon to respond. At the same time, the presence of the object makes it continually apparent that there is something that ought to be known here, something which as a result of colonial histories of violence and the associated suppression of the knowledge in the colonies themselves may have been irretrievably lost, or whose retrieval would at the very least require significant effort. Above all, it is also a matter of the unavailable information regarding the object's origin and acquisition. This tension between what the curator cannot know and the object, which indicates that something needs to be understood or researched here, can generate among the students a desire to research (in the sense of a desire to know, to understand). But how do these experiences correlate to our overarching analysis of the unequal access to enquiry-based learning among different student groups?

Following the microanalysis of specific moments in the workshop transcripts, the analysis of social exclusions from forms of open learning remains valid. However, it may be that the very people who are perceived and categorised as 'disadvantaged', who through their outsider perspective develop a keen feel for contradictions, blind spots and open questions concerning institutional research activities and the various forms, legitimations and histories of non-knowledge embedded within them. If this is the case, then transition points are precisely those situations in which this intuition of those who are less privileged is activated, allowing them to intervene in the discourse, even if just

for a moment.

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[1] An earlier version was published on the TRACES homepage as a web-brochure (Endter/ Landkammer/ Schneider 2018).

[2] Transcript from observation Lea Sante, 15.5.2017

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[3] Transcript from observation Lea Sante, 15.5.2017

[4] The line of thought and key points presented in this article are largely the result of collective conceptual labour and intensive discussions between Nora Landkammer, Julia Albrecht, and myself. I would also like to thank Julia Friedel, the curator of the Africa collection at the Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt, for her keen discussion of the text.

[5] According to Collins dictionary, a transition point is "the point at which a transition of physical properties takes place, such as the point at which laminar flow changes to turbulent flow", Online: https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/ transition-point (accessed 15.01.2019)

[6] Produced and designed by Julia Albrecht.

[7] See http://www.traces.polimi.it/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/TR_WP3_The-museum-as-a-site_14.pdf. (accessed 01.02.2019)

[8] See http://www.traces.polimi.it/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/TR_WP3_The-museum-as-a-site_12.pdf (accessed 01.02.2019)

[9] Translator's note: In German-speaking countries, secondary students are typically divided into one of three school types: *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*, based on results and perceived aptitudes. *Hauptschule* is geared towards preparing students to go on to learn a trade, *Gymnasium* towards preparing students for an academic path at university, with the *Realschule* essentially mediating between the two. An *integrierte Gesamtschule* combines all three student groups.

[10] I drew this analytical focus from our team discussions. Immediately after the workshops we often self-critically questioned whether we could really speak of 'research' in this context.

[11] Here I am invoking the conception of research developed by Arjun Apparudai which sets out from the presumption of a "right to research" (fundamental for processes of democratisation within the museum), in order to determine what we each need to know, but do not know yet (Appadurai 2006, 167f).

[12] Here I am referring to the reports by Julia Albrecht on her preliminary discussions with the teacher.

[13] The extent to which this was shaped by our own presumptions is also evidenced by the feedback we received from a facilitator who regularly works at the museum in our joint text discussion, that the school that participated in the last session had 'enquiry-based learning' in their study plan and that they had regularly carried museum workshops with this school with this principle in mind.

[14] Transcript of the Skype session between the workshop facilitators Albrecht, Landkammer, Schneider, 09.06.2017

[15] Transcript of the Skype session between the workshop facilitators Albrecht, Landkammer, Schneider;09.06.2017

[16] Transcript, Nora Landkammer, 15.05.2017

[17] Transcript from memory Karin Schneider, 06.6.2017

[18] Transcript from observation Stephanie Endter, 06.6.2017

[19] Transcript from memory Karin Schneider, 13.6.2017

[20] Transcript of memory and transcription of direct speech from Karin Schneider, 13.6.2017

[21] For a precise analysis of the change in the perceptions of students from less-privileged educational contexts, compare Schneider / Sölkner 2011

[22] Transcript from observation Lea Sante, 15.5.2017

[23] Transcript from memory Karin Schneider, 13.5.2017

[24] Transcript from memory Karin Schneider, 06.6.2017

[25] Friedel also consciously chose objects from the collection which have a problematic or unresolved colonial and or collection history, and for which little or only contradictory information is available.

[26] In order to understand the context, some parts of the transcript were retrospectively corrected based on the communication with Julia Friedel. These, along with omissions, have been placed in brackets.

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[27] Transcript from memory Karin Schneider, 13.6.2017 (Including a transcript of part of the interview with Julia Friedel to correct exact dates and names)

[28] Transcript from observation Lea Sante, 06.6.2017

[29] Transcript from memory Julia Albrecht, 06.6.2017

[30] Transcript from memory Karin Schneider, 22.3.2018

Building fragile trust. A time-lapsed conversation

Martin Krenn, Nora Landkammer, Aisling O'Beirn, and Karin Schneider

Throughout the TRACES project, the authors held a series of conversations on the concepts and theories we use in our work when we engage communities and individuals in artistic projects and educational settings. We focused on the development of the project *Transforming Long Kesh/Maze* Prison [-> Transforming Long Kesh/ Maze], [-> Restaging the object]. Keeping to the format of the reflexive conversation, this contribution is based on a conversation we held in June 2018. Intersecting statements from earlier talks, in January 2017 and September 2017, give insight into the process.

Dispersed Memories

June 2018

Aisling: You can easily imagine how the former prison can be seen as synonymous with Irish republicanism given the prison protests and the hunger strikes but for many loyalists, there can also be a reluctance around that idea. Some will tell you: 'well, actually, we want our history related, loyalists were imprisoned as well'. Not as many were imprisoned or came forward but they worry about there being a master narrative, or it becoming a 'shrine for republicanism'. Yet others think the best way to deal with the former prison is just to knock it to the ground and try and forget about it, because it represents such a difficult period of history.

Martin: The conflict is an ongoing conflict and this place is a symbol. However, its symbolic meaning differs depending on the context, for example, which group looks at it. The title of the project *Transforming Long Kesh/Maze* points to this problem, as it includes two names for the prison: Long Kesh and Maze. Our initial idea was building, together with project participants, a model of the ex-prison depicting it as a futuristic museum but after a long research phase, we dropped this idea.

January 2017

M: The situation has become even more difficult, because of Brexit there is a situation of political stalemate in this country. Now we have to deal with a different situation compared to 2016. However, this opens up possibilities for dialogical art in trying to create a space in which new forms of communication about the prison could occur and to propose new ways to deal with the legacy of Long Kesh/Maze.

September 2017
A: We can't get access to the prison site, nobody can get access. The prison's presence is dispersed beyond its perimeter walls. It is found in community museums, in private individual homes, through the objects that people made or salvaged.

June 2018
M: Finally, we had to realise that it would be impossible for us to get permission to access the ex-prison site, as it's not open to the public.

January 2017
A: I mean, we've approached the Office of First and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) in our official attempt to get a visit to the site of the gaol. We have approached and are talking to the Maze/Long Kesh Development Corporation…

A: We initially tried to get people involved who had a first-hand experience of the jail, such as former prisoners, former visitors, former prison officers, essentially people with that first-hand experience of the prison. The process of trying to get people involved dictated how the project and our methodology evolved. Initially, we planned to do it under the umbrella of one organisation that might have contacts but we found, through the process of the project, that slowly building up contacts through a range of organisations as well as word of mouth was much more effective. The archaeologist Laura McAtackney, whose book 'An Archaeology of

the Troubles', particularly her concept of the 'distributed self',[1] was very influential to us conceptually, was also instrumental in introducing us to many contacts for both our conference and for the subsequent project as well as giving us important insights into the difficulties of the evolving political context. Through one to one personal engagement, you are able to explain your initial ideas and build trust, then gradually modify your ideas according to things that people were telling you, or concerns that they raised.

January 2017

A: We have approached ex-prison officers, trying to get them on board, but that could be hard, they may well be bound by the Official Secrets Act, and also reticent to visit that difficult period in history. People don't want to be seen to be raking up issues from the past.

M: Something which I underestimated is how difficult it is to get in contact with people.

M: We asked several people to collaborate who initially seemed to agree but then we heard nothing from them anymore. We recognised that they weren't going to tell us directly that they will not take part. This took a lot of energy. In the end, we questioned our conceptual approach. We also found out that there are people who are kind of 'gatekeepers' for their community. They naturally want to protect people from being exploited as well as protecting 'their' political narrative. Personal stories are always interrelated with politics and collective memory.

M: I think there was a phase in our project when we actually no longer knew how to continue. Everything became very confusing. However, at the same time, we continued to

make contact with ex-prisoners, organisations and other people. In the end, it took another year to rework the initial concept and to build up people's trust.

January 2017

M: Although the project is process orientated, we also want a result, an artwork that makes it possible to share our experiences and insights even if the project doesn't work out in the way we have first anticipated. At the moment we still believe that we can achieve this goal. It's not that it's over now, but we have to consider a plan B.

We have to be open to failure too, otherwise, this is not a serious research project I think. On the other hand, I am not fond of failure in art. Some artists even manage to 'sell' failure as success, but I am quite sceptical whether this is the right strategy for artistic research especially when it deals with such contentious topics as we do in this project.

September 2017

M: Our situation has changed since the last time we spoke. We really achieved our main goals. For example yesterday we even met with a retired prison officer. Prison officers were the last group of people that was missing in our project. It was a moving experience when he showed us his objects and talked with us about all the suffering that was related to this prison.

A: Even an attempt to try and imagine what the future of the site might be, yielded the problems we mentioned. In the early stages when we encountered these problems whilst trying to find a solution to work with the site we came to Laura MacAttackney's book. Her

work and particularly her concept of "distributed self" (2014: 244-265) prompted us to avoid getting fixated on an architectural notion of the site as a physical structure, or on any future structure for that site. McAtackney's work highlighted the idea that the site has this sort of 'dispersed presence', through people who had somehow a relationship with it. Maybe they have things in boxes in their houses or on display on their windowsills, or stuff they donated to a community museum. Some of this material is already in the public domain and some is in private hands, hence the prison has this kind of dispersed presence, amongst different individuals who have had different political experiences of the site. So, we started to think that the network of relationships between the objects, the custodians and their political, as well as, geographical dispersion would suggest a way that we could start to work.

Objects as catalysts

A: So this is a methodology that evolved through working with people who had first hand experience of the prison and with Laura McAtackney. The idea to photograph some of these objects, but not to photograph them in a purely documentary sense, allowed us to make the taking of the photographs a dialogical process. I suppose that there is something performative about this as well. We organise a time with the person, we arrive at the place, we have our mobile photo booth, with our set of lights and our background paper. The object is taken out, the person helps us place the object, or we place the object. Whilst we are placing the object, we are also discussing how the custodian of this object might title this object. Rather than titling it in a very descriptive way, they might give it a title that says something about their personal relationship to the object. Then we also ask for a testimony around the object, again where the testimony is about the relationship to the object, rather than describing an already known or obvious narrative, for example, if it were a republican high cross or a loyalist piece of insignia. You can see that in the photograph. It reveals a more nuanced tale when people talk about the context or even some of the technical, creative details about how it was made. The custodian, the owner or the maker of the object were always in the room, part of that photographic process, often helping us place and hold the object while Martin photographed it, this was very important. So was the process of naming the object where we had a portable labelling machine to make a label for the object to put in the foreground of the 'photographic frame'. This process was all part of negotiating the representation of the object. In a way, this

method of working with existing objects opened up this possibility of creating a relationship between the object as an artefact and then the contemporary testimony of the participant.

> September 2017
> M: Our idea was that the process of naming artefacts should play a major role in our project. So, we bought a portable labelling machine which we used during the performative photo sessions. While the participants showed us the object, we asked them for a title, printed it out and stuck it below the object. Finally, you can actually see this label in the image and you kind of understand that the title was given during the photo session.

Karin: So to say the object in a way was a kind of 'transformer', or the bridge builder between you, the people and the stories, but also in a way between the past and the present, because the object is still there and plays a role in the household and how people approach it today.

M: These objects acted as a kind of memory storage. During the process of being shown, they potentially triggered and evoked special and sometimes even hidden memories. These kind of memories - outside of ideologically prescribed narratives – were the ones we were so much interested in.

> September 2017
> M: We recorded all interviews on audio, transcribed them, and then edited them. Spoken words in an open conversation always sound completely different than a written statement. Finally, we sent the pre-edited transcription back to the person with whom we collaborated so that this person could revise or even fully rewrite his/her statement. This was a time-consuming process but the integrity of the statements was one of our major concerns.
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> M: For example, with the prison officer yesterday, when we, in the beginning, made 'small talk' about the prison, we talked about the usual things. However, the moment when he took out his personal objects the conversation reached another qualitative level. I am sure the outcome of

the texts, as well as the images of the objects, would be completely different if we just have asked our participants: 'please send us an object and a statement' without meeting them in person and having these conversations during the photo sessions.

A: The objects and our considerations of McAtackney's 'distributed self' led to discussions about a *notional museum* rather than a physical repository, that might exist in the form of objects located in different places with potential to create a relationship between the past, present and future, allowing people think about the relationship between these things.

M: The main idea in our concept was to work with three types of objects: the 'real' artefacts so to say, then artefacts that are made by us but based on memories of things that no longer exist. The third type is the collaboratively made objects. This was very important for us because it suggested a link to the future as well as how to deal with the past. We will present the collaboratively made objects in the same way as we present the original ones.

M: Via McAtackney's contacts we met with a group of women who were ex-visitors of the prison. They had a republican background and they regularly meet as the 50+ Group. Their group dynamic was already established, they met regularly to craft things amongst their many other social activities, therefore it was much easier for us to work with them. The first step was that we asked them to bring prison artefacts from home. This seemed to be a great group experience for them too because it was the first time that they showed to each other these objects. The second step was to develop ideas for actually creating new objects collaboratively.

How to Talk about History – Agonism and Dialogue

A: Often the people we spoke to can *now* see points in the opinions of others, and there is sometimes overlap. There are a lot of people that *do* recognize the importance that this history somehow has to be marked or recognized, or *dealt* with, in order for people to be able to move on. But the disagreement is in *how* you talk about history, and how do you actually deal with it especially when some of the conditions that created that history are still ongoing, or still unresolved.

The issue around legacy is difficult. People who oppose anything happening to the jail in the future are worried that one particular story will be told, but the actual fact is there are lots of stories to be told about this prison, that all have interrelationships. Often the vernacular stories people tell about the day-to-day life at the prison don't contradict each other as much as one might imagine, even though the narrators might come from very different political perspectives. There were other perhaps lesser known narratives that also came out as a result of the project, including perspectives from visitors, most especially from female visitors.

M: In the beginning, I believed that the main problem of dealing with Long Kesh/Maze is that official politicians do not want to address the history of this place. However, I had to realise the problem was much deeper, the site of the ex-prison was an open wound that concerned the whole of Northern Irish society. Usually, when I work in the context of contentious heritage I have a less dialogical and more provocative approach. For example, my work confronts society with its repressed memories, such as Aryanisation during the Nazi time in Austria. For several years I conceived and produced installations in public spaces and in art spaces, which questioned the official historical narrative, and pointed to the continuation of fascist ideas in Austria. But it in this case, in Northern Ireland in the context of Long Kesh/Maze, it was a completely different situation to deal with. You cannot simply create a 'productive conflict', because you cannot define the 'enemy' (such as is the case of the [Neo-]Nazis in Austria). I had to understand that a dialogical and kind of 'neutral' (as far as possible) approach is needed.

January 2017

M: During a film project (Notes on Resistance) in the 2000s I was working with Austrian Internationale Brigade fighters who fought in the Spanish Civil war. For them, it was very important that their (forgotten) story becomes part of the collective history in Austria. Therefore, they were interested in working with me and taking part in this film. However, it was also necessary to build up trust with them. But in Northern Ireland, it seems to me, and maybe you have to correct me Aisling, that

many people whom we have contacted don't want to share their stories with the public, rather they prefer that their stories should stay inside their respective communities.

A: A lot of people don't want to talk about the past because if you rake up the past… and this is perhaps a subtext, it's often unsaid… but… 'if you rake up the past, does that create an unstable political climate that could escalate and lead back into conflict again?'.

M: So this is the main difference in our approach. Also, your question about the conflicts embedded in the site poses a question: Does an agonistic (a term introduced by Chantal Mouffe) approach makes sense to deal with this sort of conflicts? So, how much agonism is possible and how much dialogue and empathy is needed?

January 2017
M: We also don't want to create an artistic space where different camps 'fight' with each other. This simply doesn't make sense for us.

M: Getting back to our initial idea to think about a museum that Long Kesh might become: I think, at the moment, it is nearly impossible to build a museum on this site. However, in the beginning, I thought it would be the best solution to deal with the past of the ex-prison.

Nora: Maybe despite critical museum theory, there is a part of the idea of the museum, however you think it, that will still involve a certain degree of fixation or suture of a narrative. There is a certain monumentality to the idea of the museum itself, that even in the most deconstructed sense would still not be the approach to take to the situation that you are describing, for memory, and working through history.

On the Process: Research, art, mediation

M: In concept art three aspects come together: research in and through art, the process of producing artworks and the negotiation of artistic ideas. Our project is concept art and these three points play an essential role in the entire creative production. The research, the production of artworks and the mediation aspect of an artistic idea are equally important for us. Therefore we will present our project in the form of an exhibition, which actually takes two forms. Firstly we use a set of postcards presented on a table or stand in semi-public places such as libraries or conferences and festivals. Therefore, we can reach out to an audience outside of traditional art circles. Secondly, we have a more or less 'conventional' art exhibition in the art space PS2. A third presentation format will be a book, which is equally important for us. Additional to the artwork the book will consist of texts by theorists who will contextualise our work in different fields.

N: It is interesting that you now describe the process it in a regular sequence, of: first we did the research, then we produced something and now we are going to mediate it. Actually you started connecting these three activities. I am coming back to this because we spoke earlier on in the process about how this work of negotiation with community members, involving people, so to say, often remains invisible.

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A: There is a lot of invisible work in it. You want to approach people delicately and not alienate anybody. You are talking to so many people with different perspectives, you have to take time being very mindful of what you are saying. Hence the process is very slow, there's also lot of following up through sensitively worded emails and phone calls. There is a lot of invisible labour involved.

M: There was the research phase where only Aisling and I did research, eventually with the help of Laura McAtackney, then there was the production phase where we collaborated with people, followed by a mediation/presentation phase, where we had the main responsibility for the presentation of the results of our research and artistic production. Not everyone who partook in the project was involved in everything. This would have been impossible because

people don't have so much time. All these things are interrelated, they influence each other. By showing or telling something to someone, we got a response, which also could lead us to new ideas and change one of our methods, or even our field of research, and so on…

A: There is a kind of interlocked interrelationship between these different aspects of the project. In a way when we started the objects were already mediated, we encountered objects mediated in various ways. Different community museums have individual curatorial styles. Observing the different curatorial styles reveals something about the human relationship of the curators to the objects, or people talking about objects in private homes, minding them, safeguarding them, showing them or not showing them. Obviously that helped develop our thinking about how we were going to take a series of photographs of these objects, in a dialogical way with the participants.
N: Actually the research, the development of the concept already consisted of this process of finding out what might be an appropriate approach by asking and talking to people.

M: Yes exactly. That's the main point, in the beginning, we had only an idea. Initially, we wanted to build a kind of three-dimensional model of a potential Museum of Long Kesh/Maze in public space. Then we had to change our initial idea and find a new one. At the moment, parts of our project are based on participation, and other parts are based on collaboration and this, as I tried to explain, might even develop differently in the future.

N: Which is kind of why I like the word mediation, although it is not a common word for 'engagement', 'Stakeholder involvement' or 'education' in English. I like it because it initially is double sided. It happens between at least two entities, and not from one to others. But you also used, for these processes, now when we are talking, a lot the word collaboration. To do something collaboratively. Could you tell me how you would define something as collaborative?

M: Collaborations are always based on exchange and discussion. The main idea is to define a concept together in order to produce something together. Participation is a bit different because in a participatory setting I would argue that the artist defines the frame in advance. The artist already has an idea and invites people to partake in the project. This approach is of equal worth. In this case, the advantage is that people already know in which context their contribution will be presented. It is much safer for them to take part. I would say, the

participatory approach in our project is when we talk with participants about their objects, the labelling process, and the photo sessions. People trusted us to do our best to present their contributions properly and responsibly. On the other hand, the work with the 50+ group was collaborative, because new objects were built during the workshops.

Transforming Long Kesh/Maze: Reverberations

A: In a recent conversation with an employee of Tar Anall, the umbrella organisation from where the 50+ group meet, reiterated how much the women enjoyed the project saying that if we were ever doing a project like this again they would be very interested. They are keen that their history is being told and heard, given that much of it isn't written into the major narratives. They felt that this project allowed that to happen, in a way.

M: There is one thought I would like to add with respect to the title *Transforming Long Kesh/Maze*. Although, we have changed our approach we did not change the title. The reason is that the project still aims at transformation. Rather than transforming the physical site into a museum, the aim is now to develop methods and share ideas about possibilities to transform the very polarised discourse about this prison into a productive one.

A: We aim to create an environment where people feel they can discuss some of these issues – as these are the issues that are difficult for people just to discuss, because so many legacy issues haven't been resolved. The absence of a government here articulates the lack of resolution, the situation over Brexit amplifies it. These issues have to be resolved or discussed, in some form, and I would hope that our exhibition can contribute to trying to look at another aspect of it, apart from the already well-rehearsed narratives

[1] McAtackney, An Archaeology of the Troubles: The Dark Heritage of Long Kesh/Maze Prison, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2014: 244-265.

Part 6

Europe: A contested framework

Reflexive Europeanization: Europe in the making of global entanglements

Regina Römhild

The signpost makes me aware of the contentious presentation I will get to see when I pass behind it. As a visitor of the exhibition *Dead Images* in Edinburgh [1] [-> Dead images], I am requested to decide deliberately whether or not I want to enter the following room which contains a photographic still life of more than 8,000 human skulls. It represents one section of a collection of about 40,000 skulls held by the Anthropology Department of the Natural History Museum in Vienna. A long wall and two large halls of the Edinburgh College of Art are needed to show this exhibit, produced by photographer and artist Tal Adler for the Edinburgh exhibition: a 1-to-1 multiple viewpoint panorama of 30 m shelf space of a collection that has not yet been presented to the public [-> Shock].

It feels like an eternity to walk along the life-size image, and still I am not able to pay the appropriate bit of individual attention to each of the skulls on the photography. I recognize the strict order in which they are placed, side by side along the shelves and I recognize the bare details given in individual handwriting on some of the low boxes in which they sit: inventory numbers, sources, regional or 'ethnic' classifications. The information tells me that the image portraits the oldest part of the collection, often gained from archeological sites in Austrian regions but also during the colonial era.

Despite this rather calming impression that what I see are parts of the skeletons of people who died long before they were incorporated in this collection, other, more unsettling bits of knowledge are immediately mobilized by the very same picture: Knowledge about other practices of collecting and studying skulls and skeletons of people whose remains traveled unapproved to European museums, especially when they died under genocidal conditions, as in the context of NS-concentration camps or under a murderous German colonial rule in Namibia, what was then 'South West Africa'. The photograph makes me think of the role these remains of humans were made to play in a "Science of Race" (Bruns/ Hampf 2018; Foroutan et al 2018; Wernsing et al 2018) deployed in the 19th and 20th centuries, and the constitutive role physical anthropology (a remote branch of my own discipline, cultural anthropology and European Ethnology) played in establishing this science and its techniques of measuring, classifying and positioning human subjects on a global scale governed by the idea of a superior White European civilization.

This can be known through today's critical scholarly work reflecting on these genealogies of the European scientific endeavor. But it makes an immense difference to be directly confronted with an image of its foundational archive (see Szöke in this volume) [-> Individual story]. Here, I find myself forced to reflect on archives like this skull collection not only as a source of knowledge retrieval but also as a site where scientific knowledge was and is produced with specific political agendas and specific governmental techniques (cf. Stoler 2002). In the *Dead Image* exhibition, the modern European "order of things" reveals itself in its "archival productions" (ibid., 87): in the ways human subjects are rendered scientific objects, by splitting their skeletons up into chunks referring to and sorted by the diverse interests of inquiry, by counting, ranking and classifying them, by ordering them in boxes and shelfs, thus enabling the rational scientific gaze to distance itself from the violence it does to the human subjectivity of its objects. As a visitor, I am referred to the insoluble entanglements between the violent politics of a colonial, racialized world order and the epistemic violence of modern scientific thought (Spivak 1988).

I want to take this glimpse at the panoramic view on the Vienna skull collection in the *Dead Images* exhibition and my reading of it as a starting point for thinking about and with the concept of "Reflexive Europeanization" (Römhild 2009), through the lens of the TRACES project. I have chosen the *Dead Images* exhibition as my primary example because the way the concept was implicitly and explicitly used, hence further elaborated in many Creative coproductions of TRACES can be made especially evident in this work.

The work of reflexive entanglements

Originally and primarily, the term "reflexive Europeanization" - as I have started to conceptualize it elsewhere (ibid.) - refers to the makings of Europe through unintended, reversed side-effects of global entanglements (Conrad/ Randeria 2013; Randeria/ Römhild 2013). Europe is thus seen as the co-producer *and* the by-product of an unequally entangled world. In the work of TRACES, we have further thought about and experimented with collaborative scientific-artistic ways to make these effective entanglements visible, approachable and reflectable. Through the lens of reflexive Europeanization we can envisage Europe as a work of reflexive entanglements in progress – and thus as a project that is challenged and renewed from its neglected entangled 'Others'.

Reflexive Europeanization starts with the notion of a long history of worldly entanglements that have co-created Europe reaching back to precolonial times and the already then established nets and circuits of long-distance trade and commerce as well as exchange in resources, produce, goods, ideas, knowledge, and people across today's seemingly separate continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa, across the Mediterranean and the Black Sea (Abu-Lughod 1991). With colonialism and the shift towards a transatlantic configuration of the world, these entanglements were turned into unequal power relations between the "West and the rest" (Hall 1992). In this powerful reconfiguration, the notion of an entangled world was superseded and widely rendered invisible by creating a world of distant, different 'Others' outside the European West. Through these processes of colonial world-making or "worlding" in the words of Gayatri Spivak, Western colonial power created a specific arrangement of Others that would allow 'the West' to become the naturalized centre of this world.

Starting from here, reflexive Europeanization not only inquires into the makings of Others but also in the reciprocal production of Europe itself within this process. From a postcolonial view on an entangled Europe, the colonies appear to be laboratories of European modernity (cf. Cooper/ Stoler 1997) and to have provided the resource for techniques and politics of Othering that were engendered also within Europe: in much the same way of constructing a normalized 'White', bourgeois, male subject against which further genders, classes, and ethnicized, racialized parts of the population come to figure as a constituent Other (Comaroff/ Comaroff 1992). The repatriation and application of colonial patterns of "Othering" (Spivak 1985; 1988) and "Orientalism" (Said 1978) can be observed in a wide range of similar European worldings: whether in the fascist and racist empire of an 'Arian' Europe in national socialism (cf. Césaire 1972; Young 2001, 2), in the inter-national politics of the nation-state with its powerful fiction of a self-contained, sovereign, culturally unique citizenry excluding minoritized Others (Conrad/ Randeria 2013) or in the world of the Cold War creating a sustained East-West-divide across Europe in the postcolonial present (Chari/ Verdery 2009).

Such containments result in negating the entanglements on which they build. From the perspective of reflexive Europeanization they can be seen – and made visible - as reflexes of global entanglements. At this point, the approach takes the concept of colonial world-making further with respect to complications and transformations of the primary constellation of 'West' vs. 'rest': Cold war East-West relations and ongoing post-Cold war, postcolonial mul-

tipolar mobilities and emerging new worldings can thus be understood as reflexive effects of previous politics of colonialism and continuous, deterritorialized forms of coloniality (cf. Quijano 2000; Mignolo 2007).

In the concept of reflexive Europeanization, the spheres of the Other, the margins and mobilities across fabricated worlds figure prominently: as sites of the co-production and repatriation of political ideas and governmental techniques, but also of contesting European/ Western dominated power relations. Rather than seeing Europe – and its core identity labels of enlightenment, modernity, science, secularism etc. – as being autopoetic products of self-making, the concept aims at understanding both Europe and its intellectual, cultural and political histories as products of global entanglements. Colonies and post-colonies thus not only have become the laboratories of reflexive Europeanization and modernization; they are also essential sites of the contestation of Eurocentric worldings. They can be revisited as sites of other histories and presents of Europe that decentre and queer the teleological trajectorism of European self-making (Appadurai 2014). Rather than seeing the hegemonic European present as an inevitable result of a unidirectional, monocausal chronology the reflexive perspective from the world of 'Others' points towards imagined and practiced possibilities of other Europes. As Dipesh Chakrabarty (2002) has proclaimed, Europe and its hegemonic politics of modernity have become a global (contentious) heritage; in terms of the promises of equality, freedom and solidarity they have raised but failed to fulfil, the projects of Europe and modernity can only be renewed from their margins.

Such contestation and renewal is at work in the global circulation of political ideas and imaginations, but also in processes of human migration that can similarly be understood as reflexive moments of entanglements turned back towards and across Europe (Römhild 2009; Randeria/ Römhild 2013). In so far as the border regimes of the nation-states and the European Union suggest that national and European territories and identities are clear-cut entities, with obvious geopolitical distinctions between 'inside' and 'outside', 'insiders' and 'outsiders', and with a claim to sovereign control over all mobilities crossing it, they are denying the historical fact of cross-border entanglements and supersede it by the impression of biopolitically consistent containers. Currently, this image is, once again, enforced by the broad (re)turn to (neo)nationalist, racist border politics in the political mainstream at the centres of the European nation-states. However, insisting and drawing on these neglected relations between Europe and its 'Others', the global movements of migration have resisted that separa-

tion and continue to make Europe their postcolonial home (Römhild 2017; Römhild 2018). In that sense, migration contributes to building other Europes 'from below': Everyday routes and relations of migrants and their descendants across European borderlands result in "process geographies" (Appadurai 2000) reaching beyond seemingly fixed geopolitical units. From such a point of view, migration can be seen as a project that ultimately confronts Europe with its neglected historical entanglements that have laid the ground for its current existence.

Towards cosmopolitizing Europe

As argued so far, the concept of reflexive Europeanization does not refer to cognizant processes and decisions. It rather draws on unintended side-effects of power relations that are so powerful precisely because they reveal their own constructedness by naturalizing the imagined geopolitical geographies that they ground in. Here, the concept of reflexive Europeanization draws on the theory of "reflexive modernization" (Beck, Giddens/ Lash 1996) in which reflexivity is also not (at least not in the first place) understood as a cognitive intervention but rather in terms of reflexes of unintended side-effects of modernization and globalization. However, these reflexes provide the conditions for further understanding, reflection and critique that could turn a rather self-directed, contingent process into a project of volitional participation and transformation. This move from a state of being the object of reflexive modernization towards becoming its reflecting subject has been a major concern in Ulrich Beck's late work around concepts of "cosmopolitization" (Beck/ Sznaider 2006). Similarly, I would argue that processes of reflexive Europeanization do not automatically entail or lead to reflecting these processes. Rather, by making visible these entanglements and their reflexive effects, reflection and critique and volitional change can be initiated as a possible consecutive project.

This is what I see as a major intention in the work of TRACES with the concept of reflexive Europeanization. By presenting a set of widely invisible and less reflected contentious cultural heritages grounding in the entangled global histories of Europe, attempts are being made to cosmopolitize popular views on the becoming and making of Europe. The ultimate aim would be to render these contentious heritages of entangled histories the subject of informed criticism and change – and thus cosmopolitize the current hegemonic project of Europe. Here, the mode of scientific-artistic collaboration in re/presenting these heritages have provided promising options for such cosmopolitization.

Dead Images creates options to engage with and critically reflect upon reflexive moments in the makings of Europe. As visitors, we are confronted with the involuntarily traveling skeletons and skulls of 'Others' as the source and laboratory of modern European scientific thought. The exhibition reveals overseen entanglements and consequences of the production of scientific knowledge, and it productively complicates possible conclusions. Before entering the halls with the panorama image, the visitors are drawn into a multilogue of diverse actors involved in creating, handling and negotiating questions of locating and using human remains in European museums. From video screens, arranged like frames of an ancestral portrait gallery at the wall opposite to the entrance of the exhibition, museum directors and curators present their often critical reflections on the colonial, racist legacy of the collections they hold, a private collector points to his interests in the matter, while representatives of indigenous communities and overseas museum directors express their claims for repatriating their ancestors, and forensic anthropologists report on their usage of the same scientific techniques to investigate and identify the individual victims of more recent mass murders, e.g. under the Spanish Franco regime, in the Bosnian war or in the deadly border zones of the Mediterranean sea. This multilayered multilogue inhibits the visitor to think of this history as being over and shelved; rather one is made to see that the more it becomes visible the more its ongoing afterlife is also brought to light. Rather than being dissolved, the contentious heritage draws near and requires the visitors to envisage their own being entangled with it. For me, this has become most tangible in another video documenting a talk between Tal Adler, the artist and photographer, and the Keeper of the Anthropometry collection, also a photographer, at the Museum of Natural History in Vienna. Here, critical awareness needs to be combined with the recognition of mutual disciplinary and professional involvements in the colonial foundations of one's own work.

Against this background of a quite dissonant chorus of diverse actors and activists, *Dead Images* invites us to rethink the travels of human remains and their possible return from European museums to the homes of their descendants, as it is now widely discussed But: Where are their current homes when so many of their living compatriots are at home in postcolonial Europe today? And how can we think of these back and forth travels of the dead 'Others' compared to the travels of the living who are halted and rejected at today's deadly borders of the European Union (cf. Appadurai 2017)? These questions raise issues of hospitality and citizenship, as we need to rethink them with respect to the European politics of dis-

entanglement at the borders of the European Union. But they can also be discussed with respect to the presence of the dead ancestors of today's migrants who are, for the most, locked away in the cellars of contentious museum collections.

Joan Smith, artist and lecturer in the School of Art at the University of Edinburgh – the site of the *Dead Images* exhibition – and member of the TRACES team, embarked on a very interesting project that she reflected upon under the title of "The colour of skulls" in a presentation at the *Dead Images* conference. While this title first irritated me, due to its use of the loaded word 'colour', it soon became clearer what kind of colour was focused upon here. Joan was, as she told the audience, struck by the diversity of colours that the skull collection at the Edinburgh anatomy museum displayed. This difference by colour intervened in the monotonous linear arrangement of the skulls on the storage racks. The colourful skull bones do not correlate in any way with the interest for racist 'colours' in archeo-anthropology. Rather, the diverse colours being present on one skull, but also with a view on the collection as a whole, point to the posthumous impact of environmental influences and the more recent history of their travel to the European museums. Differences in colour thus stem from residing over different periods of time in different kinds of soil or water, being exposed to sun and wind. Hence, these differences point to both individual and social travel conditions after death that can be understood as a second, environmental imprint of their often involuntary journey. Joan Smith then began to paint the skulls; a project that she described as a form of meditation that led her to deeply and intimately engage with the individual appearance of every human subject in the shades of the skull bones. In this work, she encountered the limits of the modern spectrum of available colour charts and tried to think of other ways to adequately depict the imprints of soil, wind, water and other environmental forces. In some way, her project resembles my initial perception of a certain resistance of individuality of each of the skulls displayed on Tal Adler's panorama in the *Dead Images* exhibition that I could not respond to due to the overwhelming impression of standardized serial mass arrangement. In Joan's paintings, this resistance of the skulls pointing back to the individuality of the human subject, becomes apparent and acknowledged. While these paintings make no attempt to address the violent history of European genocidal colonialism, they do address the afterlife of the dead humans and the journey of their skulls. They raise questions of how these 'human remains' – and the human beings they once were – are welcomed and cared for on their journey to and from Europe. The project thus also raises important questions of hospitality and citizenship with respect to dead and living Othered subjects crossing European borders.

Within the TRACES project, the concept of reflexive Europeanization is used to investigate the global entanglements in which Europe figures as both their co-producer as well as their by-product. But furthermore, TRACES uses reflexive Europeanization as a methodological tool to bring to light the forgotten, blind spots of European contentious heritages heritages (see Macdonald, this volume) [-> Contentious Collections], in order to confront hitherto unconcerned debates on histories and memory politics with these sites that point to still existing exclusions and dis-recognitions of other Europes and their effects on the present. Here, we, as artists and researchers, can also pursue a pedagogical aim: If Europe can be seen as still under construction and in the making, then there is also the option and the hope for change and improvement. What contribution can we make to rethink and renew the European project from the margins, as Dipesh Chakrabarty has put it?

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[1] See the contributions by Adler, Harries and Szöke in this volume for more details on the exhibition and its theme. image of its foundational archive

The scattered colonial body: Exhibiting Italian/ Libyan heritage between family memory and contentious heritage

Leone Contini

The keystone of the exhibition *Bel Suol d'Amore* (curated by me and the anthropologist Arnd Schneider) is an interview with my grandmother, video recorded in 2002 and digitalized during our fieldwork in Rome in 2017 (fig. 1, fig. 2). My grandmother, born in 1914, witnessed pre-war events, that the elders among today's Italian-Libyans in Rome cannot remember: vibrant memories and family anecdotes cohabit with horrific ones, such as the beheaded heads of the Arab leaders exposed as trophies in Tarhuna by the Italian "killer" (her words) Piscopello. The 'civilizing mission' of Europe is bordering barbarism, more or less explicitly, in all her tales, from the bloody fascist era to the de facto apartheid of the post war period. The ironic perspective of this young woman with a socialist background dominates the exhibition designed by her grandson, me: while sitting in front of her image on the screen, watching the interview, it is in fact possible to see (and therefore comprehend) the entire show. Laying on a table near her interview are several couscous recipes, collected during the research process. These are available for the audience to take away: each one recalls a different component of the contradictory colonial patchwork. This collection, on the crossroad between ethnography and fiction, is a sort of hypothesis for creolization. On the opposite corner of the same table there is another video, *A Tripoli* (To Tripoli): a collection of key events which occurred during our fieldwork in Rome.

Right on the left of the video a showcase displays, as in a *Wunderkammer*, various objects that several Italian-Libyan families (including mine) were able to take to Italy (these objects are rare because the Italians were not allowed to bring more than a suitcase with them). A multilingual phone-book of Tripoli from the 1950s paradoxically evocates a utopian city (of the future?), where different religions and faiths cohabit (fig.3, fig.4). Such polyphony, albeit based on uneven power relations, have totally disappeared from Tripoli only a few years later.

These elements of the show are surrounded by and somehow visually connected with one another by ephemeral palm trees made out of paper (fig. 5). Palms are in my perspective

polyvalent keys able to access different realms of the colonial microcosm, being used by very different sides, from the Italian fascists to the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya of Muammar Gaddafi, but also by a very unknown pro-Arab Italian movement from the 1950s and also by the Italian-Libyan association in Rome, whose logo displays an eradicated palm on a boat (fig. 6).

I decided to keep another series of objects somehow isolated, distant from 'our' family collections, and from my grandmother's interview: the bronze busts of several 'actors' of the colonial drama: from the Italian King and Emperor to General Graziani, a war criminal named 'the butcher of Fezzan'. I felt the urge to bring these objects back to the public discourse, in order to reopen a neglected chapter of the Italian history, by following an anti-celebrative strategy of display: I showed them half wrapped in their packing, tied on pallets, lying on the floor and desecrated, as undigested remains of a collective crime (fig. 7).

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How My Face Was Stolen

Klaus Schönberger

During the exhibition *Bel Suol d'amore - The Scattered Colonial Body* at the Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico (Rome), curated by artist Leone Contini (Prato) in collaboration with anthropologist Arnd Schneider (Oslo) in June/ July 2017, my face was stolen. How did this happen? In this TRACES exhibition (Contini/ Schneider 2017a) a facial mask produced with a 3D printer was shown (fig. 1). This object relates to the facial plaster masks collected by Italian anthropologists in Libya during the late 20s and 30s. After I had approached this mask down to a few steps, suddenly a loud and almost visible click sounded next to me. What was that all about? Who is photographing my face here? I asked myself. But there was nobody to be seen. Just a camera on a tripod on the right side of this installation with a facial mask. Immediately I asked myself whether my, probably at this moment quite stupidly looking, face would now be transferred to a screen here in the museum or even filed with flickr, snapchat or Instagram in the Internet? I was irritated, a little upset, and a little outraged. At the same time, I tried to remember if I had entered into any license agreement with the purchase of the ticket that would allow exactly that. What had I gotten myself into?

This exhibition was an artistic interpretation of the collections of the former African Colonial Museum of Rome. The museum is located in Piazza Guglielmo Marconi in the Roman district of EUR. This is the part of the city that had been founded on the outskirts of Rome during fascism and that can be considered a collection of fascist architectural aesthetics.The multi-part artistic-ethnographic installation was located in an empty, cleared, and oversized, but very representative exhibition space. The starting point of the installation was "materiale rimosso", which included bronze busts and cannons from the former Colonial African Museum of Rome. In Italian *materiale rimosso* means both removed material and denied material.

The legacy of this museum, closed to the public for many decades, is scattered across several places in the Italian capital. The Pigorini Museum is one of them. Leone Contini (2019) describes the remains of this museum as "sort of 'undigested' remains", and sees this handling of the colonial heritage as "institutional orphanage“: "It gradually appeared to me as a body, dismembered and dispersed: the evidence of something we don't want to deal with. The

Italian colonial 'adventure' was in fact dismissed together with fascism, hidden under the comfortable narration and self-absolutory formula of *italiani brava gente*, Italian good people. The fact that the colonies where 'lost' at the beginning of the war eased the process of collective denial – moreover Italy never experienced a decolonisation process" (Contini 2019, n.p).

With their intervention Contini and Schneider wanted to set in motion a broader process of reflection on the collections and the history of Italian colonialism. The intention is to offer new perspectives and visions on aspects of the Italian cultural heritage as yet little explored. In the exhibition space of the Pigorini Museum, visitors were confronted with a multi-part exhibition ensemble. Part of the exhibition consisted of busts of the 'heroes' of colonial campaigns and wars in Libya, still packed on pallets as they would be for transport. Another part was a display case with personal objects that referred to the Libyan connections of the artist's family.

The installation with the facial mask, in which my face was stolen, is a central component of the exhibition. It was illuminated and immediately attracted my attention because of its singularity and emphasis. There was no explanation at this point about the origin of the mask. Elsewhere, the process of reproduction using a 3D printer was explained in a video. But in this part of the exhibition, the visitors were on their own. It was only the penetrating click of the camera that was heard as a comment on the physical approach to the mask. Leone Contini gave the work the title *Restolen#*.

This installation, by clicking alone, gave me a clear idea of what it might be like if one's own face were appropriated by an institution, a power, or an anthropologist. In general, the face is associated with the whole person and thus taken possession of him or her. I thought I could understand what it felt like when someone took possession of my face without my consent. As a regular visitor to anthropological and ethnographic museums, I was degraded from an inquisitive subject to an object.

The facial masks have come into the possession of European museums under more than questionable conditions. The expropriation of the face, which happened to me and other visitors, gave me a very impressive demonstration of what postcolonial theory gives us to consider in relation to the experiences of the colonised subject. With their exhibition, Leone

Contini and Arnd Schneider wish to recall for European memory that which is invisible, orphaned, and forgotten. With the installation *Restolen#*, the organisers of the exhibition are only committing a fake theft, for the camera was 'empty' and contained no storage medium. But with the feelings and sensations they arouse in visitors, they can go ’beyond Europe’ and thus convey an idea of the power divide between the colonised subject and the colonising anthropologist.

References/ Further reading

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Taking the B out of Brixton

Marion Hamm

We have this little joke. We've taken the B off Brixton and we call it Rixton," he says. "The B is for all the black people that had to move out." (Blacker Dread, in Walker 2018)

Brixton living heritage as it stands today developed from the encounter of different groups of newcomers in a neighbourhood marked by change. A thriving collective memory reaches beyond the memories of individual residents in Brixton. It is reproduced in everyday communication, through the naming of streets and squares, exhibitions at the Black Cultural Archives, informal memorials such as the one for David Bowie, or formal ones such as the Black and Afro-Caribbean War Memorial, the distinctive musical heritage, and not least in local street parties and festivals such as the Lambeth Country Show.

The current Lambeth urban regeneration program is seen by many residents as a threat to the distinctive lived heritage of the neighbourhood. As community assets such as social housing estates, libraries, shops and venues are replaced by up-market establishments and expensive flats, long-term residents are finding it difficult to afford live in the increasingly gentrified neighbourhood. Against this background, it may be argued that the various campaigns for the preservation of existing public facilities constitute heritage work. However, this heritage work is made difficult as long-term residents are forced to leave the area due to the demolition of several council estates and rising housing prices. Blacker Dread (quoted above), for instance, had to close his record store, which doubled as an informal community centre in Brixton, due to rising rent. At a time, were Brixton is more than ever promoted for its thriving culture, most prominently its black culture, many of the creators of this culture are driven out.

Shaping Brixton

Brixton heritage developed from the encounter of different groups of newcomers in a neighbourhood marked by change. When it comes to evaluating Brixton heritage, public opinion is divided. The rich, eclectic and inspiring heritage bears the marks of poverty, institutional racism and popular uprisings. This has led to both celebration and stigmatisation.

Looking back, residents of different backgrounds emphasize a strong sense of community where black and white people used to get on, because `we were all poor'. Various local historical societies, the local online magazine Brixtonbuzz and the platform Urban75 offer a rich collection of Brixton history and heritage information. A brief overview outlines the historical development which shaped Brixton heritage as it stands today.
Historical buildings such as the Brixton Library, the Town Hall, the Ritzi cinema (originally Electric Pavillion), the Brixton Academy, and several shopping arcades give testimony of middle-class life in the age of imperialism in a thriving metropolis. Their architectural value is documented by nearly 50 listed buildings in central Brixton. In the interwar period, Brixton was known as the shopping and entertainment capital of South London. With an influx of artists and workers, the middle-class suburb turned into a working-class area associated with the arts. World War II bombing added to an existing housing crisis. With labour in short supply, the Commonwealth provided a readily available source for cheap labour. Citizens from the West-Indies were invited to come and work predominantly in public transport companies and the newly formed National Health Service. The first large group, known as the 'Windrush generation', arrived in 1948 and settled in Brixton. 50 years later, the central space in Brixton was named Windrush Square to commemorate this event and mark its importance. Mixing with the white English traditions, their markets, entertainment venues, Afro-Caribbean music styles and a distinctive street live shaped the distinctive heritage of the neighbourhood. Eventually, an ambitious post-war social housing program provided decent homes. In the 1980s, squatters and artists added a thriving subculture, and the Black Cultural Archives (BCA) were founded. 30 years later, the BCA became the first national black heritage centre in Britain, situated on the newly renamed Windrush Square.

In everyday life, friendly relations developed amongst a mixed and predominantly working-class population despite a general climate of racism. The iconic 121 Railton Road squatted social centre was first opened by the Brixton branch of the Black Panthers, before it was handed over to an anarchist collective. Today's mixed audiences at music gigs and festivals can be traced back to the 1950s, when "No Colour Bar dances" were held at Lambeth Town Hall. Police repression targeted at black residents led to three uprisings in the 1980s and 1990s. Ensuing public enquiries confirmed that police made disproportionate and indiscriminate use of 'stop and search' powers against black people. Recommendations included a new code for police behaviour. The 1999 Stephen MacPherson report found that institutional racism continued to be a problem. This can be

confirmed considering the 2018 Windrush scandal, where the "B" was driven out not only of Brixton, but also of Britain. Due to the hostile environment policy instituted by the current prime minister Theresa May, numerous black British people were wrongly detained, threatened with deportation, wrongly deported from the UK or denied entry. Many of those affected were part of the Windrush generation. As commonwealth citizens, many never applied for British passport, as they believed that their right to residency in the UK was guaranteed. With the move to the right of the current government and the ongoing Brexit negotiations, the gap between a claimed heritage of tolerance and multi-culturalism and actual policies is widening – heritage has become, once again, contentious.

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Part 7
Appendix

Authors

Tal Adler is an artist and researcher at the Centre for Anthropological Research on Heritage and Museums at the Humboldt University of Berlin. Between 2011-2016 he has worked at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, conducting artistic research on the politics of memory and display, concentrating on difficult heritage at marginal and established museums, landscapes, sites of commemoration and civil society organizations in Austria. For over two decades he has been developing methods of collaborative artistic research for engaging with difficult pasts and conflicted communities in Israel/Palestine and in Europe.

Răzvan Anton is a visual artist based in Cluj (Romania). He is currently teaching at the University of Art and Design and is a member of the Paintbrush Factory artist collective. His work has been shown in various venues across Romania such as Eastwards Prospectus gallery, Plan B gallery, MAGMA and has had works included in Timișoara Art Encounters Biennial.

Leone Contini studied Philosophy and Cultural Anthropology at Siena University, his research takes place on the edge between ethnography and art. In 2018 he was commissioned a new work by Manifesta 12, Palermo. He's currently a fellow resident at Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart. He lives and works in Tuscany, Italy.

Julie Dawson is a researcher at the Leo Baeck Institute (New York/Berlin) and directs their long-term archival survey of Jewish archival sources in Transylvania and Bukovina. She is writing her PhD at the Institute for Contemporary History at the University of Vienna on post-war diaries found in the Mediaș synagogue.

Domestic Research Society was established by Damijan Kracina, Alenka Pirman and Jani Pirnat in 2004 to record, collect, research and present domestic phenomena. The members have been active in the field of contemporary art since 1991. They strive to conduct collaborative and interdisciplinary research, which enables the development of innovative approaches in contemporary art, actually addressing a broader audience.

Stephanie Endter studied photography at the Reading College of Art and Design and completed a Master's in ECM (educating/curating/managing) at the University of Applied Arts,

Vienna. Since 2011 she has run the education department of the Weltkulturen Museum, Frankfurt. Previously she coordinated the programme for cultural managers from Middle and Eastern Europe at the Robert Bosch Stiftung in Berlin, worked as a freelance photographer, as well as curating international exhibitions and leading interdisciplinary workshops and seminars in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe.

Marion Hamm is a senior scientist and lecturer at the Institute for Cultural Analysis, University of Klagenfurt/ Celovec. She has published widely on ethnographic methodology and social movements' performative media practices. She studied cultural anthropology and cultural studies in Tübingen and Birmingham, holds a PhD in Sociology (University of Lucerne), and has worked and taught in German-speaking countries as well as London (UCL) and Barcelona (Autonomous University). In TRACES, she was the principal researcher for the topic *Everyday Heritage Practices in Popular Culture*.

John Harries is a senior teaching fellow in Social Anthropology at the University of Edinburgh. His research concerns the memory and materiality with particular reference to contemporary politics of identity in settler colonial societies. He explores these issues through a study into the ways in which the Beothuk, a thought-to-be-extinct First Nations people, are remembered in Newfoundland, Canada, as well as through collaborative scholarly and artistic work concerning the complex and ambivalent relationship we have with collections of human remains.

Ute Holfelder is a cultural anthropolgist working as senior scientist at the Institute for Cultural Analysis, University of Klagenfurt. In addition to her teaching activities, she has been working in various transdisciplinary projects with video artists, sound artists and performance artists. Currently she is working on the transdisciplinary procect "Performing Reality. Dis- und Re-artikulation des Dispositivs Kärnten/Koroška", which deals with the conflict-ridden history of Carinthia.

Damijan Kracina was born in 1970 in Kobarid Slovenia. In 1999 he concluded his study of sculpture and video at the Ljubljana Academy of Fine Arts and Design. After 1998 he enhanced his knowledge in Graz, New York, at the Tamarind Institute in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and at the Santa Fe Art Institute in Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA. In 1992 he was cofounder the art group Provokart. From 1997 to 2000 he was the artistic director of the art cen-

tre Artilerie Kluže. In 2005 he was co-founder of the artists' group Društvo za domače raziskave. He is a member of the AKC Metelkova group. He works in the fields of sculpture and multimedia art. He has been a professor with the Secondary School of Design and Photography in Ljubljana since 2010. He lives and works in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Member of Domestic Research Society.

Martin Krenn, born 1970, is an artist and curator who teaches at the University of Applied Arts Vienna. He works with various types of media, especially text, photography and video. His key area of interest lies in the strained relationships between art and society. Krenn received the Vice-Chancellor's Research Scholarship for his research about social art practices in the Faculty of Art, Design and the Built Environment at the Ulster University in Belfast (UK), where he was awarded a PhD in 2016.

Nora Landkammer is a gallery educator and researcher, member of the collective EAR – education, arts and research. Her research and practice focuses on interrogations of coloniality and racism in contexts of art, museum and gallery education. She is active in the international research network Another Roadmap for Arts Education. She has co-directed the Institute for Arts Education at Zurich University of the Arts ZhdK. In TRACES, she worked on conflict and learning in education around contentious heritage.

Erica Lehrer is a sociocultural anthropologist and curator. She is currently Associate Professor in the departments of History and SociologyAnthropology at Concordia University, Montreal, where she also founded and directs the Curating and Public Scholarship Lab (CaPSL) and also held the Canada Research Chair in Museum & Heritage Studies from 2007-2017.

Sharon Macdonald is Alexander von Humboldt Professor of Social Anthropology in the Institute of European Ethnology, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, where she also directs CARMAH – the Centre for Anthropological Research on Museums and Heritage. Her recent publications include *Memorylands. Heritage and Identity in Europe Today*, and, as co-editor, *Refugees Welcome? Difference and Diversity in a Changing Germany, and Engaging Anthropological Legacies* (a special section of *Museum Worlds*).

Suzana Milevska is a theorist and curator of visual art and culture. Currently she is Principal Investigator at the Politecnico di Milano (TRACES, Horizon 2020). She was Endowed Professor for Central and South Eastern European Art Histories, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Milevska holds a PhD in visual cultures from Goldsmiths College London. She received the Fulbright Senior Research Scholarship and Igor Zabel Award for Culture and Theory.

Aisling O'Beirn is an artist based in Belfast and lectures at Ulster University. Her work, exhibited nationally and internationally, includes sculpture, installation, animations and site-specific projects. She explores the relationship between politics, space and place examining, them as physical structures and political entities. She questions how people process and understand scientific and political developments through dialogue with scientists and others. She was included in Northern Ireland's first participation in the 51st Venice Biennale and was shortlisted for the MAC International prize in 2018.

Matevž Paternoster is a professional photographer, offering services also to various cultural organisations and artists, photographing architecture, museum documentary photography for established clients for example Museum of Architecture and Design and Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana. As freelance photographer and artist he gained state status of self-employed in the field of culture and presents his artistic projects at exhibitions internationally. Occasionally he is also giving lectures on photography at universities and art schools. He lives and works in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

Alenka Pirman (1964), contemporary artist and a PhD student of Heritology at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana. Since 1991 she has worked as a visual artist, collaborating with various institutions, including a few police museums. Research interest: exhibitions, contentious heritage display, visual and material language of truth-making, (neo)conceptual art. Member of Domestic Research Society.

Jani Pirnat (1974), art historian and curator. He gained working experience in the art mediation programmes for people with learning disabilities and disorders; in 2008 he acquired a national licence of a museum curator of tangible heritage and worked also in the National Museum of Slovenia (conservation, multimedia advisor on museum displays). As a contemporary art curator he worked at the Škuc Gallery in Ljubljana, and in the Centre for Contem-

porary Arts Celje. Currently he is employed as a curator in the Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana. Member of Domestic Research Society.

Melanie Proksch is a student and tutor of Applied Cultural Sciences at the Institute for Cultural Analysis at the University Klagenfurt/ Celôvec. As a research assistant in the TRACES Klagenfurt team, she acted as visual editor and controller. She gained her BA with an ethnographic study on artist-community co-productions of spatiality in the rural Alps-Adriatics.

Regina Römhild is a cultural anthropologist and professor at the Institute of European Ethnology, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. Her main fields of teaching and research are critical migration and border studies, Europe in postcolonial, entangled perspective, mediterranean & political anthropology. She is continuously engaged in transdisciplinary collaborations between ethnographic and artistic research. For more info please consult:
http://www.carmah.berlin/people/romhild-regina/

Arnd Schneider is currently Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Oslo, and was formerly Reader in Anthropology at the University of East London and a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Hamburg. He writes on contemporary art and anthropology, migration and film. He was a co-organizer of the international conference Fieldworks: Dialogues between Art and Anthropology (Tate Modern, 2003). His main publications include Futures Lost: Nostalgia and Identity among Italian Immigrants in Argentina (Peter Lang 2000) and Appropriation as Practice: Art and Identity in Argentina (Palgrave 2006). He edited Alternative Art and Anthropology: Global Encounters (Bloomsbury 2017), and co-edited (with Chris Wright) Contemporary Art and Anthropology (Berg 2006), Between Art and Anthropology (Berg 2010), and Anthropology and Art Practice (Bloomsbury, 2013). He directed Workpackage 2 of TRACES (“Ethnographic Research on/With Art Production”).

Karin Schneider is historian, arts and gallery educator and researcher in the field of museum and educational practices and histories. From 2007 on she has been engaged in several art-based and participatory research projects such as action research with young students or museum research. 2011-2015 she was engaged in the art based research projects “MemsScreen” and “conserved memories” at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna; 2001-2007 she held the staff position at the museum of modern art Vienna.

Klaus Schönberger is Professor of Cultural Anthropology and Chair of the Institute for Cultural Analysis at the Alps-Adria-University of Klagenfurt/ Celovec. He was the coordinator of TRACES. In the last years he led several research projects at the interface of ethnography and artistic research at the Zurich University of the Arts and in Klagenfurt/ Celovec.

Roma Sendyka, associate professor, teaches in the Department of Anthropology of Literature and Cultural Studies, Faculty of Polish Studies, at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. She is co-founder and Director of the Research Center for Memory Cultures. She specializes in cultural theory, visual culture studies, and memory studies. Her current work focuses on so-called "non-sites of memory" and visual approaches to genocide representation.

Anna Szöke is an art historian, curator and a Phd candidate at the Centre for Anthropological Research on Museums and Heritage (CARMAH), Institute for European Ethnology, Humbodt University Berlin. She studied Art History and Spanish studies at the University of Vienna, and has worked as a curator at the Essl Museum, Klosterneuburg/Vienna, and as researcher on an arts-based research project funded by the Austrian Science Fund at the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna. Her research focuses on the Viennese Natural History Museum's collection of human remains and similar collections in Europe, where she explores the role of these collections in the development of anthropology and their practices of collecting from the 19th century until today. She looks at how exhibiting of human remains in Austria and Germany have developed and are intertwined with provenance research and repatriation claims, and how these influence public discourses.

Alexandra Toma is the project manager at the Mediaș Synagogue. Holding a degree in economics, she now attends to *The House by the Synagogue,* a cultural centre in Mediaș (Romania). Besides managing the daily tasks of running a public space visited by tourists and locals, she organized and carried out the Medias Jewish library cataloguing together with local youth from local Hungarian and German schools. Currently, she is the on-site administrator for the Horizon 2020 project TRACES.

Wojciech Wilczyk is a photographer, curator, poet, art critic, and lecturer at the Kraków Photography Academy. Twice nominated for the Deutsche Börse Photography Prize, he was awarded Photography Publication of the Year 2009 (for the *Innocent Eye* album) and Photo Book of the Year 2014 at the Grand Press Photo 2015 exhibit *Holy War*. 49 Wörter

Magdalena Zych, is a cultural anthropologist, curator, and graduate of the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology of the Jagiellonian University. At the Seweryn Udziela Ethnographic Museum in Kraków she coordinates research projects including a current reinterpretation of the museum's Siberian collection and an exploration of the presence of the Holocaust in Polish folk art collections.

Pictures

Pictures
Part 1

CCP1_intro 1.JPG
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Fig. 1 Casa de lângă Sinagogă (l) with Mediaş synagogue, Mediaş 2017. Photo: Răzvan Anton

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Fig. 2 Multi-media installation *Mediaş Jewish Jukebox* by Benjamin Fox-Rosen and Răzvan Anton, Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaş 2016. Photo: Julie Dawson

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JPEG-Bild - 4,7 MB

Fig. 3 First panel from the exhibition *Liminal Portraits: Stories from the Margins*, Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaş 2017. Photo: Răzvan Anton

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Fig. 4 Gallery space with oral history exhibition *"…but we brought it back…": Objects, Paths, Stories* (Anton, Dawson, Toma), Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaş 2018. Photo: Răzvan Anton

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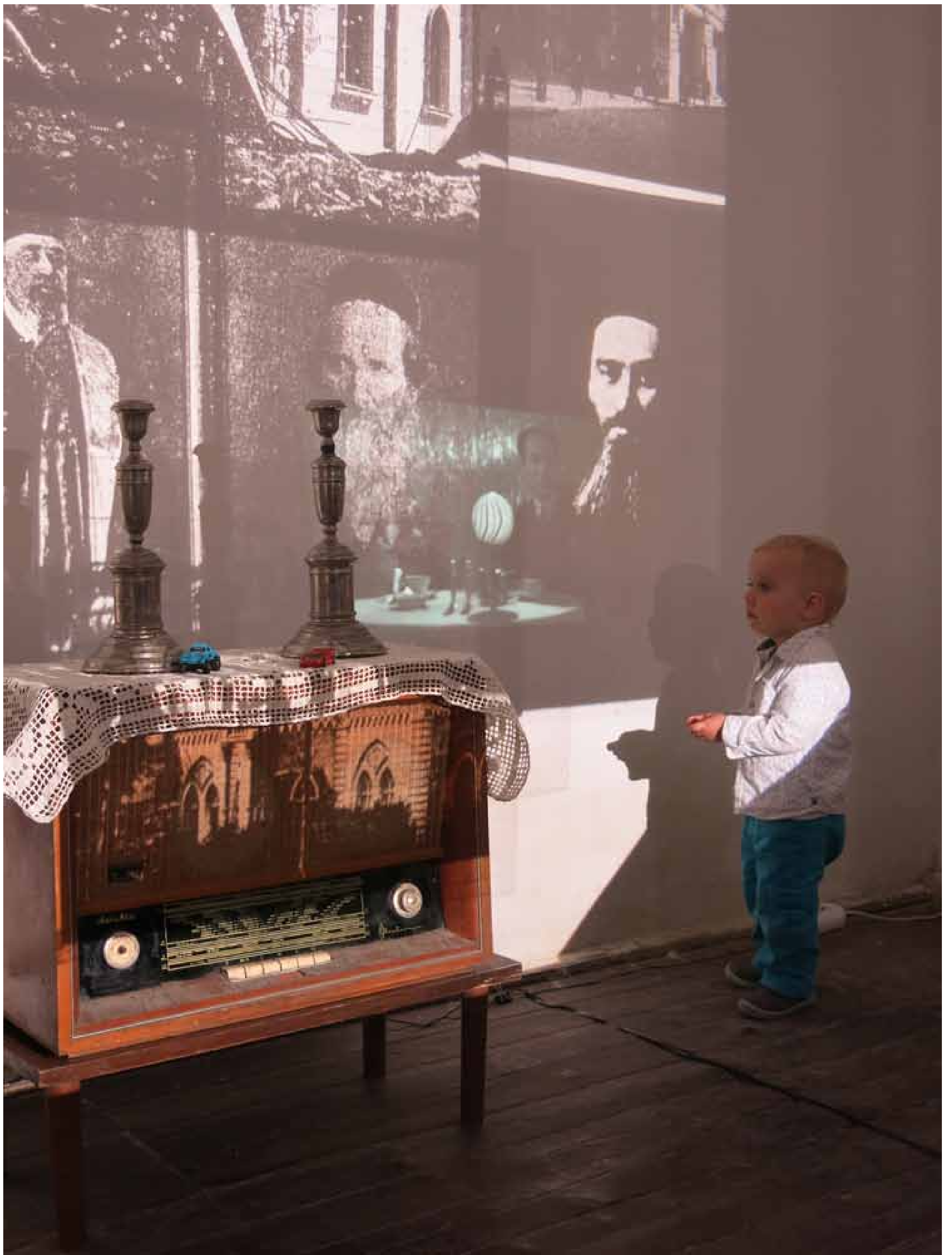
Fig. 5 Hand-embroidered tefillin bag, Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaş 2017. Photo: Răzvan Anton



1

Eu, subsemnata, doresc să îmi iau de pe suflet un eveniment traumatic, care a avut loc acum vreo 49 de ani. Acest eveniment este real. E posibil însă, să mă înșel în privința datei și îmi cer scuze pentru asta.

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Fig. 1 Erica Lehrer, interview with Zofia Winnicka, Przysietnica, Rzeszów region, southern Poland, 2017. Photo: Wojciech Wilczyk

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JPEG-Bild - 1,7 MB

Fig. 2 Erica Lehrer, Magdalena Zych, interview with Louis Galinski, Berlin, 2017. Photo: Wojciech Wilczyk

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JPEG-Bild - 1,3 MB

Fig. 3 Roma Sendyka, Magdalena Zych, interview with Władysław Naumiuk, Kaniuki, Białystok region, northern Poland, 2018. Photo: Wojciech Wilczyk

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JPEG-Bild - 7,3 MB

Fig. 4 Roma Sendyka, Wojciech Wilczyk, work in the archives of the National Museum in Kielce, photographing documents regarding the Józef Piłat's *Jewish Shop*, 2018. Photo: Erica Lehrer

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Fig. 5 Erica Lehrer, Wojciech Wilczyk, work in the photo studio of the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, 2018. Photo: Roma Sendyka

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Fig. 6 Sławomir Kosiniak, *No title*, ca. 1948, Ethnographic Museum in Krakow. Photo: Wojciech Wilczyk

Fig. 7 Franciszek Skocz, *Camp* (a fragment), 1978, Ethnographic Museum in Krakow. Photo: Wojciech Wilczyk

Nikon

P1_CCP3

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rchSite_CCP3_...or Gojkovič.jpg
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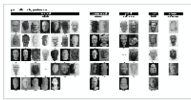
Fig. 1 Sculptor and death mask maker Viktor Gojkovič in his atelier; Ptuj 2017. Photo: Archive DRS



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fDeath_CCP3_...tionDisplay.jpg
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Fig. 2 Exhibition display: Photos of death masks from public collections, sorted by profession of depicted persons, 2018. Photo: Archive DRS

3_IntroResearchSite_CastingOfDeath_CCP3_Depot
Visit.jpg
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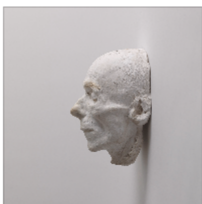
Fig. 3 Depot visit in Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana, 2017. Photo: Archive DRS



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zbirke MGML,...ster_MGML.jpg
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Fig. 4 Death mask of Slovenian composer Slavko Osterc, Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana, 2017. Photo: Matevž Paternoster. Archive DRS

po poklicih / *by profession*

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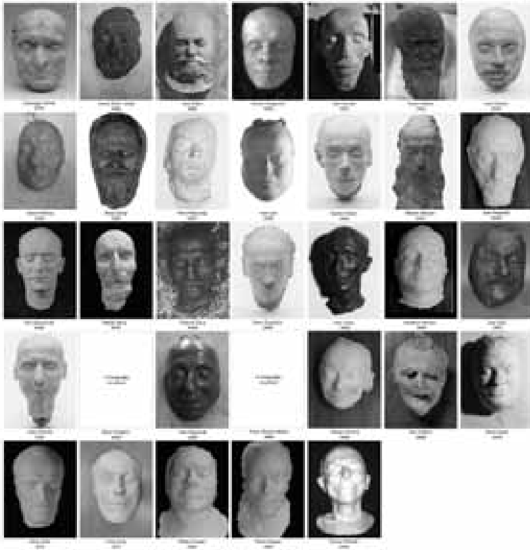
artists



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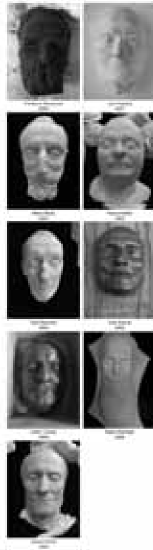

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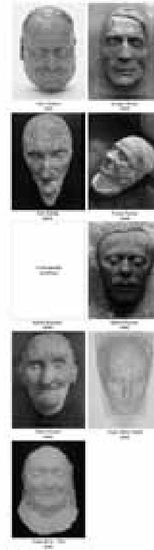

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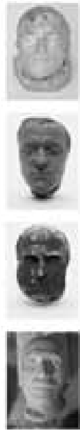
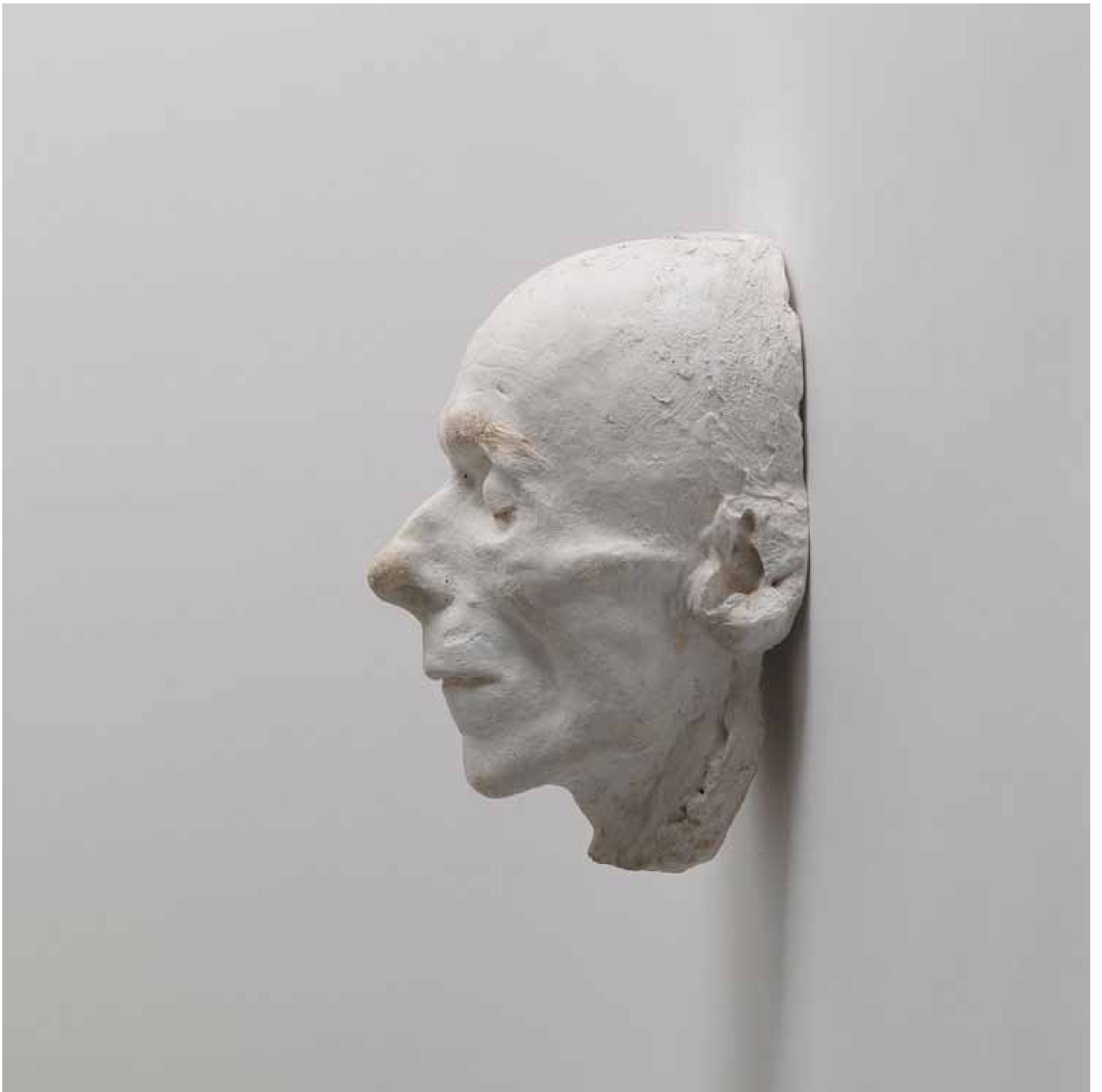




P1_CCP4

CCP4_Adler_pic1_filmstill_1.png
PNG-Bild - 5,1 MB

Fig. 1 Recording an interview with Te Herekiekie Haerehuka Herewini – head of repatriation at the Te Papa Museum, New Zealand. Still from the film *RETURN*, part of the *Dead Images* exhibition, 2018. Photo: Tal Adler

CCP4_Adler_pic2_VideoInstallation.tif
TIFF-Bild - 9,3 MB

Fig. 2 Part of the video installation of the *Dead Images* exhibition at Edinburgh College of Art, 2018. Photo: Tal Adler

CCP4_Adler_pic3_Darkroom_Installation.tif
TIFF-Bild - 16,7 MB

Fig. 3 The film DARKROOM screened at the *Dead Images* exhibition at the Edinburgh College of Art, 2018. Photo: Tal Adler

CCP4_Adler_pic4_Facing_Histories.tif
TIFF-Bild - 17,6 MB

Fig. 4 Part of *Facing Hi/stories* installation at the *Information Lounge* of the *Dead Images* exhibition at Edinburgh College of art, 2018. Photo: Tal Adler

Individual Labelled as Inventory
Number 512

P1_CCP5

01_TR_CCP5 Aerial photo Long Kesh.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 210 KB

Fig. 1 Image of an aerial photograph of prison site from The Eileen Hickey Irish Republican History Museum, Photo taken in The Eileen Hickey Irish Republican History Museum, Belfast, 2017. Photo: Martin Krenn, Aisling O'Beirn

02_TR__CCP5_Simon_pshoot_April-8.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 7 MB

Fig. 2 Photoshoot with Simon Bridge, Photo taken in Aisling O' Beirn's studio, Belfast, 2017. Photo: Martin Krenn, Aisling O'Beirn

03_TR__CCP5_workshop2017-08-16 .jpg
JPEG-Bild - 6,3 MB

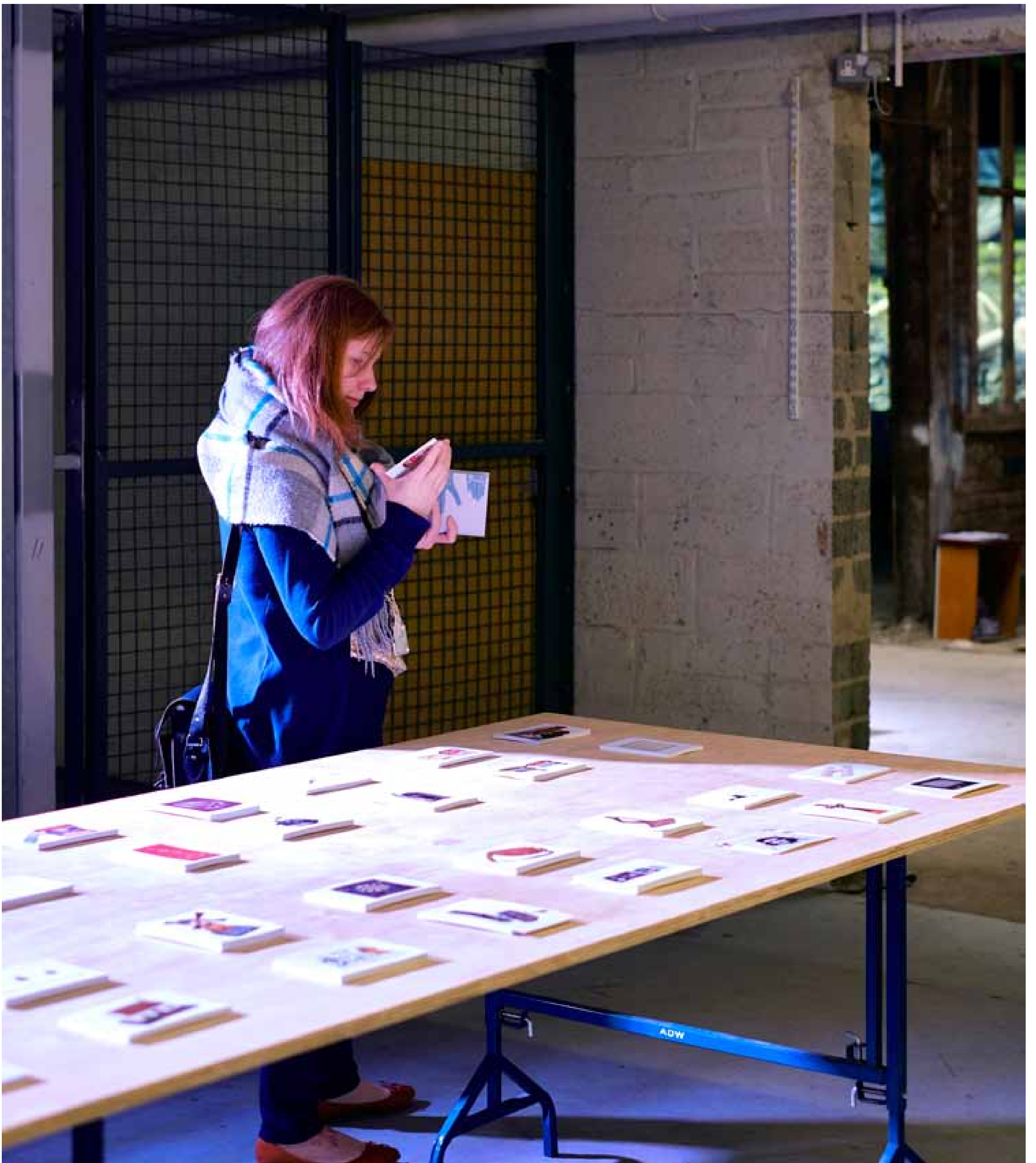
Fig. 3 Workshop with 50+ Group, Belfast, Photo taken in Tar Anall Premises, Belfast, 2017. Photo: Martin Krenn, Aisling O'Beirn

04_TR__CCP5_British Council Peace and Beyond.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 8,9 MB

Fig. 4 *Transforming Long Kesh/Maze*, touring exhibition, 'Peace and Beyond Arts Fringe', Riddel's Warehouse, Belfast, 2018. Photo: Simon Mills

05_TR__CCP5_Dispersed Presence_exhibition.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 6,1 MB

Fig. 5 *Dispersed Presence* exhibition detail, PS² Gallery, Spencer House, Belfast, 2018. Photo: Martin Krenn, Aisling O'Beirn


ADW

P1_WP2

Fig. 1 The Intruder, Tripoli, early 1950s, Photo: Contini family archive

WP2_Contini_pic1_The Scattered Col...he intruder.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 6,8 MB

,

Fig. 2 Unveiling Sabratha, Rome 2018. Still from video *A Tripoli*: Leone Contini

WP2_Contini_pic2_Frame from the video "A Tripoli".jpg
JPEG-Bild - 1,1 MB

Fig. 3 The egg in the cuscus, Rome 2018. Still from video *A Tripoli*: Leone Contini

WP2_Contini_pic3_Frame from the video "A Tripoli".jpg
JPEG-Bild - 1,1 MB

Fig. 4 Our Palm, Rome 2018. Still from video *A Tripoli*: Leone Contini

WP2_Contini_pic4_Frame from the video "A Tripoli".jpg
JPEG-Bild - 1 MB

Fig. 5 Remains, Rome 2018. Still from video *A Tripoli*: Leone Contini

WP2_Contini_pic5_Frame from the video "A Tripoli".jpg
JPEG-Bild - 1,1 MB

AFRICA ORIENTALE

P1_WP3

Fig. 1 Research Workshop with the education department team at the Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt, 2017. Photo: Nora Landkammer

IMAGE 01.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 3,1 MB

Fig. 2 Students interviewing curator Julia Friedel, Workshop *What is this doing here?*, Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt, 2017. Photo: Workshop group

IMAGE 02.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 151 KB

AND
SPECTRES
HISTORY

Pictures
Part 2

P2_WP4 Holfelder

P2_WP4_Holfelder_OtherLand_fig1.jpg
JPEG-Bild · 4,5 MB

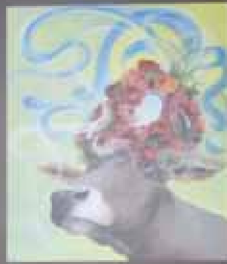
Fig. 1 Prologue, *Das andere Land,* Klagenfurt, 2018. Photo: Roland W. Peball

P2_WP4_Holfelder_OtherLand_fig2.JPG
JPEG-Bild · 4,7 MB

Fig. 2 Singstube, *Das andere Land,* Klagenfurt, 2018. Photo: Roland W. Peball

P2_WP4_Holfelder_OtherLand_fig3.jpg
JPEG-Bild · 2,1 MB

Fig. 3 Final song, *Das andere Land,* Klagenfurt, 2018. Photo: Roland W. Peball



Das andere Land
Kärnten | Koroška
in Wort und Bild

Mei Singen
Solang i kann singen,
is einwendig drin
ban Herzn nix ausghenkt,
nix angschriekt, nix hin.
A Liadle is gsund, ja,
wann s gmüatvoll wird gsung:
es macht de Welt liachta,
de altn Leit jung.
A Liadle macht
Und schafft a rings
Drum hat uns da
es Singen eingebm.
Drum sing i lei
es
Und's wird a
wann i neamma
(Franz Podesser)

P2_CCP2 Sendyka

Krakow_Halberstam%27s%20Bet%20ha-midrash_25.08.2008
JPEG-Bild · 1,8 MB

Fig. 1 Halberstam's Bet ha-midrash, Kraków, 2008. Photo: Wojciech Wilczyk, from the series *There's no Such Thing as an Innocent Eye* (2006-2008)

Kargowa%2c%20synagogue%2c%2029.03.2008
JPEG-Bild · 1,6 MB

Fig. 2 Synagogue, Kargowa, 2008. Photo: Wojciech Wilczyk, from the series *There's no Such Thing as an Innocent Eye* (2006-2008)

Sieradz_synagogue_08.12.2006.jpg
JPEG-Bild · 1,4 MB

Fig. 3 Synagogue, Sieradz, 2006. Photo: Wojciech Wilczyk, from the series *There's no Such Thing as an Innocent Eye* (2006-2008)

Kolno_synagogue_28.08.2008
JPEG-Bild · 1,8 MB

Fig. 4 Synagogue, Kolno, 2008. Photo: Wojciech Wilczyk, from the series *There's No Such Thing As an Innocent Eye* (2006-2008)

ELDORADO SPEŁNIJ MARZENIA
AWIM
KOLORY

P2_CCP1

1.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 185 KB

Fig. 1 Postcard of Klettengasse (Burdock Lane) looking down, towards the southern boundary of the town. The synagogue and other Jewish community buildings lie around the corner, at the end of the street, on the opposite side of where the medieval wall once stood. Mediaş circa 1900. Photo: Private collection

2.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 3,5 MB

Fig. 2 House built onto the medieval city wall, once used by Jewish community for employee residences and possible site of first prayer house. The Casa de lângă Sinagogă and synagogue are visible further down the street, Mediaş 2017. Photo: Julie Dawson

3.tif
TIFF-Bild - 34,3 MB

Fig. 3 Construction of Jewish school building with new mikveh in the basement. The synagogue is the building to the left. Mediaş 1920s. Photo: Mediaş Jewish Archives

4.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 1,2 MB

Fig 4 Joshua Ehrenreich, kosher butcher and assistant rabbi in the 1940s. Image from the exhibition *Liminal Portraits: Stories from the Margins*, Mediaş 2017. Photo: Răzvan Anton

5.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 2,6 MB

Fig. 5 Concert inside the Mediaş synagogue by Cantor Sveta Kundish and Patrick Farrell at the exhibition opening of *"… but we brought it back …" : Objects, Paths, Stories*. Mediaş 2018. Photo: Julie Dawson

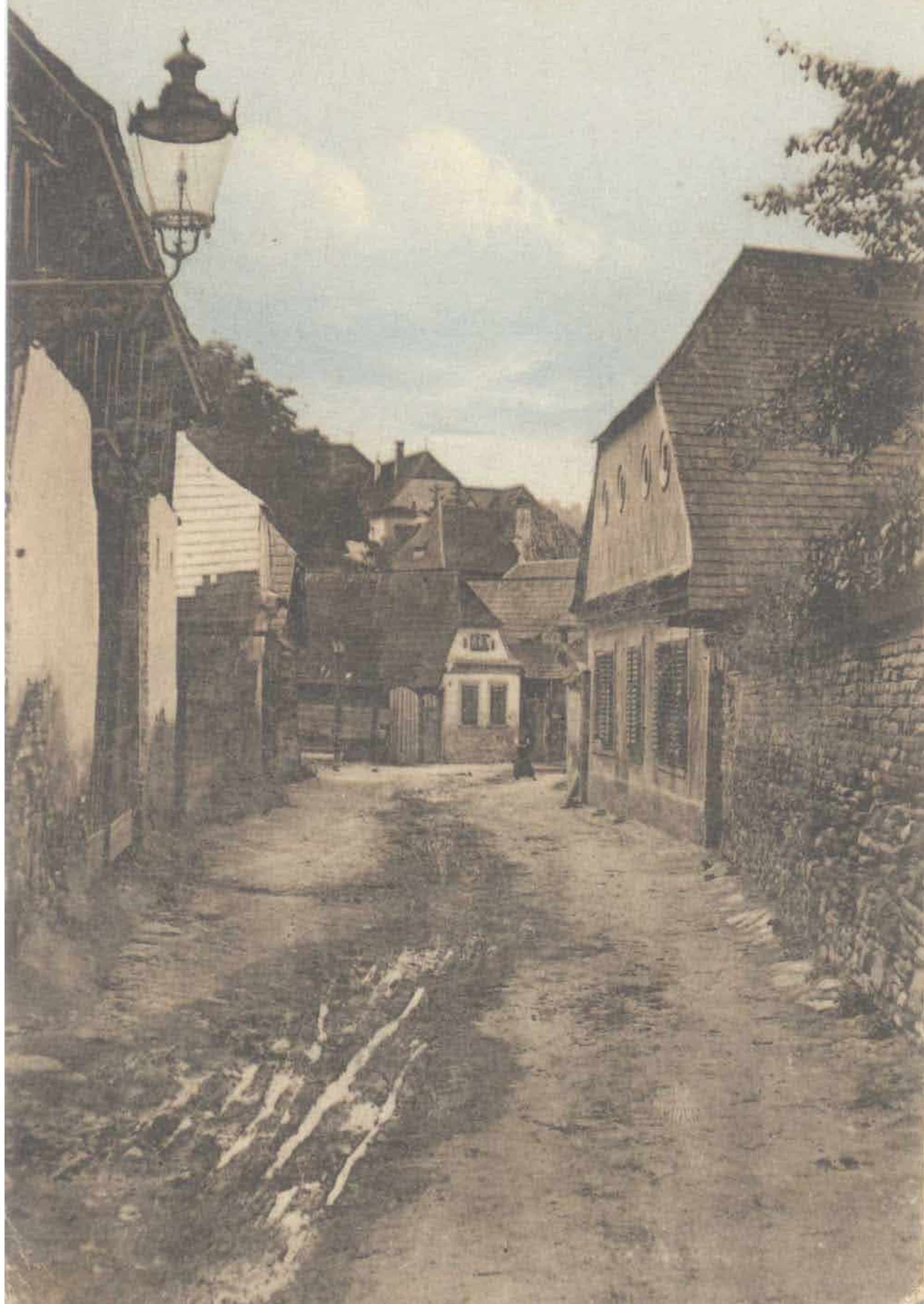
6.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 1,7 MB

Fig. 6 Close-up of intersection where the synagogue and other community buildings are located. The black dots represent the homes of Jewish families in the 1940s. Map from the exhibition *Liminal Portraits: Stories from the Margins*. Mediaş 2017. Photo: Răzvan Anton

7.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 4,6 MB

Fig. 7 Terrace of the Casa de lângă Sinagogă. Mediaş 2017. Photo: Minitremu/Minitremu Art Camp #2

Mediasch Klettengasse



[illegible] [illegible], locțiitor de rabin, circumcizator / [illegible]
[illegible] Arhivele Evreiești Mediaș / Mediaș Jewish Archives

P2_CCP5

Fig. 1 *Aunt Belle 1976*, Photo taken in The Roddy McCorley Society Museum, Belfast 2018. Photo: Martin Krenn, Aisling O'Beirn

01_TR_CCP5_aunt bell 1976 .jpg
JPEG-Bild - 2,9 MB

Fig. 2 *Family Nov 1994*, Photo taken at a private location, 2018. Photo: Martin Krenn, Aisling O'Beirn

02_TR_CCP5_family november 1994.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 3,8 MB

Fig. 3 *Message 1981* Photo taken in Aisling O'Beirn's studio, Belfast 2018. Photo: Martin Krenn, Aisling O'Beirn

03_TR_CCP5_message 1981_ .jpg
JPEG-Bild - 3,5 MB

Fig. 4 *Visit Diary, 1996 to 2000*Photo taken in Aisling O'Beirn's studio, Belfast 2018. Photo: Martin Krenn, Aisling O'Beirn

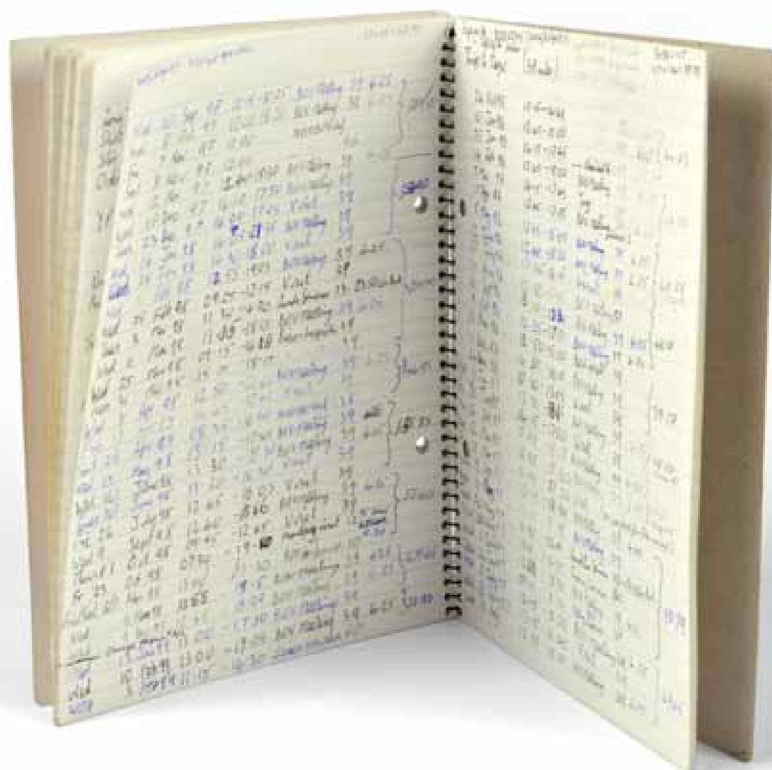
04_TR_CCP5_visit diary 1995 2000_b.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 2,1 MB

Fig. 5 *Thankfully Never Used, 1976 to 2000,* Photo taken in Aisling O'Beirn's studio, Belfast 2018. Photo: Martin Krenn, Aisling O'Beirn

05_TR_CCP5_thankfully never used .jpg
JPEG-Bild - 1,4 MB

Onion Flavour
CRISPS

FAMILY NOVEMBER 1994



VISIT DIARY 1996 2000

THANKFULLY NEVER USED 1976 2000

P2_WP3

Fig. 1 Photo: Herwig Landkammer

P1010969.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 741 KB

Fig 2 Photo: Herwig Landkammer

P1020039.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 2,9 MB

Fig. 3 Photo: Herwig Landkammer

P1020040.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 2,9 MB

Fig. 4 Photo: Herwig Landkammer

P1030219.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 3 MB

Fig. 5 Photo: Herwig Landkammer

P1010954.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 2,6 MB

Fig. 6 Photo: Herwig Landkammer

P1030317.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 2,9 MB

P2_CCP2

p2_Lehrer_HeritageCommunities_fig1.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 572 KB

Fig.1 Terkotky/Groggers on display at the Krakow Ethnographic Museum. 1929, Brzezowa near Myślenice, gift from the girl’s junior high school. Object inventory no. 3764. Photo: Erica Lehrer

P2_WP4 Schoenberger

p2_WP4_SchoenbergerHamm_SignageDispute_fig1.png
PNG-Bild - 1,3 MB

Fig.1 Memorial in memory of the German-Austrian victims of the Yugoslavian army in front of the cathedral, Klagenfurt/ Celovec, 2018. Photo: Klaus Schönberger

ZUM GEDENKEN
AN DIE WÄHREND UND NACH DEM
ZWEITEN WELTKRIEG VON PARTISANEN
VERSCHLEPPTEN UND ERMORDETEN
KINDER, UND MÄNNER.
WIR VERGESSEN
WIEDER GESCHIEHT.

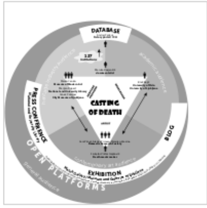
P2_WP4 Hamm

Fig 1 Gravestone of the Polessnig-Schmied family, Carinthia 2016. Photo: Klaus Schönberger

p2_WP4_Hamm_Gravestone_fig1.jpeg
JPEG-Bild - 84 KB

PHILIPP 1.5.1891 – 21.11.1972
ABWEHRKAMPFER
MARIA 31.3.1893 – 23.6.1978
GEB.GLAUWITSCH
STEFAN 2.9.1920 – 20.6.2009
SCHMIEDEMEISTER I. R.
FAMILIE
POLESSNIG – SCHMIED
KROPIUNIG ST. VEIT

P3_CCP3 DRS



p3_CCP3DRS_TechnicalTerms _PizzaChart_fig1.pdf
Adobe PDF document - 224 KB

Fig. 1 Domestic Research Society: Creative Co-production Pizza Chart. 2017-2018

DATABASE
Andrej Pančur
Sistory portal / ICH

127 institutions

Maruša Kocjančič
documentalist

heritage industry audience

academic audience

Marko Jenko
Museum of Modern Art
Marijan Rupert
National and University Library
Janez Polajnar
City Museum of Ljubljana

Blaž Bajič
University of Oslo
University of Ljubljana

HERITAGE PROVIDER

RESEARCHER

CASTING OF DEATH

ARTIST

PRESS CONFERENCE
National and University Library

BLOG

Jani Pirnat, Alenka Pirman, Damijan Kracina
Domestic Research Society

Sculptor Viktor Gojkovič
Death masks maker

contemporary art audience

EXHIBITION
Match Gallery / Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana
Public guided tours and educational workshops, Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) demonstrations by Red Cross Slovenia

OPEN PLATFORMS

general audience

Pictures
Part 3

P3_WP4

Part3 | WP4 | Holfelder Schönberger: Liminal portraits

1 Original portrait sketch, Mediaş 2017. Photo: Klaus Schönberger

p3_HolfelderSchoenberger_C
oproductionAr...istory_fig1.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 4,8 MB

2 Photo print (Răzvan Anton), Mediaş 2017. Photo: Klaus Schönberger

p3_HolfelderSchoenberger_C
oproductionAr...istory_fig2.JPG

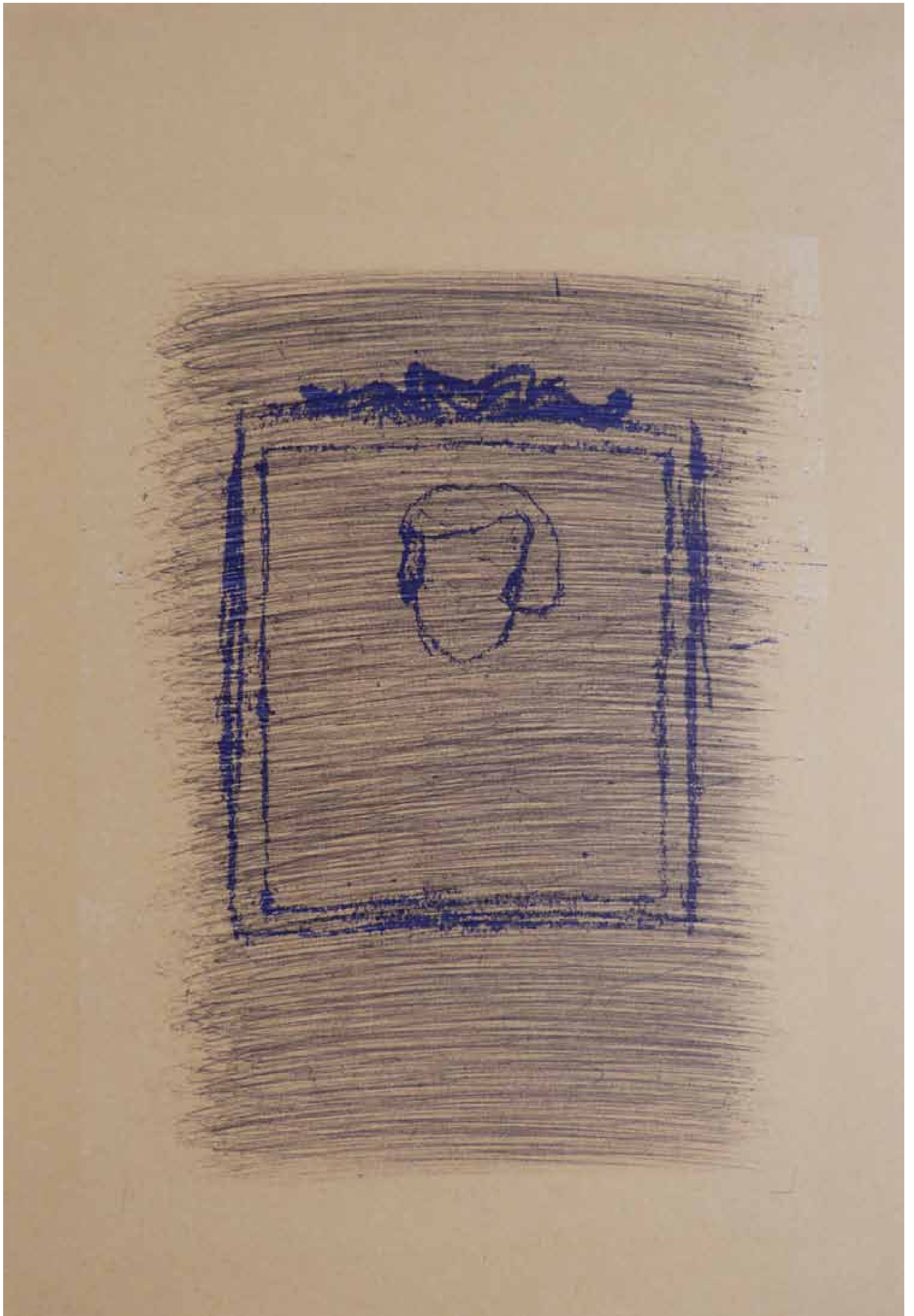
3 Photo print (Răzvan Anton), Mediaş 2017. Photo: Klaus Schönberger

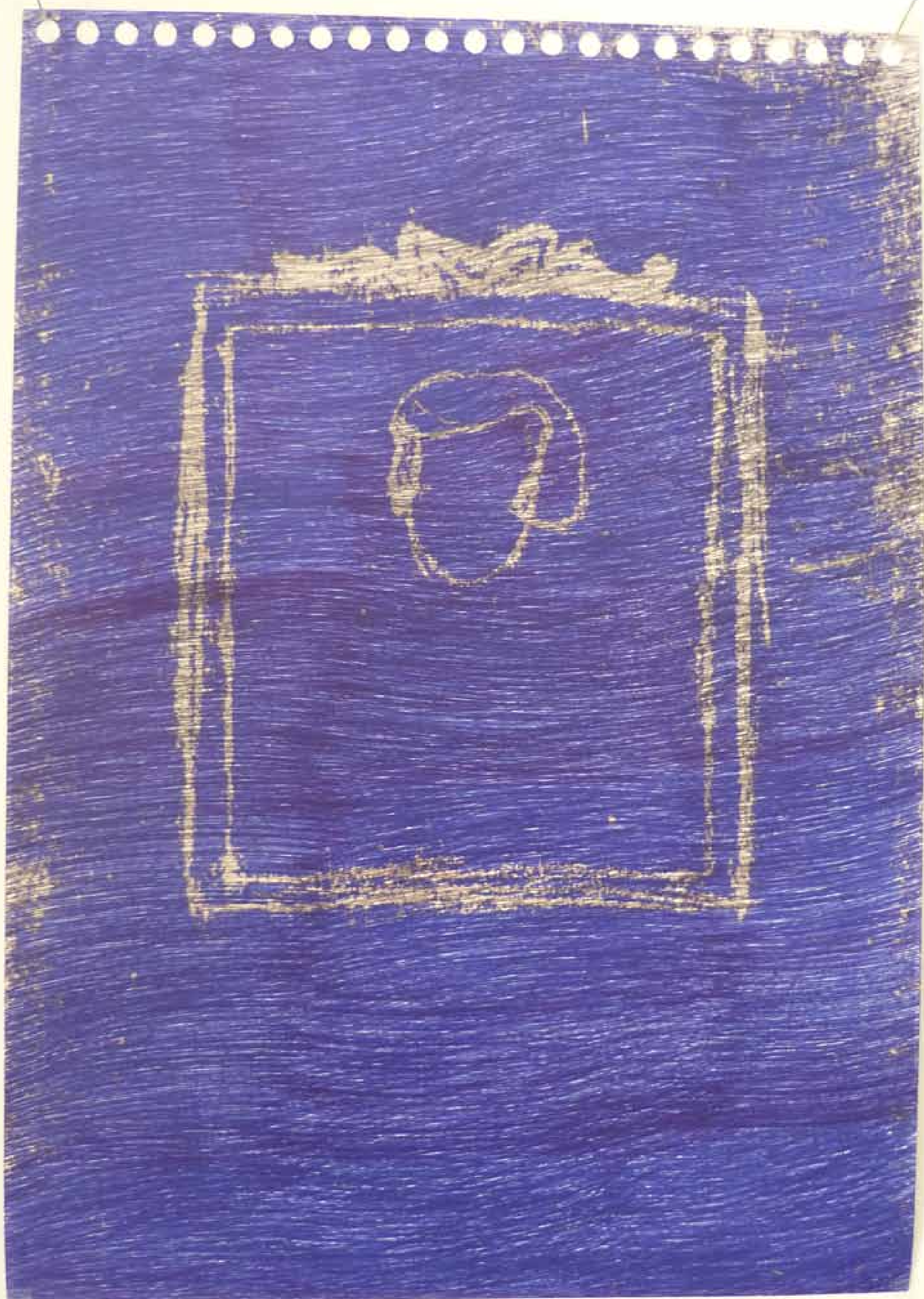
p3_HolfelderSchoenberger_C
oproductionAr...story_fig3.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 5 MB

4 Poster *European Day of Jewish Culture*, Mediaş 2017. Photo: Klaus Schönberger

p3_HolfelderSchoenberger_C
oproductionArtHistory_fig4.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 3,1 MB

לוח המולדות





Ziua Europeană a Culturii Evreiești / Europäischer Tag der Jüdischen Kultur / A Zsidó Kultúra Európai Napja / European Day of Jewish Culture
01-09-17 19:27

P3_CCP3 Pirman

p3_Pirman_ArtisticUpgrade_fig1.png
PNG-Bild - 894 KB

Fig. 1 Osmi dan [Eight Day], the TV Slovenia show on culture, featuring a death mask of the poet Simon Gregorčič rendered as a pattern to imitate a video wall in the scenography, 23.3.2017. Screenshot: Photo archive DRS

p3_Pirman_ArtisticUpgrade_fig2.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 5,1 MB

Fig. 2. Casting of Death, installation view, 2017. Photo: Matevž. Paternoster, MGML

1
TV SLO

P3_WP2

WP2_Serendipity_.COMPANIO
Nfig1.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 83 KB

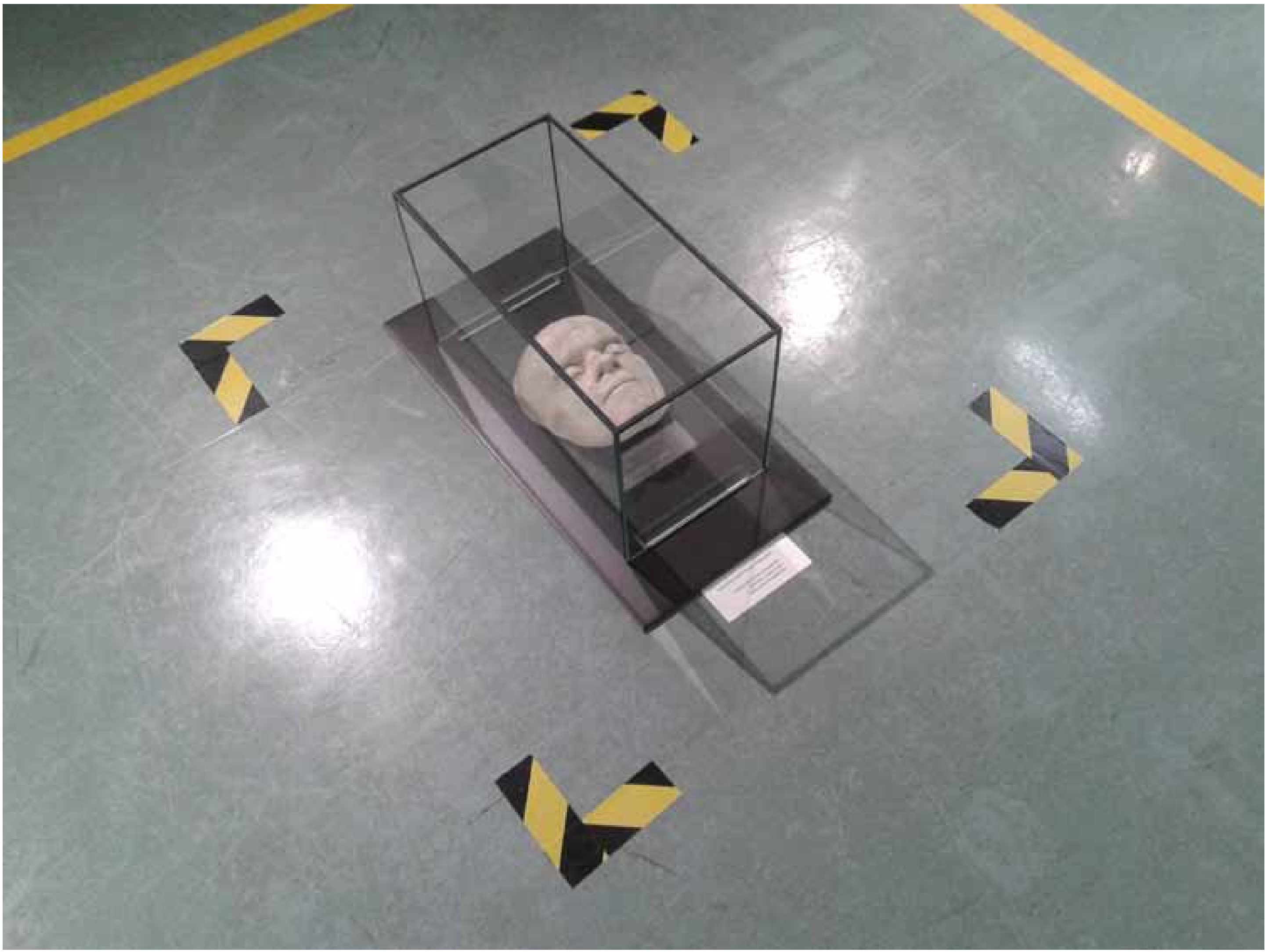
Fig. 1 In a car, Poland 2017. Photo: Kaśka Maniak

WP2_Serendipity_COMPANIO
Nfig2.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 270 KB

Fig. 2 The palm, Museo Nazionale Preistorico e Etnografico L Pigorini, Rome 2017. Photo: Arnd Schneider

WP2_Serendipity_COMPANIO
Nfig3.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 1,6 MB

Fig. 3 Death mask of Simon Gregorčič (1844—1906) at *Pixxelpoint* festival, Nova Gorica, Slovenia 2015. Photo: DDR.



Pictures
Part 4

P4_CCP1

Fig. 1 *Fading Studies*, a series of sun-prints made between 2016-2018 at the Casa de lângă Sinagogă and presented alongside the oral history exhibition *"... but we brought it back ...": Objects, Paths, Stories*, Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaş 2018. Photo: Răzvan Anton

Razvan_1.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 4,3 MB

Fig. 2 *Mediaş Jewish Jukebox,* a multi-media installation by Benjamin Fox-Rosen and Răzvan Anton, Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaş 2016. Photo: Răzvan Anton

Razvan_2.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 5 MB

Fig. 3 Participants at Minitremu Art Camp #2 browse through images from the Mediaş Jewish Archive, Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaş 2017. Photo: Minitremu/Minitremu Art Camp #2

Razvan_3.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 3,6 MB

Fig. 4 Sun-printing during Minitremu Art Camp #2, Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaş 2017. Photo: Minitremu/Minitremu Art Camp #2

Razvan_4.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 3,3 MB

Fig. 5 Still frame from a short film of the album of sun-prints made by participants of Minitremu Art Camp #2, Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaş 2017. Photo: Minitremu/Minitremu Art Camp #2

Razvan_5.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 451 KB

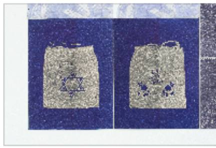


Fig. 6 Detail of *Fading Studies*: Sun-print of hand-embroidered tallis bag, part of the tapestries collection of the Mediaș Jewish Archive*,* Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaș 2018. Photo: Răzvan Anton

Razvan_6.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 7,8 MB

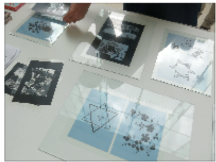


Fig. 7 Sun-printing station at *Developing Past(s)* workshop at the Polin Museum during the Jewish Cultural Heritage Conference: Projects, Methods, Inspirations, Warsaw 2016. Photo: Claire Fouquet

Razvan_7.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 3,6 MB

Fig. 8 Detail of *Fading Studies*: Sun-print of child's sketch in a prayer book (enlarged), Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaș 2017. Photo: Răzvan Anton

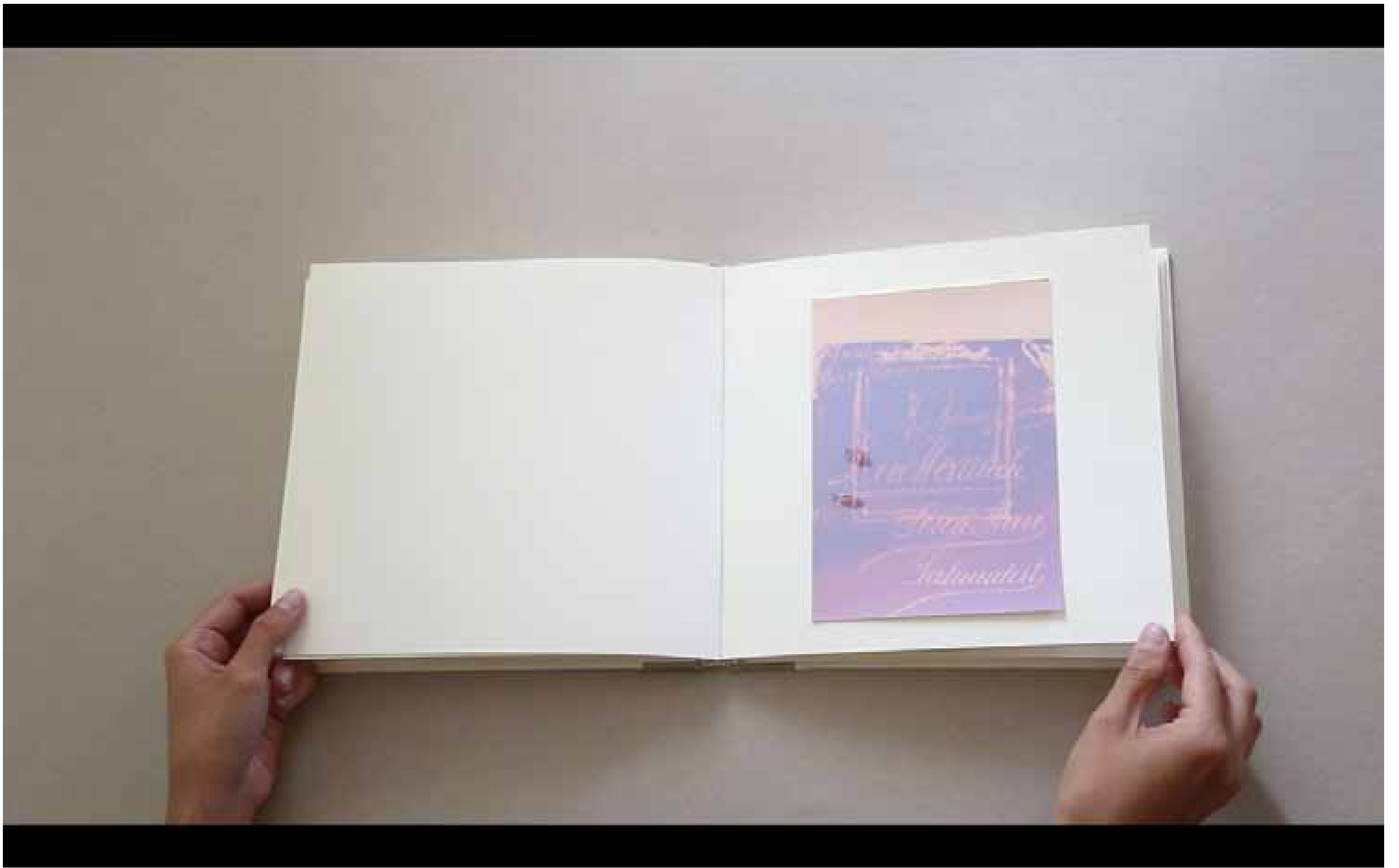
Razvan_8.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 6,9 MB

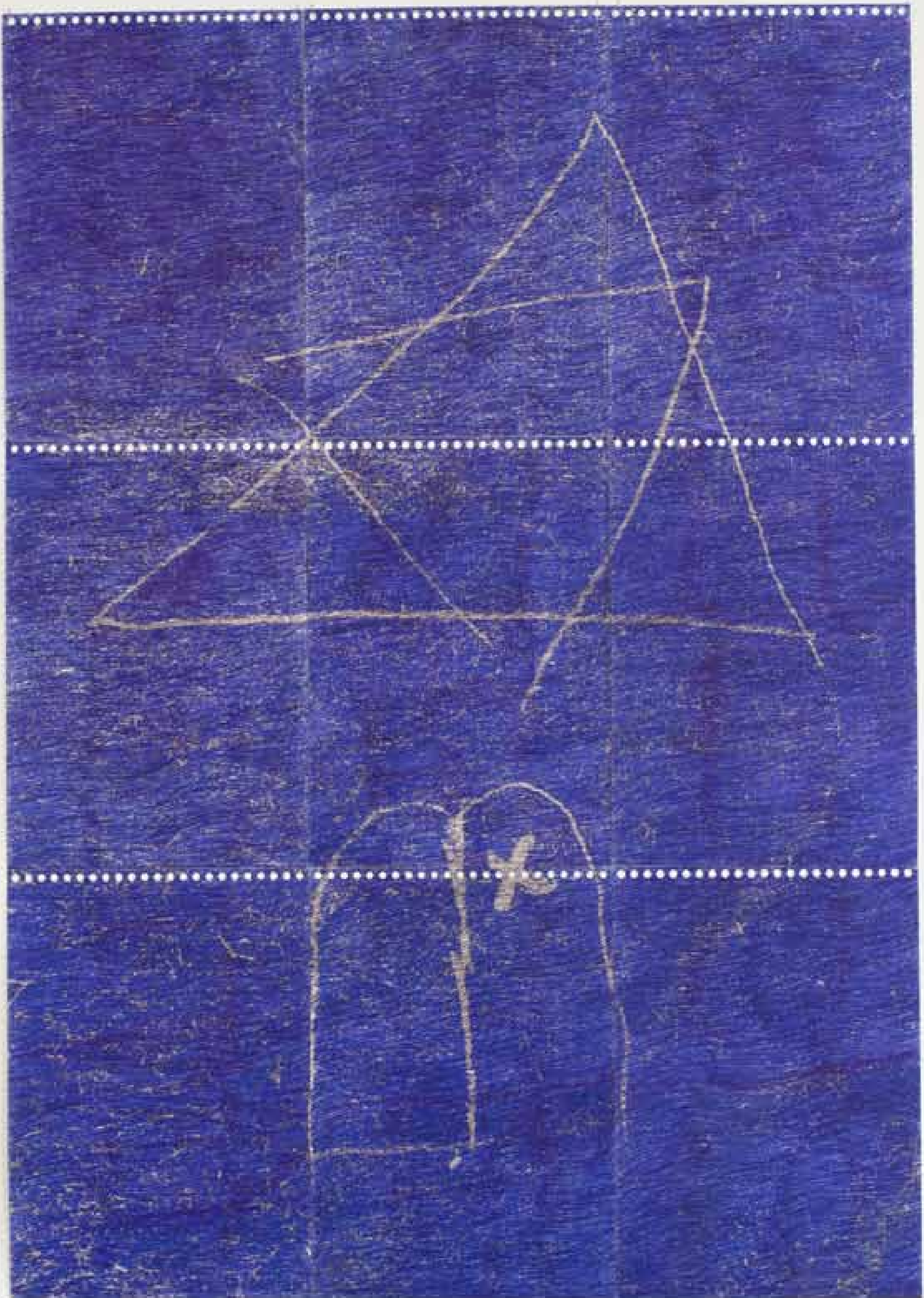
Fig. 9 Sun-print of interwar-period advertisement for the Citron leather factory, owned and operated by one of the oldest and most influential Jewish families in Mediaș, Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaș 2016 Photo: Răzvan Anton

Razvan_9b.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 5,8 MB

10 Răzvan Anton on the terrace selecting images to work with from the Mediaș Jewish Library, Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaș 2017. Photo: Julie Dawson

Razvan_10.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 3,6 MB





CITRON & C^OMP. MEDIAȘ, TRANSILVAN

FABRICĂ DE TALPĂ, CURELE DE TRANSMISIUNE ȘI PIELĂRIE FINĂ + SOHLEN-TREIBRIEMEN u. FEINLEDER-

TALP-GÉPSZIJ ÉS FINOMBŐRGYÁR

Canon

P4_CCP2

Wàadysàaw Chajec HOSS COMMANDANT O...HE PRISONERS.tif
TIFF-Bild - 13,3 MB

Fig. 1 Fragment of a sculpture by Władysław Chajec, *Hoss commandant of oswiecim Massacres cruelly the Prisoners,* ca. 1971, Jasło Regional Museum. Photo: Wojciech Wilczyk, from series *Close-ups* (2016-2018)

Jan Wojtarowicz DEUTSCHE FABRIKEN.tif
TIFF-Bild - 11,1 MB

Fig. 2 Fragment of a sculpture by Jan Wojtarowicz, *Deutsche Fabriken*, ca. 1970, collection of Ludwig Zimmerer, under the care of Marian Pokropek, Folk Art Museum in Otrębusy. Photo: Wojciech Wilczyk, from from series *Close-ups* (2016-2018)

Jerzy Kaczmarek THEY WERE THE FIRST ONES.tif
TIFF-Bild - 12,3 MB

Fig. 3 Fragment of a sculpture by Krzysztof Osak, *Perpetrators and Victims of the War*, 1986, Majdanek State Museum. Photo: Wojciech Wilczyk, from series *Close-ups* (2016-2018)

Zygmunt Skr�towicz AUSCHWITZ.tif
TIFF-Bild - 13,4 MB

Fig. 4 Fragment of a sculpture by Zygmunt Skrętowicz from the *Auschwitz* series, 1962, Warsaw State Ethnographic Museum. Photo: Wojciech Wilczyk, from series *Close-ups* (2016-2018)

Fig. 5 Fragment of a sculpture by Józef Piłat, *Jewish Shop in Dębska Wola* [Majer Lewestein, called "Major"], 1964, National Museum, Kielce. Photo: Wojciech Wilczyk, from series *Close-ups* (2016-2018)

J¢zef Piàat JEWISH SHOP IN D®BSKA WOLA 02.tif
TIFF-Bild - 7 MB

Fig. 6 Fragment of a sculpture by Józef Piłat, *Jewish Shop in Dębska Wola* [Ruchla Orzech], 1964, National Museum, Kielce. Photo: Wojciech Wilczyk, from series *Close-ups* (2016-2018)

J¢zef Piàat JEWISH SHOP IN D®BSKA WOLA 03.tif
TIFF-Bild - 7,6 MB

Fig. 7 Fragment of a sculpture by Józef Piłat, *Jewish Shop in Dębska Wola* [Mejloch Orzech called "Mejlok"], 1964, National Museum, Kielce. Photo: Wojciech Wilczyk, from series *Close-ups* (2016-2018)

p4_Wilczyk_OnPhotographingForTraces_fig5a.tif
TIFF-Bild - 13,3 MB

Fig 8 Sculpture by Józef Piłat, *Jewish Shop in Dębska Wola* [Majer Lewestein, called "Major"], 1964, National Museum, Kielce. Photo: Wojciech Wilczyk, from series *Close-ups* (2016-2018)

blok
11

P4_CCP3 Pirnat

p4_Pirnat_ShootingInTheField_fig1.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 838 KB

Fig.1 Conservational centre ŠČIT, at Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana (MGML), death masks on the table display with documentation with conservationist Katarina Toman Kracina and Damijan Kracina, 2016, Ljubljana. Photo: Archive DRS, camera Samsung SM-T210 tablet.

p4_Pirnat_ShootingInTheField_fig2.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 720 KB

Fig. 2 Death mask of physician Ivan Oražen (died 1921) Depo of Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana, 2017. Photo: Archive DRS, camera HTC Desire 825 mobile phone.

p4_Pirnat_ShootingInTheField_fig3.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 1,8 MB

Fig. 3 Box of a multiple casted copies of a Vito Globocnik death mask (died 1946), depo of National Museum of Contemporary History, Ljubljana, 2017, Photo: Achive DRS, camera Samsung SM-T210 tablet.

p4_Pirnat_ShootingInTheField_fig4.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 888 KB

Fig. 4 Death mask of poet Oton Župančič (died 1949) in the hands of a curator Marko Jenko and in the presence of literary historian Marijan Rupert, situation of a depo visit in the National Museum of Contemporary History, Ljubljana, 2017, Photo: Achive DRS, camera Samsung SM-T210 tablet.

p4_Pirnat_ShootingInTheField_fig5.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 1,6 MB

Fig. 5 Depo visit photography situation, Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana, 2017. Photo: Archive DRS, camera Huawei KIW-L21 mobile phone.

Fig. 6 Depo of Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana, 2017. Photo: Archive DRS, camera HTC Desire 825 mobile phone.

p4_Pirnat_ShootingInTheField

Fig. 7 Just unwrapped death mask of unidentified person, depo of Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana, 2017. Photo: Archive DRS, camera HTC Desire 825 mobile phone.

p4_Pirnat_ShootingInTheField_fig7.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 880 KB

5092
5199
3694
4497
0054
5071
5273
5523

P4_CCP3 Paternoster Pirnat

Fig 1a - 1c Three versions of lighting with different backdrops in the photography studio of the conservational centre at Museum and galleries of Ljubljana (ŠČIT), 2017. Photo: Matevž Paternoster

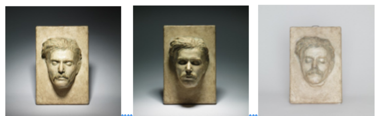


Fig 2a - 2c Lighting study of the economist Karol Kotnik's death mask (1875-1911). Material: patinated plaster. MGML Collection, 2017. Photo: Matevž Paternoster

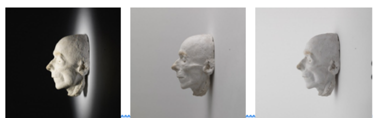


Fig 3a - 3c Lighting study of the composer Slavko Osterc's death mask (1895 – 1941). Material: plaster. MGML collection, 2017. Photo: Matevž Paternoster

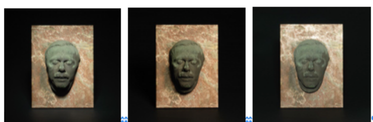
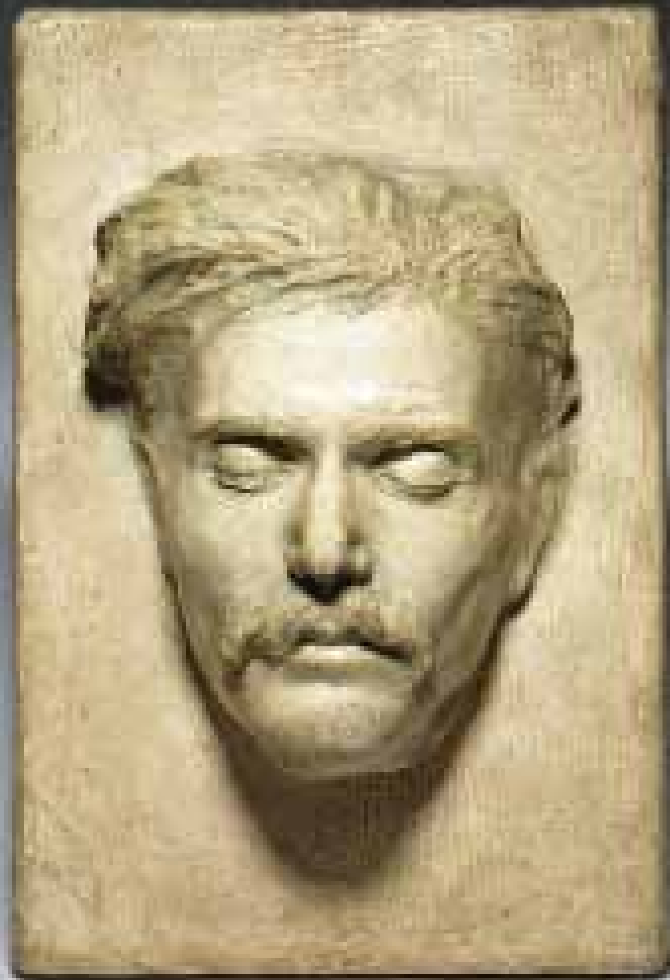


Fig 4a - 4c Lighting study of the politician Albert Kramer's death mask (1882-1943). Material: bronze on a marble base, 2017. MGML Collection. Photo: Matevž Paternoster

Fig 5a - 5c Lighting study of the politician Albert Kramer's death mask (1882-1943). Material: bronze on a marble base. MGML Collection, 2017. Photo: Matevž Paternoster



P4_CCP5 Krenn/O´Beirn

01_TR_CCP5_photoshoot .jpg
JPEG-Bild - 6,5 MB

Fig. 1 *Photoshoot with 50+ Group,* Photo taken in Tar Anall Premises, Belfast 2017. Photo: Martin Krenn, Aisling O'Beirn

02_TR_CCP5_porridge stage 1 .jpg
JPEG-Bild - 7,3 MB

Fig. 2 *Porridge, Stage 1,* Photo taken in Aisling O' Beirn's studio, Belfast 2018. Photo: Martin Krenn, Aisling O'Beirn

03_TR_CCP5_porridge stage 2.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 7,9 MB

Fig. 3 *Porridge, Stage 2,* Photo taken in Aisling O' Beirn's studio, Belfast 2018. Photo: Martin Krenn, Aisling O'Beirn

04_TR_CCP5_big mids dart board.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 4,6 MB

Fig. 4 *Big Mid's Dart Board, 1974,* Photo taken in The Roddy McCorley Society Museum, Belfast 2018. Photo: Martin Krenn, Aisling O'Beirn

05_TR_CCP5_thanks 1975.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 2,1 MB

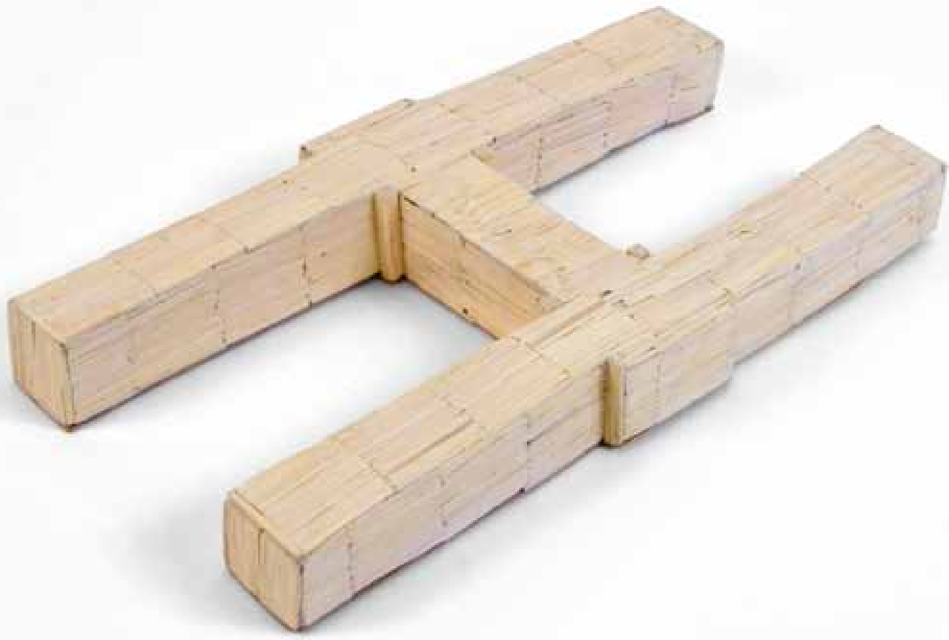
Fig. 5 *Thanks, 1975* Photo taken in The Andy Tyrie Interpretive Centre, Belfast, 2018. Photo: Martin Krenn, Aisling O'Beirn

Fig. 6 *Suffering*, Photo taken in Tar Anall Premises, Belfast, 2018. Photo: Martin Krenn, Aisling O’Beirn

06_TR__CCP5_suffering.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 3,1 MB

PORRIDGE STAGE 1

THE LORDSPRAYER
AMEN.
MARGARET
+
BILLY



SUFFERING

P4_WP4 Hamm

Fig 1 *Durchhänger,* Kunstsportgruppe Hochobir, Dreiländereck, 2016. Photo: Joachim Krenn

p4_Hamm_InSuspension_Kasten_fig1.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 137 KB

Fig 2 *Wohin schwimmen wir?* Marietta Huber, Dreiländereck, 2016. Photo: Joachim Krenn

p4_Hamm_InSuspension_Kasten_fig2.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 134 KB

Fig 3 *ALHAMDULILLAH*, Natalie Deewan, Dreiländereck ,2016. Photo: Joachim Krenn

p4_Hamm_InSuspension_Kasten_fig3.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 109 KB

Fig 4 *Borderlein*, Jani Oswald, Dreiländereck, 2016. Photo: Joachim Krenn

p4_Hamm_InSuspension_Kasten_fig4.jpg

Fig 5 *Das Gewicht des Himmels*, Niki Meixner, Dreiländereck, 2016. Photo: Joachim Krenn

p4_Hamm_InSuspension_Kasten_fig5.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 133 KB

Fig 6 *Bergfahrt für Talfahrt*, Hans Schabus, Dreiländereck, 2016. Photo: Joachim Krenn

p4_Hamm_InSuspension_Kasten_fig6.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 97 KB

Fig 7 *Kreuzzug*, Gerhard Pilgram. Dreiländereck, 2016. Photo: Joachim Krenn

p4_Hamm_InSuspension_Kasten_fig7.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 151 KB

Fig 8 *Achtung Kunst*, Cornelius Kolig, Dreiländereck, 2016. Photo: Joachim Krenn

p4_Hamm_InSuspension_Kasten_fig8.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 131 KB

Fig 9 *Alpine Orientierungshilfe*, Nataša Sienčnik, Dreiländereck, 2016. Photo: Joachim Krenn

p4_Hamm_InSuspension_Kasten_fig9.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 99 KB

Fig 10 *Das Heu ist schon trocken*, Ona B, Dreiländereck, 2016. Photo: Joachim Krenn

p4_Hamm_InSuspension_Kasten_fig10.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 105 KB

Fig 11 *Die Ecken Europas*, Inge Vavra, Dreiländereck, 2016. Photo: Joachim Krenn

p4_Hamm_InSuspension_Kasten_fig11.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 127 KB

Fig 12 *Muse der Erinnerung*, Inge Varvra, Dreiländereck, 2016. Photo: Joachim Krenn

p4_Hamm_InSuspension_Kasten_fig12.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 162 KB

Fig 13 *Ciao People*, Céline Struger, Dreiländereck, 2016. Photo: Joachim Krenn

p4_Hamm_InSuspension_Kasten_fig13.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 92 KB

Fig 14 *Stützen der Gesellschaft*, Johannes Puch, Dreiländereck, 2016. Photo: Joachim Krenn

p4_Hamm_InSuspension_Kasten_fig14.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 133 KB

Fig 15 *Wohin schwimmen wir*, Marietta Huber, Dreiländereck, 2016. Photo: Joachim Krenn

p4_Hamm_InSuspension_Kasten_fig15.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 265 KB

Fig 16 *Feierabend und dann - grande amore*, Markus Zeber, Dreiländereck, 2016. Photo: Joachim Krenn

p4_Hamm_InSuspension_Kasten_fig16.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 83 KB

IMG. 04 | Kunstsportgruppe Hochobir, *Durchhänger* | *Izčrpanci* | *Sfiancati*

IMG. 05 | Marietta Huber, *Wohin schwimmen wir? | Kam plavamo? | Verso dove nuotiamo?*

IMG. 06 | Natalie Deewan, *Alhamdulillah*

IMG. 07 | Jani Oswald, *Borderlein*

IMG. 08 | Niki Meixner, *Das Gewicht des Himmels* | *Teža neba* | *Il peso del cielo*

IMG. 09 | Hans Schabus, *Bergfahrt für talfahrt* | *Vožnja navzgor za vožnjo navzdol* | *Salita contro discesa*

IMG. 10 | Gerhard Pilgram, *Kreuzzug* | *Križarska vojska* | *Crociata*

IMG. 11 | Cornelius Kolig, *Achtung Kunst | Pozor Umetnost | Attenzione Arte*

IMG. 12 | Nataša Sienčnik, *Alpine Orientierungshilfe* | *Obmejni Kažipot* | *Guida Alpina*

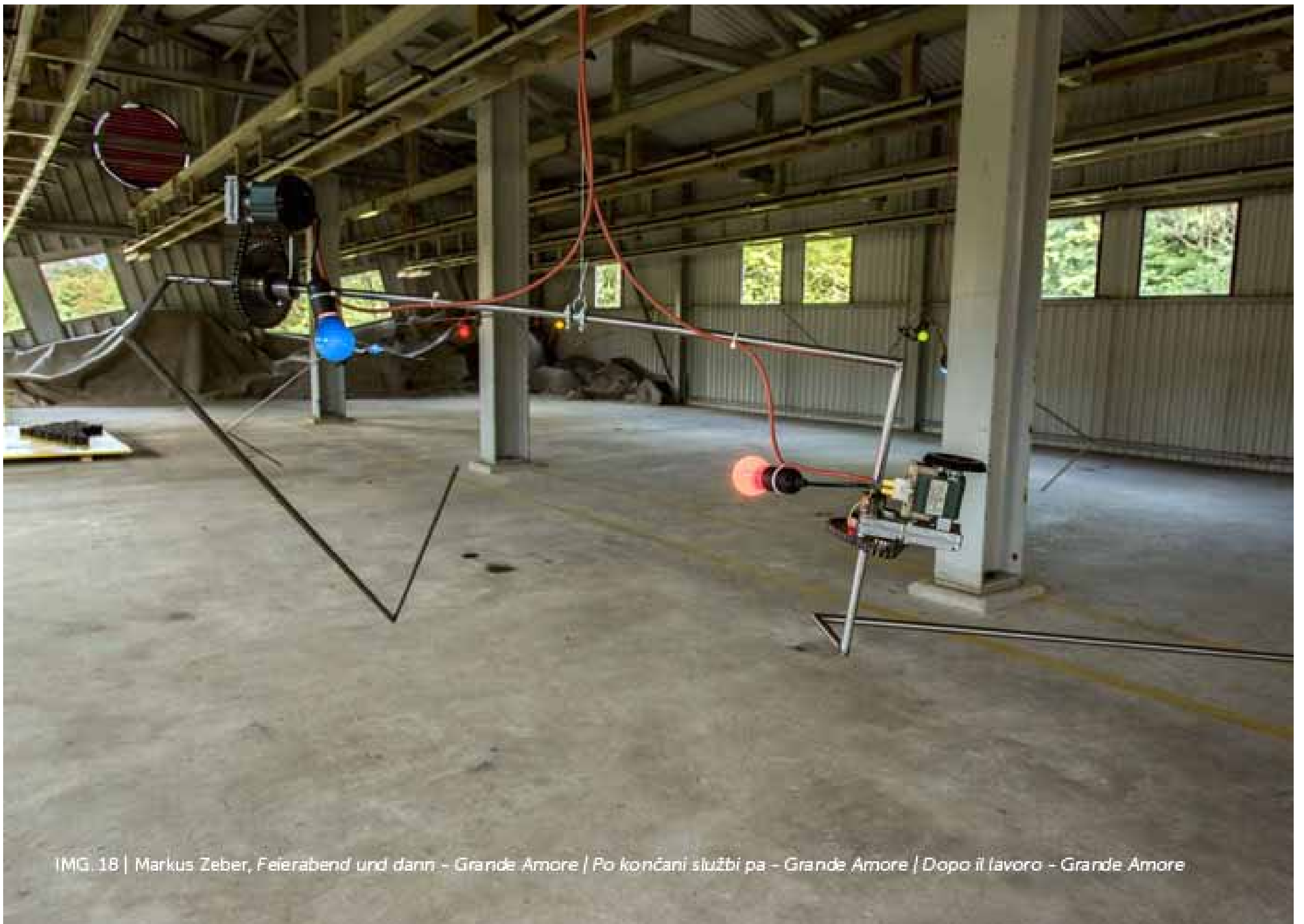
IMG. 13 | Ona B., *Das heu ist schon trocken in den bergen* | *Seno je že suho na planini* | *Il fieno è ormai secco in montagna*

IMG. 14 | Inge Vavra, *Die ecken Europas* | *Vogali Evrope* | *Gli angoli d'Europa*

IMG. 15 | Inge Vavra: Muse der erinnerung | Muza spominjanja | Musa del ricordo

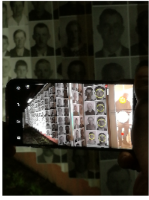
IMG. 16 | Céline Struger, *Ciao People!*

IMG. 17 | Johannes Puch, *Stützen der gesellschaft* | *Opore družbe* | *Sostegno della società*



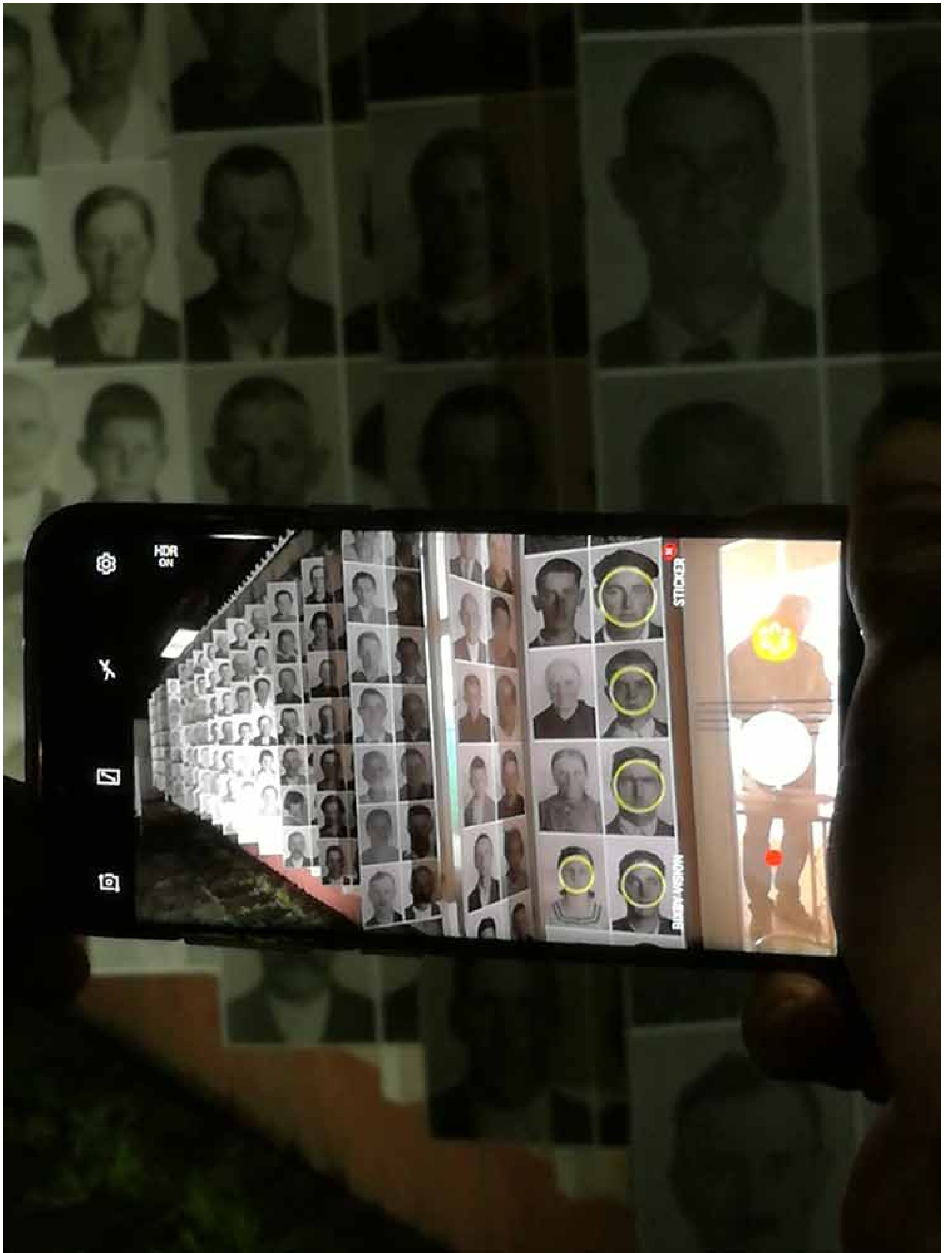
IMG. 18 | Markus Zeber, *Feierabend und dann – Grande Amore* | *Po končani službi pa – Grande Amore* | *Dopo il lavoro – Grande Amore*

P4_WP4 Proksch



p4_Proksch_MeasuringTech_fig1.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 1,8 MB

Fig. 1 Smartphone display with face recognition function against the background of exhibited portraits in exhibition *Vermessungsamt/Geodetski urad*, Sankt Jakob im Rosental/Šentjakob v Rožu, 2018. Photo: Melanie Proksch.


HDR
ON
STICKER

Pictures
Part 5

P5_CCP1 Toma

Fig. 1 Mediaş Synagogue, 2016. Photo: Răzvan Anton

4.MediasSynagogue.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 2,5 MB

Fig. 2 Volunteer garden clean-up, Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaş, 2014. Photo: Yoraan Reuben

6.GardenCleanUp_2014.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 132 KB

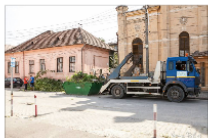


Fig. 3 The synagogue and Casa de lângă Sinagogă following the garden clean-up, Mediaş, 2014. Photo: Yoraan Reuben

10.GardenCleanUp_2014.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 95 KB

Fig. 4 Women's balcony of the synagogue before archives were processed, Mediaş, 2008. Photo: C. Binder

7.SoontobeArchive_2008.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 211 KB

Fig. 5 Poster for Hannukah event, Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaş, 2017. Image: Răzvan Anton

8.25August2018_vernissage.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 4,8 MB

Fig. 6 Artist Răzvan Anton (second from left) and guests in the courtyard for the exhibition opening of *"…but we brought it back…": Objects, Paths, Stories*, Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaş, 2018. Photo: Julie Dawson

2.KlezmerConcert_Jutta&the HiDukes_2018.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 1,3 MB

Fig. 7 Interior courtyard during a klezmer concert by Jutta & the Hi Dukes, Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaş, 2018. Photo: Gina Ştef (mirrorism.com)

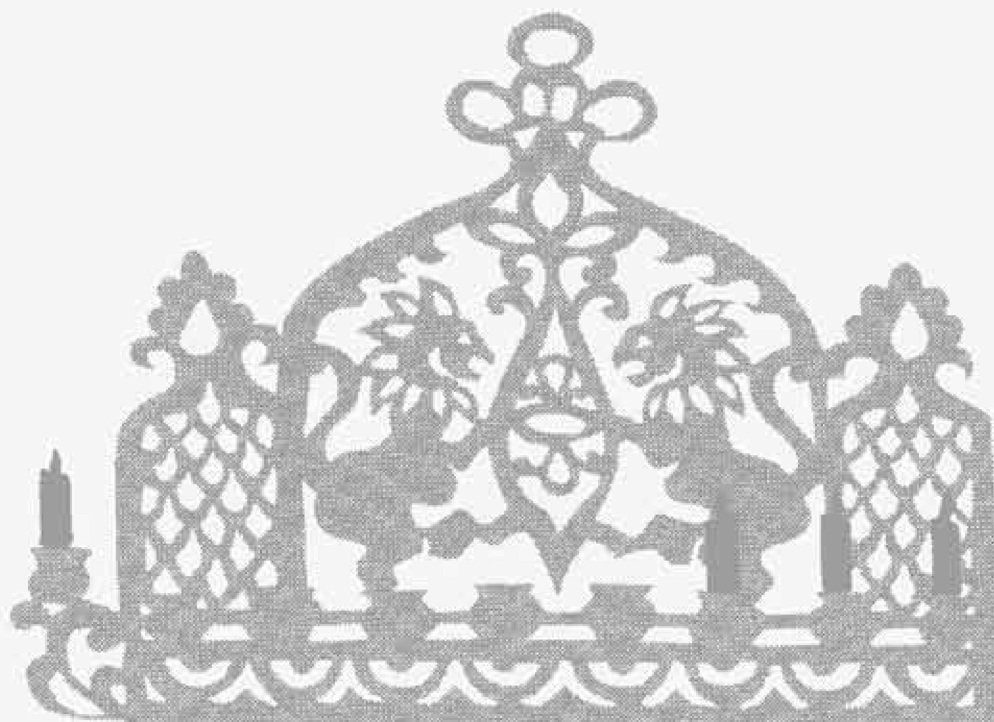
9.CasadelangaSinagoga_logo.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 60 KB

Fig. 8 Logo for Casa de lângă Sinagogă, based on a design from one of our handmade parochets, a curtain hung before the *aron kodesh* (ark holding the Torah). Recent research indicates this parochet may date back to the 18th century, Mediaş, 2017. Photo: Răzvan Anton

Fig. 9 Klezmer music and dancing (Jutta & the Hi Dukes), Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaș, 2018. Photo: Gina Ștef (mirrorism.com)

5.25August2018_vernissage.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 5,4 MB

Fig. 10 Cantor Sveta Kundish and guests mingle in the courtyard before the concert at the exhibition opening of *"…but we brought it back…": Objects, Paths, Stories*. Casa de lângă Sinagogă Mediaș, 2018. Photo: Julie Dawson



Papercut by Tsirl Waletzky

Sărbătoarea de Hanukha

a treia lumânare

Joi, 14.12.2017, ora 18:30
Casa de lângă sinagogă
str. Mihail Kogalniceanu 43
Mediaș

Invitat special: Corul Gospel Mediaș
sub conducerea lui Edith Toth

TR-
ACE
S—

mirrorism

casa de lângă sinagogă
das Haus neben der Synagoge
a zsinagóga melletti ház

P5_WP3 Endter

Fig. 1 Exhibition view, *The common thread*, Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt, 2016. Photo: Wolfgang Günzel.

Image 01_Endter.tif
TIFF-Bild - 113,9 MB

Fig. 2 Exhibition view, *The common thread*, Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt, 2016. Photo: Wolfgang Günzel

Image 02_Endter.tif
TIFF-Bild - 83 MB

Fig. 3 Exhibition view, *The common thread*, Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt, 2016. Photo: Wolfgang Günzel

Image 03_Endter.tif
TIFF-Bild - 116,4 MB

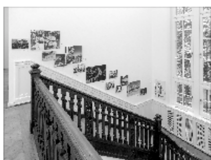


Fig. 4 Exhibition view, *The common thread*, Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt, 2016. Photo: Wolfgang Günzel

Image 04_Endter.tif
TIFF-Bild - 109,6 MB

Der
thread of life
rote
tie the knot
umgarnen
warp and weft of thinking
Stroh zu Gold spinnen
social network
Geduldsfaden
The Common
Faden
Thread
woolgathering
sich in Widersprüche verstricken
much cry and little wool
nach Strich und Faden
Knotenpunkt
den Faden verlieren

P5_WP3 Landkammer

Image
01_Landkammer_Enquiring.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 2,8 MB

Fig. 1 Workshop *What is this doing here?* for school groups, Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt, 2017. Photo: Workshop group

object future.pdf
Adobe PDF document - 120 KB

Fig 2 Workshop *What is this doing here?* for school groups, Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt. One of the objects of enquiry in the workshop was a relief panel from the Benin kingdom in the museum's collection, 2017. Photo: Workshop group. Image/text: Nora Landkammer

What should be this object’s future?

P5_WP5 Szöke

Fig. 1 *Dead Images* exhibition, Edinburgh College of Art, 2018. Photo: Tal Adler

p5_Szoeke_TheSearch_fig3.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 375 KB

Fig. 2 Israel Kaunatjike, Herero activist, speaking about the ethics of collecting human remains at an interview for the *Dead Images* exhibition, video still, Dead Images exhibition, Edinburgh College of Art, 2018.
Photo: Tal Adler

Screen Shot 2018-10-18 at 14.30.28.png
PNG-Bild - 6,5 MB

Fig. 3 Information space with *Unfinished Library*, *Dead Images* exhibition, Edinburgh College of Art, 2018. Photo: Tal Adler

Adler_20180706_RX100_0281_1600px.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 600 KB

Fig. 4 Information space with *Facing hi/stories*, *Dead Images* exhibition, Edinburgh College of Art, 2018. Photo: Tal Adler

Szoeke_Info_Space.png
PNG-Bild - 1,8 MB

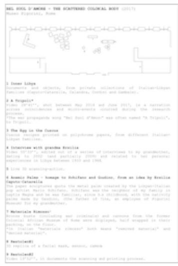
Israel Kaunatjike
Herero Activist, Berlin

P5_CCP3 & WP5
LandkammerSchneider

Fig. 1-8: Picture Series, workshop *Dispersed Presence*, Belfast 2018. Photos: Aisling O'Beirn

Pictures
Part 6

P6_WP2 Contini



WP2_Contini_pic6d_The Scattered Col...e map-eng.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 947 KB

Fig. 1 Exhibition Map of *Bel suol d'amore - The Scattered Colonial Body*, Rome 2017. Graphic project: Cinzia Delnevo

WP2_Contini_pic7_The Scattered Col...l Body_view.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 1,1 MB

Fig. 2 General view of the exhibition (from Ersilia perspective), Rome 2017. Image: Leone Contini

WP2_Contini_pic9_The Scattered Col...Inner Libya.JPG
JPEG-Bild - 5,1 MB

Fig. 3 Inner Libya, Rome 2017. Photo: Leone Contini

WP2_Contini_pic14_The Scattered Col...zia Delnevo.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 7,8 MB

Fig. 4 Reflections, Rome 2017. Photo: Cinzia Delnevo

WP2_Contini_pic10_The Scattered Col...ibya, Detail.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 1,3 MB

Fig. 5 Inner Libya, detail, Rome 2017. Image: Leone Contini

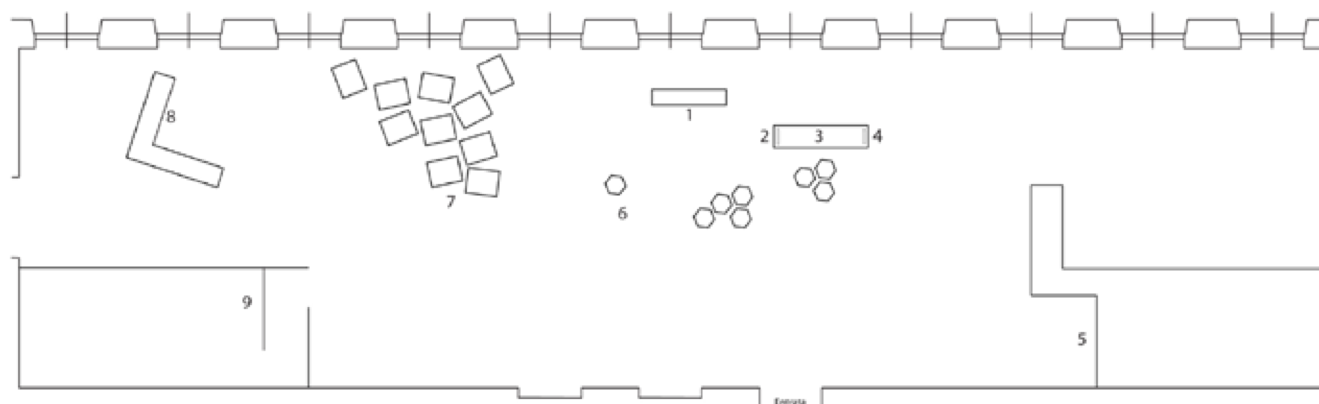
Fig. 6 Unione e Progresso, Image print on booklet ‘Associazione Politica per il progesso della Libia – Statuto’, Rome 2017. Image: Contini family archive

WP2_Contini_pic11_Unione e Progresso, the logo.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 50 KB

Fig. 7 Materiale rimosso, Rome 2017. Photo: Leone Contini

WP2_Contini_pic12_The Scattered Col...iale rimosso.jp(
JPEG-Bild - 7,5 MB

BEL SUOL D'AMORE – THE SCATTERED COLONIAL BODY (2017)
Museo Pigorini, Rome



1 Inner Libya
Documents and objects, from private collections of Italian-Libyan families (Caputo-Catarella, Calandra, Contini and Gambale).

2 A Tripoli*
Video 28'41'', shot between May 2016 and June 2017, is a narration across coincidences and micro-events occurred during the research process.
*The war propaganda song "Bel Suol d'Amore" was often named "A Tripoli", to Tripoli.

3 The Egg in the Cuscus
Cuscus recipes printed on polychrome papers, from different Italian-Libyan families.

4 Interview with grandma Ersilia
Video 55'33'', edited out of a series of interviews to my grandmother, dating to 2002 (and partially 2009) and related to her personal experiences in Libya between 1933 and 1968.

5 Live 3D scanning-action.

6 Anemic Palms - homage to Schifano and Gaudino, from an idea by Ersilia Caputo-Catarella
The paper sculptures quote the metal palms created by the Libyan-Italian pop artist Mario Schifano. Schifano was the neighbor of my family in Leptis Magna and he was familiar, since his childhood, with the nativity palms made by Gaudino, (the father of Tina, an employee of Pigorini Museum) for my grandmother.

7 Materiale Rimosso*
Bronze busts (including war criminals) and cannons from the former Colonial African Museum of Rome were displayed, half wrapped in their packing, on the floor.
*In Italian "materiale rimosso" both means "removed material" and "denied material".

8 Restolen#1
3D replica of a facial mask, sensor, camera

9 Restolen#2
Video 13'52'', it documents the scanning and printing process.

Tarhuna
1940

UNIONE E PROGRESSO

P6_WP4 Schönberger

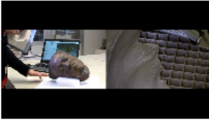


Fig. 1 Scanning and printing, Naples and Rome 2017. Still from video *Restolen*: Leone Contini.

restolen6.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 567 KB

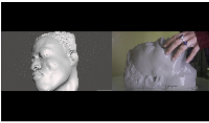


Fig. 2 Digital Awakening, Naples and Rome 2017. Still from video *Restolen*: Leone Contini.

frame da video_ Restolen.jpg
JPEG-Bild - 396 KB

Fig. 3 The trap, Rome 2017. Photo: Leone Contini.

Screenshot 2018-12-03
17.42.15.png
PNG-Bild - 3 MB