summary

METHODOLOGY

AN EXHIBITION AND ITS BACKGROUND

Treasures Beneath the City – Something New from the Past, a temporary Exhibition at the Budapest History Museum's Castle Museum

by Paula Zsidi, curator, deputy director of the Budapest History Museum

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Ten years, more than 2000 archaeologically monitored construction projects, about 150 excavation sites and exactly 1259 exhibited objects - in numbers this is the essence of the temporary exhibition about the archaeological activity of the Budapest History Museum. However, the exhibition involves more than logically arranged, beautiful objects. The ancient settlements in the present territory of Budapest are outlined and you can discover historical events and the evidence of past wars and golden ages. At the same time, illustrations and reconstructions enable visitors to gain an insight into each part of the lived past now buried. In the background of the exhibition there is the coordinated work of several organisations and institutes, construction projects and specialists. Much effort is required to produce a display of the finds documented in the course of field work and preserved in the museum, and to delineate a historical picture comprehensible to all. The Budapest History Museum is statutorily responsible for conducting archaeological excavations in Budapest and undertaking such activity in connection with construction projects. The tasks in relation to constructors and excavations are both defined by legal provisions. They mainly concern the first phase of archaeological exploration, the field work. Those planning construction activities provide the possibility – with special consideration to the urban territory - for excavation. During construction, the archaeologist can gain an insight, if only briefly, into the historical layers of areas otherwise hidden by buildings and infrastructure. Without investments and investors, 90% of archaeological work in the capital during the past ten years would not have taken place. The costs of excavation are borne by the builder, who would, in the interest of construction, disturb or eliminate the various layers. Thus from the point of view of investors, most archaeological excavations can be considered a 'by-product' of construction and development accompanying earth works. The interests of constructors and archaeologists are not the same, so successful archaeological research requires cooperation, for which mutual respect is necessary. A target public for the exhibition has not been determined, which we regard as a special value. The past belongs to all. Thus it had to be displayed in such a way that everyone understands and everyone finds a part of the exhibition which speaks to him or her. This aim is served by tableaux for children, texts in English for foreigners, reconstructions and the interactive equipment for those looking for an experience, as well as detailed information for those seeking knowledge. We have not wanted to exclude anyone. At the same time, the exhibition provides feedback for investors and city residents alike - there is something new and something valuable below ground.

TOPOLOGY AND TYPOLOGY

The morphological approach in research concerning Hungarian peasant dwellings by Máté Kavecsánszki

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'One of the most striking bearers of the culture of a given people, region or landscape is represented by built heritage. At the end of the 19th century ethnographers devoted increasing attention to examining the traditional (vernacular) architecture of the Carpathian Basin. This interest, which appeared at the same time as in western Europe, is confirmed by, inter alia, the construction of an open-air village for the 1896 Millennium Celebrations in Budapest, which played an important role in the commencement of professional, scholarly ethnographic and architectural research, although it did not result in the start of serious folk monument protection. In the long run, however, the delay proved to be advantageous, since at the time Hungarian 'open-air museology', the establishment of the first Hungarian open-air ethnographic museum and the then scholarly results already made it possible to achieve historical and regional authenticity. Thus was avoided the dead end in which many west European first and second generation open-air museums found themselves. When research got underway at the end of the 19th century, the general incidence of room+kitchen+larder was essentially the typical formula for Hungarian peasant dwellings, although considering the arrangement and function of the spaces there were numerous local variations. However, the newly forming interest in ethnography was not directed at contemporary types, rather in line with the then aims of scholarship and motivation archaisms and ancient approaches were sought. Thus research into vernacular architecture almost immediately - without anything in quantity with which comparisons could be made - concentrated on the genesis of the Hungarian (!) dwelling and over time sought out, on the one hand, the farthest possible and, on the other, specifically the ancient Hungarian examples, though these criteria didn't match the three-part peasant dwelling. However, this form of research into the most ancient led to the discovery of the regional variations in folk and peasant culture. The recognition of the heterogeneity of such Hungarian culture resulted in the nascent regional research in the second half of the 19th century, and at the same time in the case of vernacular architecture the aim of that research was also the discovery of ancient forms. From then on research into Hungarian dwellings had two strands - examining the origins and correctly identifying the regional types. Research into Hungarian vernacular buildings received a new impetus in 1960s and 1970s. Undoubtedly, the question of regional subdivisions came into prominence, in which a major role was played by the ethnographic museology developing from the 1950s. The body of information accumulated by the 1980s facilitated the creation of a broad synthesis on both the historical and regional level, as well as the current array of scholarship.

INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE IN OPEN-AIR MUSEUMS

Open-Air Museums and their Social Roles

by Zsolt Sári, deputy director of the Hungarian Open-Air Museum p. 99

'New museology, which had been developing from the 1970s, became critical museology in the early years of the 21st century. Nina Simon's 2010 work, however, already spoke about the participatory museum. By today it has been proved that a museum cannot be an institute simply based on reputation and asseveration. We have to look for the possibilities within which we allow for both interaction and contemplation, since a museum is not only based on the prestige of its collection. It has to relate to the public's different points of reference. Consequently, different tendencies are present in a museum - aesthetic contemplation and relaxation, connoisseurship and consumption, individual delight and public service. Open-air museums represent one of the world's most successful museum types, with important ethnographic and historical collections, visitor-friendly and attractive exhibitions, and activities and events relating to them. Their success has mainly been due to their ability to appeal to a diverse range of social layers, irrespective of educational background and social and economic status. Open-air museums speak about the daily life of people: visitors can see themselves and their families reflected in the stories presented. This was the basic conception of the open-air museum. Arthur Haselius (1833-1901) dreamt of a museum type which, with the help of relocated dwellings, would reflect the rural or urban architecture, interior decoration and lifestyle of each region. They were not simply museums of architecture and/or interior decoration, but real social museums which, reaching beyond the spirit of the times, not only dealt with the usual tasks of collection, preservation and presentation, but also had a function serving both education and relaxation. This was the role of the Stockholm Skansen, which was simultaneously a folk park, a multifold relaxation park, a green area and a meeting place. The success of the Skansen and other open-air museums was based on the creative mix of scholarship and entertainment. Initially historical minorities and social issues of both the majority and minority were addressed in the research and collecting of open-air museums, as well as later in their exhibitions and promotional / educational events. Within this basically historical perspective (and narrative) the lifestyle of regional minorities was presented. European open-air museums were among the first museums which, with their own resources, aimed to reflect the issue of migration. From the 1970s, huge numbers of non-European migrants settled in the western and northern parts of Europe. The museum representation of the minority groups which had migrated looks back to earlier times than the wave of migration experienced today. Several open-air museums have adopted the documentation of the migrants' culture as part of their collecting and exhibiting tasks.

THE SKANSEN SENSORIUM About the ASTRA Museum in Sibiu

by Anna Keszeg

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This article aims to present a critical overview of the ASTRA Museum in Sibiu, Romania. Particular attention is paid to three aspects of the institutional organization: the founding story, the contemporary expansion plans, and the museum as a visitor and experience centre. The predecessor of today's museum was founded in 1908 with the aim of assuring cultural self-expression to Romanians from Transylvania, copying the models of the existing museums of Saxons, Hungarians and Székelys. The idea of an open-air museum in Sibiu was initiated in 1960 by Romulus Vuia, thanks to whom the first open-air ethnographic museum in Romania was established in 1967, when the Astra Park opened its doors in Dumbrava forest. According to the plans, the museum was to present the popular material culture of "the whole country" from the perspective of the history of technology. Today, the museum is the largest ethnographic institution in Romania, comprising an open-air museum aiming to present Romanian, Saxon, Hungarian and Roma culture, the indoor ASTRA Museum, the Emil Sigerius Saxon Ethnographic Museum, the planned Roma Museum and the Franz Binder Museum representing the culture of non-European ethnic groups. The history of the institution has a structure that reflects the entire academic debate of European ethnology, ethnography and cultural anthropology. In addition, the ASTRA Film Foundation came later. The Foundation is an anthropological documentary film and visual education centre established in 1990, which organised Romania's first documentary film festival in 1993, and has continued to do so since then. Today it is the most important event of its kind in the central and east European region. The location of the Astra Park is an impressive geographic environment, as well as a place where the middle class from around Sibiu loves to relax. Its collection of buildings and artefacts is organised in line with the concept of a technical museum: the buildings of the different streets are connected by traditional crafts - there are blacksmiths, potters, textile workers, etc. Thanks to this framing, the differences between the ethnic cultures of the Transylvanian regions can be seen, while simultaneously remaining 'hidden' in that they create the illusion of a perfect match without any difficulty. By the entrance to the museum there is a visually attractive, contemporary exhibition, curated by the ASTRA Museum and the Museum of South Trondelag in Trondheim, Norway, presenting the differences of two Roma communities. From there, visitors reach an attractive museum shop and the park called the site of authentic Romanian popular culture. The museum space is full of many discursive splits and ideological contradictions. One wonders whether, in a country with a serious lack of understanding about the politics of memory, those discontinuities will ever come to an end.

LOCAL RESPONSIBILITIES New Possibilities in Den Gamle By by Martin Brandt Djupdræt

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'Den Gamle By (The Old Town) is an open-air museum established more than 100 years ago. Focusing on urban life, it is located in Aarhus in Denmark and attracts many Danes as well as foreigners. Den Gamle By has a national focus, but since its foundation in 1914 it has also been a museum telling stories about Aarhus through buildings and objects connected to the city. As one of the major museums in Aarhus, it has always been an excursion destination, drawing people from the city. With the new assignment as a local museum, we had to develop a more coherent strategy as the museum for Aarhus and its inhabitants - while at the same time continuously being a museum for tourists and visitors to the city. A central aim when we were entrusted to be the local museum was to devise a permanent display about the history of Aarhus. Another focal point was to seek dialogue with citizens, developing activities and exhibitions with them. These joint projects have been in focus in recent times and have also raised debate concerning what function such a museum could have. A goal from the start was to include citizens, alongside introducing more contemporary history into the museum. One project was about homelessness. In 2012 we staged the exhibition Homeless - it is here I live, made together with Ulrik Szkobel, a homeless man in Aarhus. The project raised the issue of whether we were unethically using a person as a spectacle. We reasoned that by putting the museum's expertise at a citizen's disposal and allowing him to use our setting to tell his story, we would be providing an opportunity for a group who were not normally heard to speak. Our museum is partly about everyday life in Danish towns over the centuries, and homelessness is certainly part of that story. Another project where people from Aarhus shared their contemporary history was based in the city's Gellerup social housing area. This is a concrete housing neighbourhood from the 1970s with many low-income inhabitants and many citizens from the Middle East and North Africa. We presented a Somali-Danish home in the museum. With this exhibition Den Gamle By became a museum about a new refugee group, thereby making it relevant for them to come and visit the museum. It is quite justifiable to give an insight into the daily life of immigrants in contemporary Denmark. Yet one thing was missing in our role as a local museum, namely a large permanent exhibition about the history of the city. Den Gamle By worked on planning that exhibition and in 2012 the museum acquired a large grant, making it possible to tell the Aarhus story. Thus an 800-square-metre underground exhibition opened in April 2017 showing the city's chronological development from the Viking period to the medieval market town, and then to the mid-1800s, when the town expanded tremendously, and culminating in the last 60 years of growth in all areas.

THE FRENCH MODEL - ECO-MUSEUMS

by Edouard de Laubrie, section head for agriculture and nutrition in the Museum of the Civilisations of Europe and the Mediterranean (MuCEM), Marseille, France p. 133

In comparison with most European countries, the idea of collecting and presenting provincial dwellings of different regions in one location is not very popular in France. It contrasts, for example, with Scandinavian countries, Great Britain, Holland, Germany, Romania and Hungary. This is so despite the fact that Georges Henri Rivière, the founder of the Musée national des Arts et Traditions Populaires (National Museum of Folk Art and Traditions), devised plans to establish several open-air museums of ethnography. From 1932 Rivière deliberated on establishing an "open-air museum of regions in France", which would have included one hundred buildings from all the regions of the country. On founding the Regional National Parks in 1966, the idea of connecting them with open-air museums was raised again and promoted by George Henri Rivière. Two open-air museums were studied for the plan. One was the Marquèze Museum linked to the Regional National Park in the Landes de Gascogne, in south-west of France, which later became the Grande Lande eco-museum in 1969. The other was the future eco-museum of Ouessant linked to the Armorique Regional National Park in Brittany, the most western part of France. Only in 1971 was the idea of eco-museums formulated, thanks to a coming together of political and cultural factors. It well matched a tendency deriving from the events of 1968, which aimed to spread culture as broadly as possible, making it accessible for local communities. A new type of institution, the eco-museum headed by Marcel Evrard in Creusot Montceau-les-Mines, was founded between 1971 and 1974. It is situated neither in a national park nor in a village environment, but is based on the industrial activity of an urban community living in 16 settlements. In the words of Hugues de Varine: "The whole of the community creates a living museum whose audience throughout is within. The museum has residents instead of visitors." Varine's concept included the experience spread by the idea of Museo integral in Latin America during the same period. People's everyday activity is the basis of heritage in Creusot. The residents have to preserve it all, including their own dwellings. Hence, eco-museums appeared as a new response to the issues raised in connection with the educational role of museums. George Henri Rivière stipulated his first definition of an eco-museum in 1973 two years after the concept was born. These days the population is more mobile and its members are often not from the location where the eco-museum is situated. Thus this has to be taken into account in order for the museum to remain as a lasting basis, which keeps on adapting to the conditions of the present. Local authorities which maintain eco-museums turn them into cultural assets and employ them to promote the tourism of their region, while using them less and less for local development.

DEBATE

BACK TO THE SOURCES - THE FOUNDERS AND THE FOUNDED

Moderated by Marianna Berényi and Zsolt Sári

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'Open-air museums are not only interesting elements of Hungarian museology, they are also extremely popular with the public. In 2015 the Hungarian Open-Air Museum in Szentendre, the open-air museum in Szenna, the Sóstó, Göcsej and Vas village museums and the National Heritage Park in Ópusztaszer attracted close to half a million visitors. The various collections were established during the course of the 1960s and 1970s, within relatively precise limits. Scholarly based ethnographic collections were established in which the transferred buildings, buildings preserved in situ, sometimes reconstructed or rebuilt, simultaneously presented vernacular architecture, lifestyles, interiors, different methods of husbandry and the related forms of settlement. What antecedents were these and their success based on? How were these institutes established? What kind of debates have they subsequently generated? Iván M. Balassa (Szentendre), Judit Knézy (Szenna), József Németh (Göcsej) and István Páll (Sóstó) have been involved with them for all or a large part of their careers. The discussion with the now retired ethnographers-museologists and museum directors involved an overview of a period as well as some museum history, in which the issues raised are still currently relevant. In 1959 Gyula Ortutay and his associates organised a conference in which the entire profession presented its standpoint and the views expressed there later became basic points of reference. Thus there was a recurring notion that an open-air museum should be established to present Hungarian vernacular architecture. However, selecting a location gave rise to many problems. Before World War II there was a plan involving the People's Park in Budapest, but that had become outdated. A fine area by Arany Hill in Aquincum was suggested, but in the end Szentendre proposed an open space where the landscape offered both flat and hilly sections. In preparation for the selection of buildings, there was a so-called Black Book, essentially a wish-list concerning what kind of units could be established and within those what kind of buildings. When the decision was made to establish the museum, the collecting began. As many people as possible were involved, including those in the provincial areas. The Black Book contained some ideas which very quickly proved to be clearly impractical, or were unsuitable from the historical perspective. The list contained 18-20 regional units, which were reduced to 14 on the basis of a tender for plans. Then a two-round competition was launched in connection with developing the transfer plans. The first round involved many participants, but by the second round it was possible to choose between 2-3 projects. That period of the competition was fortunate in that it allowed for the involvement not only of architects but also ethnographers. Thus was born the Hungarian Open-Air Museum.

CRITICISM

VIRTUE FROM ABSENCE

On the Rearranged Permanent 19th-century Exhibition in the Hungarian National Gallery by Julianna P. Szűcs

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It seems to be a contradiction, although it is not: for Hungarian children (and later adults) 19th-century Hungarian art has simultaneously become a solemn part of their self-identity, moral evidence of their superego and the majestic decor of patriotism, as well as a part of the curriculum which had to be tolerated with boredom and then ticked off. The newly revised permanent exhibition of the Hungarian National Gallery acknowledges this experience, as well as the fact that the present framework of the institution would anyway cope with radical changes only with some difficulty. Although the conclusion is usually summarised at the end of a review, let the order be now reversed in the spirit of renewal. This exhibition is a triumph of restraint, which avoids a multitude of failures and intelligently accepts the use of museum eyecatchers. The proportions of the exhibition break daringly with two hidebound traditions. One is more than a century old, its prototype being a concise work about art history, Száz év a magyar művészet történetéből (A Hundred Years from the History of Hungarian Art – pub. Athenaeum, 1901) by Tamás Szana, which recalls the factual history of the arts during that successful period. Perhaps due to that historicising, positivist method, the selected works are arranged splendidly, but deprived of their independent character, as if they were threaded on the string of the world beyond the arts. The other script was written by the history of ideas. István Genthon's Az új magyar festőművészet története (History of New Hungarian Painting - pub. Magyar Szemle Társaság, 1935) separated works according to styles and schools, and drew a sharp line between Biedermeier and Romanticism, as well as between Historicism and Realism. While museums do not often use a 'boxing' system - collections usually resist spreadsheet-like divisions according to stylistic history - professional literature has found much delight in that efficiently sorting technique. It is worth recalling the two most frequent era interpretations on the occasion of the rearranged exhibition because the young curator, Réka Krasznai, and her colleagues (especially Orsolya Hessky) have not applied the aforementioned, rigid professional topoi, but opted for a third way. They have managed the difficult terrain by dividing it into 17 individual sections and by taking into consideration the facilities of 14 rooms. The Hungarian National Gallery restricted its own revisited 19th century. It was not concerned with what happened before or after. Works of a documentative nature or the first timid steps towards Modernism are absent. Something else was the aim with this selection - a more modest Hungarian fine art which suggests continuity, develops quietly and is agreeable, compared to many blinding eye-catchers. Hence this rearranged exhibition is an exception that proves the rule.

MUSEUM QUARTER

MUSEUM ON THE BORDER

 $Palestinian\ Museum\ in\ Ramallah, Birzeit, Museum\ on\ the\ Seam\ in\ Jerusalem$

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by Péter György

- The exhibition Magiciens de la Terre¹ was held in the Centre Georges Pompidou and the building of the Grande Halle de la Villette in Paris between 18 May and 14 August 1989. In the end this became the exhibition which, after several antecedents and largely as a result of the current changes in contemporary history, required and created new interpretational frameworks for both the universal, global view of contemporary art and the interpretational domains of museum geography. The end of the Cold War also saw the end of the orderly hierarchy of the "three worlds". The transformation of political geography, a new contract with reality the rewritten borders which lost validity in two years after the beginning of post-communism offered a new perspective and art world for the new perception and unknown maps of the universalism of contemporary art, which no one could suspect in the months when the exhibition was being prepared.²
- ¶ The exhibition curated by Jean-Hubert Martin is still a clear and sharply defined reason for the close connection between the institutions such as the museum and its exhibition and the concepts of contemporary art.3 That is to say, Magiciens de la Terre, as its increasingly rich and unending afterlife shows, announced the end of Modernism defined by the institutions and concepts of the West. It signified a new dialogue, a new representational mechanism, narratives based on new concepts of art and thus the appearance of a self-reflexive museum norm - everything that has partly happened afterwards. Indeed, the series of discussions about the concept and practice of the *qlobal art world*⁴ pointed at the invalidity of "distant worlds" seen and meant by exclusively western eyes (note Joseph Conrad's Under Western Eyes). What is offered is criticism of the continuity of postcolonialism's cognitive and mental maps, the discussions about scales, i.e. spatial turn⁵ and the great and virtual (art) historical narrative.⁶ There are grave differences between the view of postcolonialism, the new aesthetic programme and the actual practice of art, i.e. its institutional history, especially when we disregard such virtual hyperrealist places as Abu Dhabi or Dubai. They are gigantic museums of cultural colonialism based on partly recycling the unreal myth and the norm of global western museums and they represent part of the logic of global neo-capitalism, nothing else. Yet there are real locations, Israel and Palestine can be regarded as such, where cultural, art historical concepts, representations and art institutes are also direct political tools, whose history and present state demonstrate the identity political role of museums precisely, whose primary context is exclusively the network of local conflicts. That is to say, the historical past is not a broad meta-context in a broad sense, but an immanent part of strictly daily politics, which suitably keeps interfering in museum history.

- ¶ The following will concern recently established Palestinian museums, some of which are under transformation, as well as Israeli museums which have existed for decades and have been rearranged or reconstructed recently. Both their situation and domain of opportunities demonstrate well what the narrow and determinant context means. So Umm El Fahem Art Gallery⁸ in northern Israel, the small collection of the Museum of Palestinian Folk Heritage in Sakhnin, western Galilee⁹ and the Bethlehem Art Gallery in Bethlehem in the West Bank will be discussed.
- ¶ The Palestinian Museum in Ramallah, Birzeit obviously has a different meaning and significance similarly to its political context and in my opinion its fate and future may have an important effect on other institutions within the territory of Israel in relation to the Israeli/Palestinian cultural field and conflict zone. The Israel Museum in Jerusalem, the Museum on the Seam on the border of East Jerusalem and finally the Museum of Art in Tel-Aviv are all in another situation. Although we are talking about museums in each case, there are several significant differences among these institutes, primarily between the institutional forms and possibilities vis-à-vis Palestinian and Israeli Jewish identities. Despite decades-long contemporary crisis and debate, the existence and future of the state of Israel is an unquestionable fact. Yet the Palestinian state exists in part virtually, primarily by legal notions, i.e. the borders of its territory are far from being evident. Correspondingly, the operational conditions of its cultural institutions are radically different from those in Israel. At the same time, as a consequence of the difference of political realities, institutions in the territory of Israel, in the West Bank and in the territory of the Palestinian Authority follow and require a different cultural logic. In some absurd way, all these museums and galleries are connected by a radically different and seemingly irreconcilable historical narrative, namely remembrance politics. At the same time, the Israeli standpoint is neither homogenous nor static. In recent decades an internal criticism of Zionism has taken place and the new narratives of post-Zionism, which differ from one another when the occasion arises yet appear as one, have attained strong intellectual positions.¹⁰ The rewriting of the historical narrative which defines the identity of contemporary society and cultural memory has a perceptible influence on the perspective of Israeli museums. Palestinian society and culture, which remained invisible or seemed to be in the twilight for decades, are gaining an increasing role, especially in contemporary collections and exhibitions.
- ¶ The cessation of the dominance of the Zionist narrative involved the unavoidable nature of an important question, namely the interpretation and present narrative of the Arab general strike that disregarded the UN recommendations about two states in 1947 and then the 1948 war (which in the end led to the proclamation of Israel's independence) following the attacks by Arab states against Israeli settlements. In accordance with the political ideology of Zionism, the unquestionable Israeli viewpoint regarded the events of 1947-48 as the basis of the new state and the new Jewry. At the same time, it existed throughout the Cold War and the Israeli narrative, which had been accepted in what is generally called the West, marginalised and made the

Palestinian exodus invisible. In 1948 the Israelis destroyed some 350 Palestinian villages. 160-190,000 Palestinians fled to Gaza, 300,000 to the West Bank, 100,000 to Transjordan, the same number to Lebanon and 75-90,000 to Syria. Correspondingly, the society of refugee camps with their by now deeply divided social strata was formed. The catastrophe, the exodus referred to as Nakba by Palestinians, has fundamentally determined Palestinian identity and the political culture of memory. In the end, some 150,000 Palestinians remained in Israel.

- ¶ In accordance with the dominant Zionist narrative, the image of Palestinians in the contemporary western world became hopeless. ¹⁴ However, due to the Israeli laws on archives, from the beginning of the 1980s a significant part of the events of 1948 became researchable. Consequently, in a few years a post-Zionist paradigm was formed by new historians and new sociologists, whose authors are in dispute with one another. At the same time, a change of perceptions has taken place and become an element of British, American, German and French academic life, as well as contemporary journalism. In accordance with that, the memory, i.e. registered fate of the several hundred thousand Palestinians who were forced to flee became part of Israeli social fantasy and contemporary culture, i.e. of reality. ¹⁵ However the future of Israeli and Palestinian peace talks is formed or for that matter the direction in which Israeli politics goes, which is far beyond the scope of the present writing the post-Zionist, new memory of the 1948 war which has been constructed in the past decade, i.e. the experience of its varied reality, is present in the contemporary discourses of culture and the arts ¹⁶, and it has an effect on a significant part of Palestinian museums, cultural institutes and concepts.
- ¶ The Palestinian Museum is situated next to the Birzeit University campus on a hilltop above Ramallah on a guarded territory controlled by the Palestinian Autonomous Territories, officially the Palestinian National Authority of Palestinian Autonomy. No wonder it seems complicated for an outsider, yet that is the museum's primary context, in no way can it be matched with the close-by Israel Museum in Jerusalem or the Museum of Art in Tel-Aviv, which is after all also quite near. The West Bank and Gaza, namely the two parts of Palestinian Autonomy, enclosed by Israel, represent the territory of the independent state proclaimed in Algiers in 1988. This state was de jure recognised by a large number of UN member states with the exception of several western countries which have diplomatic relations with Palestine but do not recognise its independence. At the same time, a large part of the country's territory is under Israeli army control. 400,000 Israelis live in settlements in the West Bank, which are guarded by the military. Ramallah, only 12 kilometres from Jerusalem, is the seat of the Palestinian National Authority, i.e. the town with a population of 30,000 in the territory beyond the Israeli crossing points is the capital of the country in some way. Ramallah used to be populated by people of different religions and ethnicities, and was a Christian and Arab town with corresponding architectural edifices. It is still a fabric of spaces with complicated semantics. So the size and the political geographical position of the town determines its cultural institutions, thus primarily the Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center which was founded in 1996 and includes

- a non-profit gallery and concert hall, as well as serving educational aims. It used to be owned by the town, but today it is in the ownership of the Palestinian Cultural Ministry. Notwithstanding geographical closeness, Ramallah is separated from Jerusalem by a truly sombre wall, i.e. it is a hostile political world, as far from Israel as possible.
- ¶ In view of control over the territory, governmentality, as well as the norms and traditions of nation states, the Palestinian Museum stands in an extreme, culturally absurd position, in a political vacuum. It is as if it all cited Foucault's lecture series in the Collège de France in 1977–78.
- ¶ "The administrative state born in the 16th and 17th centuries is no longer feudal but is characterised by territoriality between state borders. It governs a society of regulations and disciplines, and finally a state of government which is no longer defined by its territoriality, by the surface occupied, but by a mass: the mass of the population with its volume, its density, and for sure, the territory it covers, but which, in a way, is only one of its components." 17
- ¶ The instability defining daily routine, ¹⁸ which is a reality due to the political standpoint of the Palestinian National Authority governing in Ramallah, clearly has a strong effect on the expectations concerning cultural institutes. (With regard to the immediate environment, Yasser Arafat's grave is there, so the town with its Christian, Orthodox, Lutheran and Catholic cemeteries is marked out to represent historic continuity on the one hand and, on the other, to demonstrate sovereignty.) And here the role and mission of the Palestinian Museum, which is to serve as a response to territorial insecurity, historic traumas, grievances and legal demands, and to represent them with its existence, is separated from those of the institutions belonging to the global world of contemporary art, since they are unable to function, more precisely are meaningless without the broad international context. ¹⁹ This does not mean that they have no direct political role, but their legitimacy is not connected to the traditional nation state's machinery of governmentality, as happens in the case of the Palestinian Museum.
- ¶ The new building and its park also in a closed area next to the campus of Birzeit University, namely the architecture and the culturally defined environment, represent the anticipation of an authority which operates as a closed nation state, enjoying and demanding absolute control over its territories the museum is the utopian, eschatological building of the non-existent Palestine, the existence of a pressing political desire: thus it promises the establishment of a state which it must represent until then. The museum is nothing other than the guarantee and hope of statehood to be achieved. The building, which is erected on the top of the hill and blends into the plateau, at the same time follows the vista of its surroundings precisely. The museum consists of not a single block, but is divided into a geometrical pattern which actually follows and repeats the logic and vista of terraced landscape architecture. In my opinion, Heneghan Peng Architects of Dublin simply reversed the usual sequence and overwrote the "power relations". Thus the building adapts to the landscape, representing and maintaining the issue of Palestinian identity.
- ¶ This situation in itself is such a weight on the institution that it makes the caution it must show understandable.²⁰ So the *political landscape* which turns the building and terrace farming into

an identity issue²¹ is exactly the model and metaphrase of the utopian modernism which Palestinian autonomy needs as much as the little hope it has – because in reality the territory consisting of a coalition of territorial fragments, which could be called a federation of any number of states, will never be able to represent a single and exclusive narrative, since its Jewish part is also in fragments. The Ashkenazi, Mizrahi, Russian and African Jews all constitute different cultural enclaves, not to mention another pattern: the competition of religious and secular cultures. The latter is relevant in the same way from the aspect of the Palestinian state, which was born in the tradition of secular modernism, and it would be difficult for it to shift towards radical Islam, which would again mean an entirely new system of state norms – and anyway the presently used, created and required cultural infrastructure would not fit in with it, either.

¶ The Umm el-Fahem Art Gallery, the Museum of Palestinian Folk Heritage and the Arab Museum of Contemporary Art in Sakhnin operate on the boundaries of a reality determining political, geographical and everyday life, i.e. they operate within the territory of the State of Israel whose

existence cannot be recognized by the Palestinian Museum. For this reason its exhibition Jerusalem Lives, announced for the autumn of 2017 and which should open on the 50th anniversary of the 1967 war, seems crucial. At the same time, as can be read on the museum's website, the exhibition opening in September will present a critical reading of the presentations of Jerusalem in a broad context of the past fifty years.²² The events in the museum in Ramallah or events merely waiting to happen automatically become issues of high political publicity, that is the representation of a virtual, imagined national community in its exhibition policy, compared to which real visitors sometimes represent only a bio-set. How many of the permanent exhibitions of important museums have done so all over the world! The self-representation of authority has actually meant empty rooms over the years and it sometimes happens in Budapest even today. Umm el-Fahem and Sakhnin - they must have contact with the local community, i.e. visitors, and this basically requires a museum and exhibition strategy different from the cultural-political logic and aesthetic norm of state institutions. No wonder the title of the impressive large catalogue in three languages published by Umm el-Fahem in 2015 with the sponsorship of the Israeli national lottery is The Identity of the Palestinian Artist: Tradition, Culture, Modernity and Globalization. The catalogue presents contemporary Palestinian artists who meet the double aesthetic expectation, i.e. their works are thematic and understandable for local visitors yet the editors hope they are also suitable for the far more complicated roles of the global art world and the norms including more self reflexion. Understandably, this aesthetic duality almost cannot be accomplished, while it cannot be avoided. Metaphors of defencelessness, the often threatening scenes and icons of everyday life keep appearing in the pictures, such as the wall dividing the two societies or the crossing points in the works by Abed Abdi, Asad Azi, Nabil Anani and Suleiman Mansour. Yet the latter also present the idyllic heritage, just like Khaled Hourani. Metaphoric small-scale realism sometimes moves to direct political caricature, for example with the works of Usama Said and others, whose creations resonate

with communities of Israeli Palestinians or those living in the West Bank or Gaza. However, at best these works are on the edge of the global contemporary art scene, similarly to artists choosing the local universe of contemporary Hungarian painting. It is remarkable or painful to see how narrow the toolkit of thematized identity creating painting is and how closely it is connected to the 19th and 20th century academic small-scale realism, and how hesitatingly it stops at the boundary of historic and contemporary isms: because the price to be paid for understandable imagery narrative is always high, independently of the given cases. No wonder that partly the same artists appeared at the group exhibition Reviewing Oneself and the Art of Living, which opened in spring 2017 in the Gallery at the Walled Off Hotel in Bethlehem. Curated by Housni Alkhateeb Shehadah, it was the subject of one of the biggest media hypes in recent years, though in my opinion it is the most repulsive cultural enterprise. The hotel rooms furnished in the manner of colonial imperialism are decorated by Bansky's current, location-specific paintings and frescos, which may give internet users the impression of subversion, some civilian courage and the documentation of resistance. At the same time, it is really nothing other than a qualified case of disaster tourism, the absurd opportunity of accommodation in the privilege of scandal. The meaning of the paintings in the gallery, whatever quality the works may have, is fully defined by the qualified kitsch of the hotel as a whole. The most conspicuous part of the design in the Piano Bar on the ground floor (what else could it be called) is constituted by thin wooden panels on the walls in the shape of coats of arms which used to have hunting trophies. Instead of antlers, today various cameras hang from them with slings underneath as a commercialised monument to the intifada.

- ¶ I regard the Museum of Palestinian Folk Heritage on the list of forgotten museums as far more important and memorable. Its collection has been untouched for years and is the representation of the culture of poverty, which also characterises its own condition. The reason for oblivion is the lack of political use. The museum does not follow any political or strategic ethnology. It 'only' recreates the world which a Hungarian painter, Ilka Gedő once called the world of biblical objects, over which the steel train of history clatteringly passed by. It is not likely that the assemblage of articles of everyday use, clothing, furniture and oil paintings, which literally disappears in the dust among the walls of the modest building, would attract many visitors. Yet there are only a few more obvious and understandable places than this one, a clear evidence for real oppression being not only political but continuous and silent aggression, which determines and afflicts life as a whole. The museum, which is in a marginal location from the aspect of museum geography, is an excellent example of the incomparable magic of forgotten places, the truth of ignored places.
- ¶ On the 'other side' stand the universal pinnacles of the Israeli museum industry the Israel Museum in Jerusalem and the Museum of Art in Tel Aviv.²³ They hold several intercultural exhibitions, and both seek and offer the opportunity for dialogue for the middle class. Their mention is unavoidable, yet their analysis is unnecessary here in this context and is

not especially understandable. However, there is a museum in Jerusalem which is absolutely important to introduce with special respect to the fact that the Museum on the Seam is far from being well-known. The building of the institute wedged in between the boundary of East Jerusalem defined by the Arab population and Mea Searim, the Ultra-Orthodox quarter, was constructed in 1932 and designed by a Palestinian Arab Christian architect, Andoni Baramki, who studied in Athens. The edifice built from Jerusalem stone follows Palestinian and Greek architectural patterns.²⁴

- The use of the building standing on the city's political front line precisely represents the complexity of Israelis and Palestinians living together separately. Until 1948 it was situated in an area of mixed population, then in line with the post-war agreements it came under Israeli military control with respect to the proximity of the Israeli-Jordanian border. After the 1967 war the building preserved with damage was turned into a museum (The Tourjeman Post Museum). It was to be operated as a symbol of the universal city of Christianity, Islam and Judaism with global significance, and this attempt vis-à-vis political memory understandably ended in complete failure. To a large extent, the failed story of the museum at that time may remind readers of the problem of the Palestinian Museum above Ramallah. Both cases show the incompatibility of political identity representation and the spirit of the place. In one case the too dense location and in the other the 'non-lieu' made the museum's mission impossible, or complicated.
- ¶ From the 2000s the museum has adapted to reality. It exchanged the hope of ideal co-existence and its impossible programme with methodical conflict analyses, as indicated by its present name, Museum on the Seam. So the significance of the museum is indisputable as much as its meaning is clear. Accordingly, its role is marginal in the Israeli museum system and it is more or less invisible from the aspect of Palestinian cultural institutes. The Museum on the Seam is a solitary and invisible museum on the border, whose removal and surpassing it is marked out to be. An institute for culture, memory politics and identity creating dialogue cannot perhaps stand in a more symbolic location.
- ¶ I am grateful to the noted specialist Roland Végh, without whom this article could not have been written.
- [1] Cf. Lucy Steeds et al., Making Art Global (Part 2) 'Magiciens de la Terre' 1989, Exhibitions Histories, Afterall Books, London, 2013.
- [2] Thomas DeCosta Kaufmann, Catherine Dossin and Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, Reintroducing Circulations: Historiography and the Project of Global Art History, in: Circulations in the Global History of Art, Thomas DeCosta Kaufmann, Catherine Dossin and Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel (eds.), Ashgate, London, 2015.
- [3] Jean-Louis Déotte, The Museum, a Universal Device, in: Museum International, August 2007.
- [4] Contemporary Art and the Museum: A Global Perspective, Peter Weibel and Andrea Buddensieg (eds.), a ZKM Book, Hatje Cantz, Ostfildern, 2007. Is Art History Global? James Elkins (ed.), Routledge, New York and London, 2007.

- [5] The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary perspectives, Barney Warf and Santa Arias (eds.), Routledge, New York and London. 2008.
- [6] Cf. Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, 2004.
- [7] That is how to mention the Abu Dhabi Louvre, the Abu Dhabi Guggenheim, which exists only as a plan but even so is looming, and Zayad National Museum, also under construction. They will or would all be parts of the Saayidat Cultural District. The plan of Zaha Hadid's Performing Arts Center in Abu Dhabi is to be regarded as part of a global obsession with gigantic things.
- [8] https://www.ummelfahemgallery.com/ or The Identity of the Palestinian Artist: Tradition, Culture, Modernity and Globalization, Farid Abu Shakra (ed.), Umm el-Fahem Art Gallery, 2015. Cf. http://www.hadassahmagazine.org/2010/03/21/rebranding-umm-al-fahm/. In 2011 the director of the gallery, Said Abu Shakra, tried to change the gallery of contemporary art into a museum and there was talk about it being designed by Zaha Hadid of Iraqi roots. https://www.theguardian.com/world/view-from-jerusalem-with-harriet-sherwood/2011/mar/10/new-museum-umm-al-fahm. In 2013 the plan was, to say the least, postponed with regard to a lack of financial resources.
- [9] See the poor cultural institutes and their context in Sakhnin, Galilee, among others, in Witt Raczka, *The* Unholy Land: In Search of Hope Israel/Palestine, Hamilton Books, 2016, p. 47. At the same time there is a dispute between Sakhnin and Umm el-Fahem about the superiority and role of the contemporary Arab art museum. AMOCA (Arab Museum of Contemporary Art, AMOCAH Heritage), which cooperates with the museum of Palestinian Folk Heritage and opened in 2015 in Sakhnin, has undeniably exhibited several contemporary artists who are well-known in the global art world. The museum is one of the experiments of Israeli-Palestinian cultural and political cooperation. I will return to the significance of the medium of contemporary art later.
- [10] Implicitly, this is all true for the Palestinian viewpoint, which is far more difficult to follow and is heterogeneous. From the literature accessed by me, see Edward Said, The Politics of Dispossession: the struggle for Palestinian self-determination, 1964-1994, Vintage Books, New York, 1994; Maha Samman, Trans-Colonial Urban Space in Palestine: Politics and Development, Routledge, London and New York, 2013; Abujidi Nurhan, Urbicide in Palestine: spaces of oppression and resilience, Routledge, London and New York, 2014; Lori Allen, The Rise and Fall of Human Rights: cynicism and politics in occupied Palestine, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2013. However, it is a fact that while the rather critical Israeli texts are penned within a threatened but existing state, the Palestinian texts and viewpoints are closely connected to the all-determining desire of acquiring and regaining territory.
- [11] Israelis and Palestinians in the Shadow of the Wall: Spaces of Separation and Occupation, Stephanie Latte
 Abdallah and Cédric Parizot (eds.), Routledge, New York and London, 2015. Romola Sanyal, Urbanising
 Refuge: Interrogating Spaces of Displacement, in: International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, Vol. 32,
 March 2014, pp. 558-572. Claudia Martinez Mansell, Camp Code. How to navigate a refugee settlement, Places,
 April 2026. https://placesjournal.org/article/camp-code/, accessed 11 May 2017. Palestinian Refugees: Identity
 place and space in the Levant, Are Knudsen and Sari Hanafi (eds.), Routledge, New York and London, 2011.

- [12] Baruch Kimmerling and Joel S. Migdal, *Palestinians: The Making of a People*, with a new preface, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1994, pp. 128-156. In addition, the situation has continued to deteriorate since 1967 from the aspect of the Palestinians.
- [13] In this connection, it must be remarked that Hungarian readers are privileged. In his novel Avraham Bogatir hét napja (Seven Days in the Life of Avraham Bogatir) published in 1968, György G. Kardos, who went to Palestine in 1944 and returned to Hungary in 1951, wrote about the difficult coexistence of Palestinian, Bedouin and Jewish peasants in 1947 with the following words.

 "Drive away the British if you can, who cares!" Avraham is holding back his temper. "And what happens then? Where is the great Jewish empire, the legacy of King David?" And he is also shouting and stuttering from agitation, gasping for air. "Transjordan! The Sinai Peninsula! Here, on this land, here, within the Palestinian mandate, more than one and a half million Arabs live side by side with five hundred thousand Jews. What will happen to them? Will you exterminate them all? Or will we simply keep them as slaves?" (Magvető, Budapest, 1968, p. 165.)
- [14] Edward Said, After the Last Sky: Palestinian Lives, photographs by Jean Mohr, CUP, 1999, p. 4.
- [15] Cf. Benny Morris, 1984 and After: Israel and the Palestinians, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1994.

 Baruch Kimmerling, The Invention and Decline of Israeliness: State, Society, and the Military, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 2001. Gil Eyal, The Disenchantment of the Orient: Expertise in Arab Affairs and the Israeli State, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 2006. Making Israel, Benny Morris (ed.), The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 2007. Postzionism: A Reader, Laurence J. Silberstein (ed.), Rutgers University Press, 2008. Ilan Pappe, The Idea of Israel: A History of Power and Knowledge, Verso, London, New York, 2014.
 - I am not in a position to take a serious stand on the debate between Israeli historians and sociologists and the continuously changing divisions between the different viewpoints. It cannot be forgotten that this debate of which I can read only the English translations and see its pure scientific contexts is not an abstract issue at all, either on the Israeli or the Palestinian side. Hence neither can I or do I wish to judge Benny Morris's 'turn', i.e. return to Zionism after the Second Intifada. Yet mention should be made here of his One State, Two States: Resolving the Israel/Palestine Conflict, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2009. With reference to the Hungarian scholarly reception known by me, which is not defined by political hysteria, see Attila Novák, A cionizmus, mint akarat és képzet (Zionism as a Will and Idea) in: Kommentár, 4/2010, and János Gadó interviews Benny Morris ("Az arabok nem írnak zsidó menekültekről" Arabs Don't Write about Jewish Refugees) in: Szombat, August 2013.
- [16] Of the immense reception in English concerned with Israel, the works of Tony Judt are especially important to me. When the Facts Change: Essays, 1995-2010, edited and introduced by Jennifer Homans, Penguin Books, 2015.
- [17] Michel Foucault, A "kormányozhatóság" (Governmentality), in: A fantasztikus könyvtár, Pallas Stúdió/Attraktor Kft, 1998, p. 123, translated by Gábor Romhányi Török.
- [18] "To Live without a map is to exist without a future, in a space forever uncharted." In: Claudia Martinez Mansell, op. cit.

- [19] Cf. Bruce Altschuler, Biennials and beyond: Exhibitions That Made Art History:1962-2002, Vol. II, Phaidon, London, 2013, and Chin Tao Wu, Biennials without Borders? in: Tate Papers 12, Landmark Exhibition Issue, 2009. The cultural-political geography of biennials is clearly too immense to consider here. However, it can be seen at first glance that unlike museums, the structure of contemporary art institutes is present increasingly strongly, or involves the so-called 'fringe regions' and thus conflict zones such as Israel and Palestine. The legitimacy of contemporary art, the new canon, is closely connected with the criticism of the Western canon and is not primarily a question of the artists' origin but of the geography of the institutes and consequently of the themes. Cf. Charles Green and Anthony Gardner, Biennials, Triennials, and Documenta: The Exhibitions That Created The Contemporary Art, Wiley Blackwell, Chichester, West Sussex, 2016.
- [20] Here I must express my gratitude to the director of the museum, Dr. Mahmoud Hawari, for the informative and important conversation we conducted in the Palestinian Museum, Ramallah, on 26 March 2017. Cf. Mahmoud Hawari, The Citadel of Jerusalem: A Case Study in the Cultural Appropriation of Archaeology in Palestine, in: Present Pasts, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2010, pp. 85-95.
- [21] Cf. Z. Ron, Agricultural Terraces in the Judean Mountains I-II, in: Israel Exploration Journal, Vol. 16, Nos. 1 and 2, 1966, pp. 33-49 and pp. 111-12. Ghazi Falah, The Israelisation of Palestine human geography, in: Progress in Human Geography, Vol. 13, No. 4, December 1989, pp. 535-550. N. Kliot and S. Waterman, The political impact on writing the geography of Palestine/Israel, in: Progress in Human Geography, Vol. 14, No. 2, 1990, pp. 237-260. (Response to Ghazi Falah's article) The Landscape of Palestine: Equivocal Poetry, Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, Roger Heacock and Khaled Nashef (eds.), Birzeit University Publication, 1999. Shelley Egoz, Deconstructing the Hegemony of Nationalist Narratives through Landscape Architecture, in: Landscape Research, Vol. 33, No.1, February 2008, pp. 29-50.
- [22] It is obviously not accidental that I saw no trace of the word Israel and the events of 1948 on the website which refers to it as Nakba, as a matter of fact without the year or history of events, whose memory the museum is to keep otherwise justly. The question is merely how and in what context, whether ignoring the existence of Israel or not.
- [23] Cf., for example, the enormous installation Fracture by the Ghanaian Ibrahim Mahama. Coffee and cacao are transported in jute sacks delivered from India, Bangladesh and Brazil to Africa, which are reused later. Namely the journey and functions of the jute sacks precisely correspond to the geography of global migration. This in itself is nothing other than an allegorical statement. However, the several hundred jute sacks with Ghana on them, which are fixed to the walls and banisters of the four-storey staircase providing a complete view of the space in the new wing of the museum, is not merely a criticism of the western illusion of globalisation, it presents a dramatic sight instead of being an empty spectacle, which is equally important. It is an immensely powerful conceptual installation, which determines the meaning of the museum spaces through four storeys, lifting them from the neutral tradition of the white cube. It does so without aggression, silently and relentlessly. It is a rare, fortunate unison of curator, artist and museum space.
- [24] Efrat Ben-Ze'Ev and Eyal Ben-Ari, Imposing politics: Failed attempts at creating a museum of 'co-existence' in Jerusalem, in: Anthropology Today, Vol. 12, No. 6, December 1996, pp. 7-13.

RESEARCH

OUR HERITAGE?

The Metal Environment of Box-shaped Houses

by József Gagyi, sociographer, Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania p. 229

In the village close to Târgu Mureş where the photographs for this article were taken, 48% of the basic material for gates is exclusively iron. Gates have also been made from wood, stone and bricks, but it is iron, i.e. iron tubing, bent reinforced iron and iron plates that dominate. Iron defines the village image, which is still an assembly showing a uniform use of material, patterns and taste – box and L-shaped houses, renovated long houses, porches with an iron railing, pergolas made of iron pipes with climbing vines, and iron gates in front and iron fences lining both sides of the street. A similar sight can be seen in the suburbs of Târgu Mureş where there are detached houses, or in any of the neighbouring villages. Rapid change and the construction of new buildings began in Romania and in Transylvania in the 1950s, the second decade of socialism. The then increasingly cheap and accessible iron, which was believed to be lasting, became the favoured material. New houses, if possible box-shaped then later similarly shaped buildings of several storeys with patterned iron gates made of reinforced iron reflected the new possibilities of a changing way of life, new demands and taste formation. Time went by, the political changes took place and the inclination to build houses declined and then revived. The dominance of iron as a building material has ceased because it has become only one of many. There has been a change of generations and the one which was at a working age and used iron for its houses during socialism has departed or is departing. What will the new generation do with its inheritance in terms of buildings and structures surrounding them? Will it demolish, transform or leave them in place, or convert them and be proud of them? Many questions can be raised. Why do some people renovate iron gates and why do others demolish and replace them? What happened in both urban and provincial society at the time of the spread of box-shaped houses and a way of life that could be lived in them for the past 50 years? How did the fashion of the iron environment around box-shaped houses boom and decline? Can the phenomena in village society of the past decades be regarded as the formation of a kind of cultural continuity or rather should it be regarded as breaking away from traditions, the transformation and preservation of elements that characterised the provinces of socialist construction culture, including materials and forms already considered traditional? What should be regarded as heritage? Is it worth setting up an iron gate in front of a box-shaped house in the open-air museum? What can exist as a uniform image of villages in today's post-modern era is no longer the result of an endeavour to achieve uniformity, but is shaped by the different ways of life that can be mostly characterised by consumption habits following the appearance of uniform services.

RESEARCH

WHO COULD HAVE BEEN THE "POLISH FIGHTER WITH A BROKEN SWORD IN THE HUNGARIAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE"?

by Beatrix Basics

p. 251

An iconic image of Hungary's 1848-49 War of Independence is a work of graphic art which was written about in the volume published jointly by György Rózsa and György Spiró in 1973: "It is the allegory of crushing defeat – the Polish fighter with a broken sword in the Hungarian War of Independence". In his study published in 1993, literary historian István Csapláros interprets the history of the work somewhat differently. According to him, the work was reissued with another title due to its topicality, as well as for commercial reasons. The watercolour with the title The Polish Officer: Praga 1831 is included in the itinerary of the Wallace Collection in London as a work by Léon Cogniet (1794-1880). An aquatint by Jean-Pierre Marie Jazet (1788-1871) made after Léon Cogniet's drawing entitled Praga 1831 can be found in the Collection of Prints and Photographs of the Bibliotheque nationale. So the watercolour and the print were most probably made in 1831, and their subject matter was a concrete event. What was the event that inspired Cogniet to paint the watercolour? Although the date next to Praga is 1831, the first tragic event of Polish history connected with this location took place in 1794 when the population of Warsaw supported the Kościuszko Uprising and launched a successful attack against the Russian army stationed in the city. They managed to defeat the Russians despite Prussian support, yet the Russian troops commanded by General Alexander Suvorov occupied the part of Warsaw called Praga. On 4 November 1794 they launched a terrible massacre, killing some 20,000 people in the district. The awful event was almost repeated later. In the Battle of Warsaw of September 1831 the Russian troops attacked the western fortifications of the city. That was the most significant and last battle of the Polish-Russian War. The Battle of Warsaw became an iconic theme in Polish culture during the 19th century. Poets and naturally painters presented the event, which evoked compassion all over Europe for the Poles and their fight for independence. How could the printed version of Léon Cogniet's composition, allegorically depicting the Battle of Warsaw and the Polish fight for independence, become an allegory of the defeat of the Hungarian War of Independence in 1849? As a professor at the Academy, Cogniet taught foreign artists including Viktor Madarász, who sent several paintings from Paris to Hungary for the competition of historical painting announced on the 10th anniversary of the defeat of the War of Independence. And if the master influenced his pupil it was possible the other way round. Perhaps it was due to Madarász that Cogniet learnt more about the tragedy of the Hungarian struggle for freedom. There is no date on the aquatint and it is likely that Cogniet reused the theme with respect to the Hungarian events under the influence of the Hungarian painter.

"VILLAGES WERE IN THE THROES OF DISCARDING THINGS. WE, HOWEVER, WERE STARTING TO COLLECT"

Conversation with Miklós Cseri, director of the Hungarian Open-Air Museum by Judit Jankó

p. 263

Miklós Cseri is 60 this year, while the institute, where he has worked for 30 years and headed for 23, is celebrating the 50th anniversary of its foundation. He was born in Miskolc in 1957. In 1984 he graduated in history and ethnography at Lajos Kossuth University in Debrecen. From 1987 to 2014 Cseri worked at the Hungarian Open-Air Museum in Szentendre and was its director from 1994. After a short period as a state secretary, he has again been its director since 2016. He has twice been president of ICOM Hungary, in 2002-2008 and again between 2012 and 2015, and from 1998 to 2002 he was deputy president of the Pulszky Association. He is a member of UNESCO's Hungarian National Committee. He has received many awards and prizes, being the recipient of the Belgian Royal Order of the Knight's Cross and the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Hungarian Republic. He is also an Honorary Citizen of Szentendre. He is the author of two volumes, around 50 articles and studies, and about 60 works disseminating scholarly knowledge in a popular form. He has also been involved with editing around 50 volumes of essays and annuals. The 1967 establishment of the Hungarian Open-Air Museum was relatively late (the world's first opened in Stockholm in 1891). The idea behind such museums was for elements of the 'old' culture to be preserved in the rapidly modernising and urbanising world. For almost a century Hungarian ethnographers and monument protection specialists regarded an open-air museum as a necessity, but this could only be achieved in the period of consolidation in the decades following 1956. The so-called Dance House movement began and village museums were established. People were still alive who had collectible objects and there was a wide circle of people who provided the support and social basis for an open-air museum. The aim was the preservation of village, non-urban culture, but there was one twist - in the socialist, internationalist world it was somewhat nationalist. The situation was both merciful and catastrophic. It was merciful since collecting could happen and catastrophic because at the time fine examples of Hungarian rural architecture were being destroyed. As an effect of economic prosperity thousands of box-shaped dwellings were constructed, while old buildings were demolished. Villages were in the throes of discarding things. Ethnographers, however, were starting to collect. With the appearance of the Hungarian Open-Air Museum in Szentendre two tendencies coincided. According to some, its establishment was an ambitious, but untenable concept - forget the three regions and let's be satisfied with a small, comprehensible museum of 120-150 buildings at most. In contrast, Miklós Cseri believed that a rich and varied museum was needed for a comprehensive picture, which did not exist elsewhere – and it was one worth developing.

MUSEUM KEEPER

"I WASN'T PREPARED FOR THIS, NOR DID ANYONE PREPARE ME"

Conversation with, Friderika Biró ethnographer, one of the founders of the Hungarian Open-Air Museum

by Emőke Gréczi

p. 277

Tone huge research subject has essentially defined Friderika Biró's career from university to today, namely developing the Western Transdanubia regional unit. Alongside her work as a museologist, she has also conducted much scholarly research. We spoke about the secrets of her career, which can be regarded as accomplished. Friderika Biró was born in Budapest in 1943. In 1968 she graduated in ethnography at ELTE University's Humanities Faculty, where she completed her doctorate in 1972. From 1968 she worked at the Hungarian Open-Air Museum in Szentendre (and its predecessor, the Village Museum Department of the Museum of Ethnography). Her most important task involved assembling and arranging the buildings and objects of the Western Transdanubia regional (Őrség, Göcsej and Hetés) unit. Her research field covered vernacular architecture, folk objects and interior decoration. She has had several studies and books published about the vernacular architecture, interior decoration, peasant lifestyle and folk art of Zala and Vas counties. Together with Lajos Für, she wrote and edited Búcsú a parasztságtól (Farewell to the Peasantry), which was published in three parts in 2013-14. In March this year she received the Hungarian Order of Merit, Knight's Cross awarded to civilians. She never viewed ethnography as something exotic and never looked for such. The Museum of Ethnography's Village Museum Department was established in 1967, exactly 50 years ago. It functioned in that form, as a special department of the Museum of Ethnography, until 1972, then the two separated and it moved to Szentendre in 1974. Her first research took her to Szalafő in the Őrség region, which in the 1960s took one day to reach. The anxiety and suspicion of the locals towards outsiders took some time to dispel. It took a while before Friderika Bíró realised what had happened several years before to the local peasantry – as the title indicates: "I wasn't prepared for this, nor did anyone prepare me." When she moved to the Hungarian Open-Air Museum, it was natural for her to be in charge of the Őrség and Göcsej units. Her tasks included identifying the buildings which could be purchased. Zoltán Erdélyi and Lajos Szolnoki, who worked out the concept of the museum, had already singled out buildings which represented the types of dwellings found in Western Transdanubia. However, apart from Szentendre, there were also open-air museums in Zalaegerszeg and Szombathely, so it was often necessary to divide up the selected buildings. Today the community no longer exists. The ties that for centuries bound people together have been broken. It is not only the community which has disappeared, but also an entire lifestyle. People lived in accordance with a rhythm established over centuries, but within a decade, in an unnatural manner, the community was broken up as an effect of an overpowering external force.

MUSEUM KEEPER

"IT'S LIKE PANNING FOR GOLD"

Conversation with photography historian Klára Fogarasi about photos in best rooms by Ágnes Karácsony

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For decades Klára Fogarasi has been studying photographs depicting peasant culture. Her volume In the Village of the Old World appeared 20 years ago, since when it has been impossible to find. For more than two decades she headed the Museum of Ethnography's Photographic Archive Collection, and she still regularly goes to the museum. Múzeum Café spoke with her there about the hidden values and interpretive possibilities of historical photographs. In traditional peasant culture at the beginning of the 20th century, having photographs taken was a serious, festive occasion, when people would don their best clothes. A photographer was sought to record all the main stages of life, such as engagement, marriage and childbirth. The festive clothing, dignified bearing and facial demeanour all helped to concentrate the status, ideals and social and ethical norms in the photograph. In the early years of the last century only better-off peasants could afford to have their photographs taken. It became a mass phenomenon during the First World War, when soldiers departing for the front had their pictures taken with their families. These photos from the turn of the century to the 1920s can be regarded as representing the 'classic era' in the period when the peasantry became more wellto-do. From the order of seating to the types of pose, everything had a meaning in the photos. Apart from the styles in the images, they reflected a stable system of values and the hierarchy within the family. You can see from the bearing and countenance of the father that he was the head of the family. In addition to those taken in a studio, in the years following the turn of the century photographs taken in a village situation were also equally formal. If a photo is very important for someone, it is also essential how it is kept. The personal relation with photographs, the bond and affection for them, also appeared in their use. In villages they were put on the walls of the best room, underneath the tilted mirror. A bridal wreath was placed around images of the bride. Visitors would scrutinise them. In fact, early on the photo was an object actually replacing the person. It is thought that the first ethnographic photograph, a daguerreotype, was taken of Jóska Sobri's family in 1847. The photographic collection of the Museum of Ethnography holds several thousand of these images, which were purchased from photographers' studios across the country in the early 1920s by István Györffy, Károly Viski and Gyula László Snr. with a view to surveying the habits of the peasantry vis-à-vis photography. A huge collection was gathered from these provincial studios and today they provide evidence regarding folk costumes of times past. The work of a photography historian is like panning for gold. A huge quantity of not-so-interesting material has to be sieved through in order to find a real gem.





- Augusztus utolsó hétvégéjén immár több mint egy évtizede a zenéé és a közösségteremtésé a főszerep Pannonhalmán. A bencés főapátság ilyenkor sajátos kulturális egyveleget nyújt a látogatóknak: a spiritualitás élményén túl a művészetek koncert, kiállítás, irodalom is elvarázsolják az ide érkezőket. Idén a Közös ház jelmondathoz igazodva eltérő karakterű, mégis harmonikus egésszé kovácsolható korok és stílusok alkotják az MFB Zrt. által is támogatott Arcus Temporum fesztivál programjának vázát.
- ¶ Augusztus 25. és 27. között a látogatók bepillantást nyerhetnek a bencés közösség életébe, és megismerkedhetnek a szerzetesekkel is, hiszen részt vehetnek kora reggeli vagy éppen esti miséken, elvarázsolódhatnak a labirintusbejáráson az Arborétumban vagy érdekes előadást hallhatnak a barokk ebédlőről, mint a közösségi élet színterének szerepéről. Hívogatóak a kiállítások is: Hajlék és Rejtett kincsek a Pannonhalmi Főapátság gyűjteményeiből címmel kurátori vezetéssel megtekinthetők a Pannonhalmi Apátsági Múzeum és Galéria tárlatai, illetve gasztronómiai élményben is része lehet annak, aki úgy dönt, hogy elfogyaszt egy ebédet a Főapátság Viator éttermében.
- ¶ Sokszínű és hívogató a zenei paletta, az előadások helyszíne a Bazilika, a Boldogasszony-kápolna vagy a Szent Márton-emlékévben kialakított gimnáziumi díszterem. Arnold Schönberg osztrák és Henryk Górecki lengyel zeneszerző műveit Rost Andrea és a Concerto Budapest adja elő. Felcsendülnek Vidovszky László Kossuth-díjas zeneszerző művei, de dzsesszestet is tartanak, Snétberger Ferenc Kossuth-díjas magyar gitárművésszel. Igazi kuriózumnak ígérkezik a Diák-kápolnában a Közös hajlék dalai című program, amely a zsoltáréneklésbe nyújt bevezetést.
- ¶ A 20–21. század jelentős alkotóinak művein keresztül Pannonhalmán az előző évekhez hasonlóan az idén is igyekeznek teret adni a szent és profán, a játékosság és áhítat, a rohanó világ embere és egy vallási közösség találkozásának. (x)

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