
CHAPTER 2

The relations between museology and community development: from the 90's and towards a new century.

In the early 90's, Mario Moutinho launched the concept of social museology, idea which symbolizes much of the updates taken place in the field of museology during the past years. Created as a framework for the newly implemented museology courses at the Universidade Lusófona in Lisbon, the concept of social museology translates, according to Moutinho (1993), considerable part of the efforts in adapting museology to contemporary society conditionalisms⁵⁶. It refers to the opening of museological structures to the milieu and their organic relation with the social context that brings them to life.

The notion of social museology, as well as the appreciation of the context in which it was created, serve as departure to analyse two aspects that characterize the state of affairs between museology and community development today -relationship marked by a slow convergence that has become more solid since the decade of 90, period when proposals concerning contributions to development clearly began to extrapolate the circle of the new museology and integrate the broader field of museology. The first aspect refers to the relations of museums (and the museological field as a whole) with contemporary society and the second to an approximation between the so-called new and traditional museology.

Departing from the premise that museology ought to change in order to adapt to the contemporary world and that this change accompanies the realization of an organic relation which shall be marked by the

⁵⁶ Effort which has been recognized and stimulated by the most important instances of museology according to the author.

enhancement of social impact of museology, Moutinho has provided in different opportunities images of change and resistance within the field. A first issue that appears fundamental to understanding the changes taken place in museology during this period refers to developments related to its communication role. In this regard, Moutinho wrote in 1997:

“Each time it is more evident that museums anywhere in the world have been passing through changes that are manifested in many forms. Beyond the traditional functions of collecting, conserving and displaying objects as enunciated in ICOM’s statutes, museums are coming to intend to be means of communication, opened to the preoccupations of the contemporary world.”

Here, museums’ communication role appears in close relation with the use of “new technologies” of information and exhibition language as an autonomous means of communication (MOUTINHO, 1993)⁵⁷. Other issues presented as support to the courses on social museology also represent some of the topics that arrive to the new century as dominant forces- not only within the context of the new museology school of thought but also in the discourse or practice of the field of museology as a whole. They refer to the broadening of the notion of heritage and the consequent redefinition of “museological object”; the idea of community participation in the definition and management of museological practices; museology as a factor of development; and issues on interdiplarity (MOUTINHO, 1993). These aspects give shape to what Moutinho

⁵⁷ It is clear that the major part of the museological field has gone through a communication “revolution”, which finds ground in the “information era” that characterizes our contemporary time. More than other aspects, this enhancement of museums’ communication potential extrapolates the efforts to endow institutions with a social responsibility and also comes to integrate approaches that lay far from social considerations, mainly setting museums as “spectacles” or, at the most, helping to camouflage an educational function as Moutinho (1993) stresses.

(2000) considers the main areas in which it is possible to realize more clearly the changes in the world of museology. He presents them as:

- the right to be different: there is not a single model of museum anymore, based on the idea of collection, building and public;
- the “relativisation” of collections: beyond the dimension of artefacts, there is a general recognition of the material and immaterial character of collections and of the collections that are not stored inside the museums, instead spread on a territory, which the museum supports with its protection and potential of valorisation;
- management forms: partially because of the museum opening to the community, there was the development of non- hierarchical management models. “In a certain way, there was a management democratization, which became a collective responsibility in many museums, at the same time that this responsibility kept from being obligatorily subordinated to orientations from curators or directors in other cases. The technical staff kept from determining the action of museums; instead it started responding to the surrounding environment demands”;
- critics to exhibition: if in one hand modernizations and the introduction of technologies helped to camouflage old discourses, in the other hand exhibitions have been object to critics which provide a better perception of this media and its potential;
- museum as end *versus* museum as resource: it is possible to realize each time more frequently a new generation of museums (even those that have not changed in the previous points) that organize/define programmes and are put in perspective as a resource for development. In other cases, museums have taken the form of resource itself and because

of this are shaped according to the profile and meaning of this same development.

In the other hand, the author reminds that these areas are not free from resistance. In regard to the change in management models, for example, Moutinho (2000) stresses:

“This process of abandoning power was and still is naturally difficult. Many of the places that museums occupy today are determined by an ambiguity of this situation, which carries on a conflict, in many cases difficult to solve.”

In addition he calls attention to other domains that still remain quite insensitive to societal changes. They are:

- the museological discourse keeps depending on collections: in contradiction to a crescent recognition of museology as communication means and of the exhibition as an independent vehicle that is not confined in the core of museum's services, there is a resistance against broadening forms of communication and considering exhibition as a resource detached from collections, which may become a resource to develop and present ideas inside and outside museums;
- there is no recognition of a new degree of autonomy in the acquisition of information by the visitors: museums do not respond to increasing demands for information and questioning of the quotidian, as well as for the need of people to recognize elements of their memory in the discourse;
- museums maintain their speeches out-of-date in relation to the quotidian: museums have difficulty in renovating themselves once a number of factor come into scene-museums do not work with an idea of permanent renovation, exhibition resources are not sustainable, the time of

museums is many times understood as the past time, museums do not focus on what happens outside their walls.

Again, it is possible to identify movements of change within these domains. As Moutinho (2000) affirms, there has also been an alteration of museological rhythms: temporary exhibitions have occupied positions in the work of museums and exhibitions on topics related to actual problems are a reality and comprise the orientation of different museums, be them regarded as more traditional institutions or as community museums. Moutinho finalizes stressing that, in general museums have dealt with this new reality by pursuing an “intermediate way”, which intends to conciliate old and new approaches. For the author, such conciliation do not solve the need of adaptation to societal demands and “sooner or later museums will have to abandon this obsession for the past, in order to communicate through objects that express ideas and recognize the existence of a public that do not need guides or labels.” Finally, he concludes:

“There are, indeed, things that changed in museums, just like the society that is in permanent change. And, if there are things that change in museums, it is logical to admit that these alterations provoke a gap in updates in one hand and, in the other hand are an invitation to the production of changes (new and in other areas).”

It is in this context of struggles for continuous changes and adaptation - which have strongly claimed the approximation of museology to social responsibilities since the late 60's and is now updated to the demands of our time - that draws the state of affairs between museology and community development. If, in the past, resistance to changes and, in this particular case, to issues concerning developed came to confine proposals in one pole of the dichotomy created between new and traditional museology, today such situation is different. Resistance and change pointed to community

development purposes cohabit in the field of museology as a whole, shaping a rather complex scenario, indeed a scenario in construction.

Such complexity can be translated in the multiplication of speeches that endow museology with a responsibility towards development, mainly aligning traditional museums with the concerns of the new museology⁵⁸. This becomes concrete through assertions clearly addressed to development issues, as well as through those that do not mention the term, but bring proposals and implementations that turn out to be fundamental in the search for a relevant contribution to development. In this regard, it is possible to appreciate the work of museums that aim to promote a greater approximation with the public, stimulate action (e.g. civic action), discussions on contemporary and community issues, among others. That is to say, these museums make use of their collections, services and other resources in order to reach objectives focused on the public and not (only) on research, communication and preservation of collections. These museums, even if not addressing explicitly to this matter, place themselves in a better condition to contribute to actions that aim at community development, once their energy, attitudes and resources are committed to people and social change.

It is also possible to note that discourses which have assimilated the term development do not bring similar approaches: some are more revolutionary (actions proposed by the new museology can be placed here); some comprise only a number of adaptations of museums functions, establishing fundamental differences with the previous ones; others even seem to consider that museums do not need to go through major changes in order to provide a relevant contribution to development (perhaps due to inaccurate interpretations of what development means and requires), setting an elemental contradiction in their discourse.

⁵⁸ A good example of that can be found in ICOM, which, since 1995, defines museums as institutions in service of society and its development.

From this complex scenario a fact emerges certain: if 30 years ago contributions to community development were regarded as choice of radicals, today they are taken rather as necessity. It seems to be a growing feeling that social responsibilities of museology eventually come to direct attention to develop issues, although it may be not accompanied by correspondent actions in many cases. Moreover, inevitable resistances that accompany such atmosphere address more doubts on the limitations of museums and museology than on the legitimacy of their responsibility towards community development, as happened in the past. This fact naturally leads to the appreciation of the second aspect that characterizes the dialectic museology/community development today, regarding a tendency of approximation between “new” and “traditional” museology.

Short after the formalization of the new museology movement in the 80’s, theorists have gone through an effort to define relations between “new” and “traditional” museology, clearly addressing to a convergence and presenting “new” and “traditional” as facets of one museology. In 1990, records from the third regional meeting organized by the Portuguese cluster of MINOM stated:

“(...) we do not understand the new museology as a fundamental rupture in the field of museology, it is instead an adaptation of what is specific in the museum work to the new conditions⁵⁹, to which pre-existing museums were not always (or almost never) able to respond efficiently.”

As seen before, adaptation has also set the tune for the social museology concept, idea that emerges in the context of the work carried out by MINOM and aims to insert new museology and its

⁵⁹ Related to the emergence of a decentralized economic model that privilege local resources and the local and regional spheres as privileged areas of economic development, according to the same document.

manifestation in broader context of museology, as part of a movement of adaptation of museological structures to the contemporary world. It is in this same orientation that many other authors stress that there are not two museologies and that changes occurred in the field during the last decades only translate a natural evolution of the science.

In relation to the contents on community development, certainly one cannot affirm that it was because of such approximation between new and traditional museology that issues on development came to integrate the discourse of the museological field as a whole. However, it is also not possible to ignore the impact promoted by an increasing exchange of ideas, seen in the affiliation of MINOM to ICOM; in the participation of new museologists in ICOM meetings and of different professionals in MINOM's meetings; in the inclusion of new museology in training programmes and publications (VARINE, 1996), among others.

The most explicit aspect that rises from such interaction refers to the spread of ideas which have been mainly developed in the sphere of the new museology school of thought. In 1995, Peter van Mensch wrote:

“Although new museology was often discussed within ICOFOM, it was always considered as one possible approach rather than the main perspective. Each symposium is seen as an open forum, with a free exchange of ideas. Conclusions are never considered as final statements (...) Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the rhetoric of the new museology has spread beyond MINOM and similar organizations, and had become a dominant force within ICOFOM.”

The case of “development ecomuseums” (understood under the perspective of community museums) also offers evidences of such

spread of ideas. According to Peter Davis (1998), “today, development ecomuseum are significantly more numerous than other forms of ecomuseums”. The author also explains that, taking proposals and ways of action into consideration, it is possible to note initiatives that do not use the label “ecomuseum” but carry out a similar work. Some of the professionals related to these experiences align themselves with the new museology movement or consider themselves associated to the new museology school of thought, but many others do not. The same happens with a number of other initiatives that make use of the integral museum concept, of popular education, etc.

By admitting an impact of the new museology contents on the broader field of museology, one may even consider that its practice has had a certain influence in placing community development in the spotlight within the museological field. However, if such idea is true, it is also true that it is only applicable to restricted contexts (i.e. where people have access and are aware of the new museology contents) and can only be proved with the use of concrete references, such as the ecomuseums case. Furthermore, ideas on development have permeated the museological field since the late 60's, being carried out almost exclusively by the new museology until some years ago, when eventually other spheres showed to be opened to development issues.

The reasons for such change of attitude in the 90's are not completely clear. Some authors provide insights that may be helpful to understand the transformations taken place in recent years. Maria Celia Santos (2002) stresses on societal changes, explaining that radical transformations - such as the communications revolution, the increase of productivity and the emergence of new centres of economic and political power - have characterized our contemporary world. At the same time, development has increased poverty, violence, diseases, pollution and conflicts, facing the world with global problems, of which solutions depend on the capacity of

articulation of a broader spectrum of social agents. Recent times witnessed the growing intervention of civil society that, in an organized way, tries to occupy spaces and place social aspects of development in a privileged position.

It is in such context of engagement of civil society in the solution of contemporary problems that some arguments concerning a change of attitude in the field of museology can be placed. They refer to the contribution museums can make in order to enhance social capital, engaging civil society and bringing long-term social benefits to their public. An example can be found in Carol Scott (2002). She argues that, since the mid-80s, policies of macroeconomic reform that have swept Western industrialized countries introduced an increased accountability for the expenditure of public monies. Models of performance measurement were then introduced in museums, primarily regarding quantifiable indicators. According to the author, in the last decade such model has evolved and “accountability has moved from fiscal accountability to encompass accountability to the public”. In this way, there is a growing pressure on museum to demonstrate public accountability, which according to Scott:

“(..) has focused attention on perceived value for money in terms of whether museums actually provide benefits to the public and what kind of changes museums effect in the world beyond their doors.”

Museums are, with this, “increasingly required to demonstrate that they provide long-term benefits to the community” (SCOTT, 2002), which according to the author can be assessed as regarding aspects of personal and collective development.

During a lecture at the Reinwardt Academy in October 2002, Gail Lord was asked about the reasons of such change of attitude in the field of museology. Confronted with the fact that development issues have surrounded museology since the late 60’s but only recently they

come to play an important role in the orientations of the field as a whole (being until the 90's restricted to the new museology school of thought), she admitted the need for research on this subject. Yet, Lord mentioned that the opening of museums to community development could be, to certain extent, related to the kind of money given to museums today (i.e. the nature of the funding employed in many museums). Lord's assertion suggests that museums are regarded differently today, perhaps as institutions capable and responsible for delivering social outcomes to their visitors, once they receive money aimed at programmes of social character and development issues.

In addition, one may also remember the arguments used to define new museology as an adaptation to dominant economic development models (LOPES & MOREIRA, 1986; MOUTINHO, 1989). In the late 80's, new museology was presented as a response to a new model that privileges decentralization and the use of local resources. Today, one can say that such model has gained even more prominence: the approach to sustainable development claims not only local engagement but a generalized civil participation and responsibility, dragging museums, as well as other societal institutions, into a renewed paradigm of development⁶⁰.

As said before, although it is possible to identify the increasing number of proposals regarding contributions to development that grow beyond the new museology school of thought, the panorama turns out to be very heterogeneous. Differences refer to the approaches to development, the degree of engagement identified in discourses, the form proposed contributions take, the ways of action, the level of interference, etc.

⁶⁰ Which stands out as a paradox to the globalized and supra-territorial economic exploration that also characterizes our time.

In this regard, one cannot ignore a “tradition” of the new museology in dealing with development, leading to a more concise discourse than other spheres of the museological field. Another fact that stands out is that, despite of evidences of an exchange of ideas between the so-called new and traditional museology, great part of the professionals do not mention a word about past or current advances of the new museology and, worse, many seem to ignore a knowledge that is fundamental to the understanding and practice of museology as a resource for development. Because of this, the next sections of this chapter will still privilege a differentiation between new museology and traditional museology.

The first section is dedicated to an update of new museology proposals on local community development. This does not denote that these proposals are only used or developed by those associated with the circle of the new museology: they simply appear within the discourse of the new museology in a more concise and substantial way. Once it is one of the objectives of this thesis to identify the forms through which the museological work becomes concrete, the second section will address on the proposals regarding “traditional” museums, in order to highlight differences in forms and ways of action.

Finally, it is also important to realize that advances mainly found in the new museology school of through, as well as other themes- which are precious but not exclusive to it (ex: popular education, “heritage education”) - also constitute a knowledge that is applied in other approaches to development, originated from the museological field, and that escape the predominance of the local development concept (what does not mean that they are not or cannot be integrated to the process of local development). Sometimes, these approaches do not comprise the use or name of museums, being characterized

more as an application of methodologies⁶¹. Such acknowledgement is important to understand that, although new museology pays much attention to territorial development⁶², many advances in field can be applied in other approaches and circumstances.

Territorial museologies of development

In contrary to the belief of many, who insist in confining its climax (via the experience of development ecomuseums, the initiatives on popular museology, the creation of MINOM, etc.) to the decades of 70 and 80⁶³, as said before, the contents of the new museology school of thought have crossed the 90's and arrived to the new

⁶¹For example, actions on popular and “heritage education” that target individuals, children and youth, focusing on citizenship, social inclusion, etc. Two initiatives with this profile can be found in the work of MINOM-Portugal’s member Alfredo Tinoco (MINOM archives) and of the Brazilian museologist Maria Celia Santos (1996, 2000 and 2002)). Another example referring to the application of principles of the new museology can be found in Mayrand (1998). During a seminar of ICTOP in Croatia, Mayrand exhorted museology to play an active role in issues concerning ‘peace & reconciliation’, evoking the knowledge generated by the ecomuseology and social museology. In one hand, he shows belief in the relevance of community museums as conflict mediators, which, through action more than through words, could give priority to respect learning and the comprehension of differences in a context of reconciliation and also of preventive conciliation. That is to say, he evokes a role on political education. In the other hand, Mayrand exhorts other types of museums to compromise with the solving and prevention of conflicts, evoking institutional changes that could find inspiration in the principles of the new museology, such as the recognition of museums’ social engagement, a multi disciplinary approach and communitarian participation in museums’ initiatives.

⁶² Some authors even express scepticism in relation to approaches to development that escape the dominance of territory.

⁶³ Perhaps the reason for such misconceived belief is to be found in the impact provoked by the new museology itself during the 70's and 80' - which marked the imaginary of museology in this period and can never be repeated, only refined and experimented daily- as well as in the appreciation of some examples that became “icons” of a new orientation (such as Le Creusot and Anacostia) and for many reasons did not last or maintained their “revolutionary” approaches beyond the 70's or 80's.

century as a concrete and substantial body of proposals for an active contribution to community development.

Through the considerations presented next, one can appreciate the continued input of activists who have contributed to the work of museology in the previous decades, as well as the input of new actors. It is also possible to recognize a continuity of the new museology philosophy, incremented with a deepening of conceptual elaborations and development of aspects of intervention already worked previously. At the same time, there is a sort of rupture, with updates of challenges to be faced and new orientations. It is important to notice that new museology remains plural and practical. Its forms of action appear more diversified, with the work of museums, as well as through the application of methodologies that do not comprise the use or name of museums.

In the core of the international movement for a new museology (MINOM), there has been an effort to clarify concepts and the notion of development applied to museology (MAYRAND, 2001)⁶⁴ and, with this, to refine the idea of a museology (or museologies) of development. In this way, efforts concentrate in conceptualizations of museology that are defined by its purposes and relations with development; at the same time, apparently, trying to bring a clarification to terms such as ecomuseum, new museology and others that do not define purposes and have been object of confusion during the years.

Thus, it is possible to appreciate the elaboration of the concept of “territorial museologies of development” in 2001, which

⁶⁴ With the support from the academy, as Mayrand (2001) attests: “the courses of *Maîtrise in New Museologies* of the University of Quebec, in Montreal, and of *Social Museology* in the Lusófona University in Lisbon, work as multi-disciplinary conceptual laboratories to capture the theory of development applied to the museological work.”

comprehends manifestations of the new museology, placing them around the common purpose of local development and around common principles of action:

“The territorial museologies, ecomuseums, neighbourhood museums, cultural parks, emerged from the family of community museums, are characterized by a process that implies the active participation of a territorial community in systematic actions, global and of local development, placing the contribution of the social museology as a recognized partner, that cannot be dissociated from the regional valorisation and revitalization. Departing from the identification, of the analysis in diverse sectors of human resources, cultural, of the memory, territorial museologies are those that have as mission to submerge themselves completely in the project of a common future, to support it during its stages, to facilitate the transferences of a traditional society and of a contemporaneous society, in relation to the spiritual and environmental richness, shared, sustainable. These museologies differ from the nature interpretation centres, from the *Musée de Société*⁶⁵, or history museums because of their character of evolution and integration, because of their search for accompanying changes.” (Propose of definition of the territorial museologies of development, MINOM Newsletter, 2001).

The concept of “territorial museologies” confirms the fundamental philosophy of the new museology elaborated during the decades of 70 and 80, evoking the museological intervention in benefit of community development, as an instrument that supports a global

⁶⁵ Definition introduced by the French Government in the early 90’s to classify all museums that dealt with aspects of social history and community life (history museums, anthropology and ethnographical museums, maritime museums, folklife museums and ecomuseums), according to Davis (1999).

view of reality and as a process in constant adaptation that ought to respond to particular contexts. The same document also makes the approach on territorial development explicit and introduces questionings regarding aspects⁶⁶ that result from the proposed museological action. This follows and represents continuity, as well as a deepening of the new museology thinking on issues concerning community development.

Added to its basic philosophy and known guiding principles, it is also possible to identify the rise of an emphasis on the ideas of duration and sustainability (related to the broader concept of sustainable/durable development) inside the discourse of MINOM-International.

In 1996, for occasion of the 7th International Workshop, Minom members initiated the elaboration of a new declaration of the new museology movement. Reinforcing the social and political mission of museology, the project of the Declaration of Pátzcuaro evokes the durability of the relation between a population and its vital heritage (natural heritage), as well as aspects of durability of the museological action.

Among the conditions for the museological action, the document includes, besides the recognition of the social objectives of museology and the need for qualified training, a programming that takes into account the duration of actions with impact in the long-term, of which size must be considered according to the means offered by museology.

⁶⁶ E.g. the interactions between a milieu and its surrounding, the co-existence between the local and the universal factors that condition the human relations, methods of context analysis, evaluation of instruments, formation in museology in order to attend local development processes, etc.

A manifest that accompanies the declaration evokes a “durable development that respects the fragile equilibrium between a population and the natural resources which assure it life and dignity”. Museology is called upon assuming an engaged responsibility towards the populations, defending the natural (vital) heritage against the impairment of economical exploration and suggesting alternative modes of organization in local communities.

In regard to the Portuguese context, MINOM’s regional cluster has been able to carry out a consistent discussion on the social role of museology and its work for development. Through the organization of regular meetings, several publications and the close co-operation with the academic environment, MINOM-Portugal appears as the most articulated nucleus of the new museology, contributing to its development and promoting its opening to the field of museology as whole in the country.

Discussions and outcomes generated from regional meetings organized by MINOM-Portugal (Jornadas sobre a Função Social do Museu, 1991-2001) exemplify some other developments of new museology throughout the 90’s and in the new century. They comprise 3 main aspects, which are:

1) *a continuous update of subjects that bring new (and old) challenges to communities’ lives.* It is possible to appreciate the effort in apprehending and reflecting on current issues, which are eventually taken as objects of local museums’ interference. Among these, a big emphasis relies on the European Integration and the development programmes for Portugal (in special in the rural areas). Discussions follow on the necessity to protect local communities in face to the European integration process; guarantee equity and their right to representation as ‘owners’ of local identities; i.e. guarantee the “recognition and practice of the right to be different”. As to rural development, there is a concern in responding to problems such as population ageing, migration and economic stagnation. Within this

context, sustainable tourism appears as a strategic element of community development (in special as a strong trend for economic revitalization and a way to stimulate cultural exchanges). Discussions also concentrate on the utilization of EU programmes for rural development (LEADER programmes in particular). Other topics refer to the contribution to education, preservation of the natural environment, etc.

2) *discussions on the efficiency of techniques and especially of the museum management.* The meetings show a continuous concern in improving the quality of museum services and management, what points to a greater professionalism of the new museology. Discussions follow on the need to renew exhibition techniques, documentation and to respond better to the different groups that compose a community, as well as to external public.

What emerge as a very important innovation in this domain are the claims for a greater professionalism of the museums management. In a position paper, Fernando João Moreira (1995) explains that prejudice and misconceived ideas that cultural institutions should be not-for-profit have hindered possible contributions of Economics (and with this, management theories) to the museological field⁶⁷. According to the author, if one understands profit beyond a restrict financial sense⁶⁸, he will come to the conclusion that “the idea of a cultural institution where there was a given investment of time, knowledge, hope, money and will, without implying objectives of producing a final added-value, (...) is meaningless, a loss of inputs that could be used in other opportunities”. In this way, museums should acquire management tools that, through providing

⁶⁷ In this case, to the field of the new museology. Moreira aligns such ideas to his personal opinion, although it is possible to extend them to a whole generation.

⁶⁸ For instance, profit as revitalization of community's traditional economical sectors, promotion of the region, a higher cultural level of the community, self-financing, etc.

rationalization and “profitability” of resources, allow them to improve efficiency in obtaining “profits”. For that, claims refer to more accurate organizational planning, the need for strategic planning and strategic forecasts. Marketing is also seen as an important management tool, as a way to strengthen the ties between museum and the population and maximize results.

3) *discussions related to the fundamentals (aims, targets, methods) of the new museology.* At a first glance, some of the meetings’ annual records seem to lack emphasis on crucial fundamentals of the new museology⁶⁹, evoking the idea of a cooling of the basis launched in the 80’s. In the other hand, in many occasions, records also attest the attention given to reminding participants of new museology’s political fundamentals⁷⁰, such as the need to drive communities to action (beyond representing them or their cultural identity), contribute to solving social problems and carry out direct interferences in the political and economical domains. In order to comprehend such discrepancy, one must remember that, in accordance with MINOM’s philosophy, the referred meetings have increasingly counted with the participation of a variety of museum professionals, local agencies, as well as specialists from other disciplines, who were not necessarily involved with the new museology or perhaps even truly aware of its contents. The regional meetings were able to gather a plurality of people and ideas, and their outcomes have to be seen not only as product of few members of the new museology movement. Differently, outcomes have complied with democratic resolutions, which were obviously not free from varied points of view, disagreements and controversy.

⁶⁹ Some conclusions of working groups restrict museum’s interference to the acts of collecting, preserving and communicating, neglecting the political role of local museums.

⁷⁰ This is done mainly by MINOM members.

Taking such aspect into consideration, it is clear that those contents which bring a more traditional view of museums or stay some steps prior to the political fundaments of the new museology (in the way they were established during the 80's) do not necessarily denote a change in the movement's philosophy. Actually, due to the recurrent "reminds" from some of MINOM members - and based on a large number of statements- it is possible to affirm that the essence of the new museology remains the same. The effort in responding to new challenges comes to reinforce the idea that museums should play an active role in community development and continuously adapt to changes. Outcomes reaffirm the principle of community participation (through a high and direct input in all the processes in which the community is engaged), the need for a global view of community's life and for interdisciplinary approaches. Aims, targets and methods for local museums also remain faithful to those proposed in the 80's⁷¹, being sometimes adapted to current community demands.

Examples of such adaptation- what may also be interpreted as a stage of greater maturity of new museology within the Portuguese context-

71 In brief, aims for local museums concentrate in: strengthening identity; raising awareness and forming a critical consciousness; strengthening self-esteem; favouring cultural exchange; improving social bonds and articulate forces; promoting community empowerment (ability to plan, execute and evaluate); helping with solving urgent problems. In order to achieve such aims, participants propose the following targets for local museums: act as a data bank; protect and value heritage; build capacities (form agents, stimulate the development of small industrial and handcraft units, etc.); promote region and organize the space; support teaching; co-operate with other institutions. For that, methods depart from the assessment of the local heritage, are seen as local resources for community development and make extended use of the museological language. They refer to traditional museum functions (investigation, documentation, conservation, communication, etc.) and also to a more direct interference in the political and economical domains; be they from an internal perspective (social animation, support to planning and critical evaluation), be them from an external perspective (interventions in the economic and political domains, etc.) This is a condensation based on records from MINOM-Portugal regional meetings ("Jornadas sobre a Função Social do Museu", from 1991 until 2001).

refer to the consolidation of the idea of an external public. Since the 80's, efforts in strengthening the bonds between local communities and the outside world pushed museums into improving their outreach services ⁷². This became even more necessary with the raise of tourism's role as element of local development strategies. In this way, outside visitors, who are expected to visit local communities mostly because of tourist activities, gain the status of a distinct category of museum users. They are presented as recipients of consistent consumer-oriented services and their input is taken as quantitative (especially in relation to generating income), as well as qualitative contributions to communities' lives (by helping to preserve and value the local heritage, exchanging experiences, etc).

Still in regard to the tourism activity, the reinforcement of its role as part of development strategies confound itself with the first mentions to sustainable development and a greater emphasis on the promotion of community economical development since the second half of the 90's. As seen before, Portuguese museologists have already concentrated their efforts in developing methodologies that comprised actions in the community's economical domain (e.g. aims to ferment employment, stimulate professional improvement, etc.) during the previous decade. Following the outcomes from the referred meetings, it is possible to see that such approach not only remained, but also has being developed into a more substantial conception in time. Aligned to the potentials of tourism and the idea of sustainability, community economic development seems to occupy a fortified position within new museology's objectives. Thus, it is possible to contemplate assertions on museology's role in contributing to the diversification of community's economic

⁷² According to Moutinho (2000), interdependence bonds between the museum and the exterior are expressed by: the connection between community and regional, national and international institutions; the lack of certain resources inside the community; the capacity of opening to all who share the group's (community's) concerns and, as consequence, are willing to participate in the group's (community's) actions.

activities (with a special attention to rural populations), as well as a general tendency to consider elements of the local heritage as resources to be made “profitable”⁷³.

In order to avoid misunderstandings, it still seems necessary to call the attention to the position that targets on economical development occupy in new museology’s strategies for community development. In 2001, conclusions of a working group from the XIII MINOM’s regional meeting stated:

“A final question: which tourism do we want? A tourism as ‘engine of the development process’ or, instead, a tourism as another element of a living and diversified economy centred in the fulfilment of populations’ necessities and in the improvement of their life quality?” (XIII Jornadas sobre a Função Social do Museu, 2001; my underline)

Translating a permanent concern in reminding of the necessity to sustain an integral approach, the statement above offers a very good example of the new museology’s posture in relation to actions on economic development through the case of tourism. As can be interpreted, if economical development is to be shaped according to population’s necessities and the will to improve life quality, tourism

⁷³ During a class attended in the master course of the Universidade Lusófona in December 2002, Fernando João Moreira addressed to three main effects of the use of the heritage as a factor of community economic development: “row effect” (related to the raise of cultural tourisms, which brings a number of risks to the local economy such as the raise of prices, pressure on the population to move to the services sector, mono-specialization on tourism, etc.); “competence effect” (due to the heritage, there is an improvement/creation of competencies/know-how that can be used in other fields as a way of economic development such as the creation of small businesses, production re-qualification, etc.); and “innovation effect” (distinctiveness and specialization, which comprise introduction of components of the local cultural identity, provide added value to products in the market).

is only meaningful when also responding to these demands⁷⁴. Tourism is conceived as a means and ought to integrate a broader methodology, extending its contributions beyond an immediate contribution to community's income. In this way, tourism does not only assist development by generating economic activity, but also by increasing the value and protecting the heritage, allowing the community to exercise its power of self-management (once, according to the principle of participation, it is the community to plan and organize tourism), among others. It is possible to understand that these gains, when placed within the integral context of the communities, favour the development of other community's competencies and contribute to other development objectives, which may not be necessarily directly related to tourism⁷⁵. That is why tourism itself is not taken as an "engine of development", but as an alternative integrated to a broader strategy of development.

In this way, according to the new museology's philosophy, the role of museums should not be confined to promoting tourism, or, in extension, to fermenting economic activities within the community. Understood as instruments, museums are, in principle, supposed to keep an eye on the global situation and respond to all possible community demands, be they related to the economical domain, social, educational, etc. In the cases where objectives on economic development appear as an important demand for community development, actions on economic (re)generation should exist as part of a whole and integrated to other actions, in order to maximize improvements and respond to the principle of integral development.

⁷⁴ One may understand that if the tourist activity does not comprise contributions to broader community's demands, it may not be an intelligent option for development, once it cannot produce final added-values for the community, as explained by Moreira (1995).

⁷⁵ E.g. the heritage, which tourism helps to value and protect, serves future tourist activity, as well as other objectives, such as professional revitalization, consciousness-raising, etc.

The reason why it seems important to reaffirm such aspect relies on the fact that the 90's witnessed the development of many initiatives in the broader field of museology that, with a view to community development, proposed to contribute to local economical development and/or organize the tourism activity. In a number of cases, these museums play indeed an effective role in stimulating community development. Nevertheless, many of them differ from the conception of "territorial museologies" in the sense that their proposals are mainly restricted to specific and pre-established tasks within community's life; while museums that correspond to the concept of "territorial museologies" have, by principle, a responsibility towards the global development of communities, in which economic development may be a key element, depending on the situation. Such acknowledgment - far from intending to produce judgements or state preferences - becomes relevant once it evidences that museums take two different and fundamental roles in community development, as will be seen in the next chapter⁷⁶.

Finally, records also provide evidences of constant- and, why not to say, increasing- interactions between new museology and the broader museology community in Portugal. In the first place, "reminds" of new museology's political fundamentals during the meetings state the effort in disseminating ideas. Added to this, as mentioned before, the fact that outcomes sometimes lack approaches which are dear to the new museology movement leads to the conclusion that they have complied with varied feedbacks from a number of professionals, who were not necessarily related to the new museology. This suggests an opening of the new museology movement and a constant exchange of ideas. The contents of such outcomes themselves also reaffirm this interaction, once even those assertions that bring a more traditional view of museums and museology evoke basic fundamentals of the new museology, such as the will to contribute to community development, the principle of community participation and the use of

⁷⁶ See museums as instruments and actors of community development on page 147.

the local heritage as resources for development⁷⁷. In this way, it is possible to understand that much of the new museology was absorbed in the daily practice and thinking of the Portuguese museology, in special by the local museums.

Added to this, Varine (2002) stresses that Portugal has gone through a considerable change in its development policy, privileging an integral and decentralized process (i.e. local development) and recognizing the role of museums as cultural instruments of such development.

João Fernando Moreira comes to reinforce some aspects of change presented above⁷⁸. He explains that while in the past museums had as main concern issues on population's autonomy (i.e. give power to people, especially in the countryside), caring out a social intervention of political character essentially, today they respond to a new situation and must face renewed problems. Because of this, other aspects integrate the work of museums and drive their intervention not only to the internal sphere of the community, but also to the exterior. According to Moreira, in the internal sphere, museums must respond to problems such as social inclusion, integration of immigrants, social cohesion, conservation of know-how, mobilization, etc. In the external sphere, they play a role in the valorisation of resources, tourism, handicraft, etc. Finally, he adds to the growing response to the external sphere a more realistic planning, a bigger professionalism and the recognition of museums as new actors of development as important characteristics of the changes occurred in the new museology in Portugal.

Such (quantitative and qualitative) increase of the role of actions aiming the exterior, found in the organization of tourism or in

⁷⁷ Obviously these fundaments take different dimensions depending on specific situations and contexts to which the discourses are related.

⁷⁸ During an interview in December 2002.

economic stimulus for example, is not exclusive to the Portuguese context. Actually, this can be regarded as a strong trend that integrates approaches to local development, seen in many examples that share the labels of the new museology, ecomuseology (not always identified with the new museology circle) and community museology.

Another example can be found in Mayrand (2001). Providing an update of the state of museology in Quebec, he addresses on a conciliation approach among the economic, social and cultural domains:

“(...) we can evidence a double polarization of the use of the concept of development in the current museology in Quebec, which is seen, in one hand, in the search for partnerships that allow maximizing the offers to the publics and, above all, that can be measured in terms of economic repercussion and number of visitants, and which is seen, in the other hand, in the effort to accomplish objectives common to a region in benefit of a population and of the equilibrated order of its territory.”

It seems to be a close connection between the rise of the sustainable/durable development idea and the increase of interferences aiming the exterior (in special in regard to the economical domain) in the discourse of the new museology school of thought. At the same time that references grow on the durability of natural resources, it is possible to apprehend continuous allusions to the devastating economic exploitation that subject local communities to the logic of the neo-liberalism. Taking these two aspects into consideration, one can understand that conservation of the natural environment appears in narrow connection with creation of a local economical ordering, in order to guarantee a new exploitation based not only on the profitability but also on the durability of natural resources. The same way, this idea is extended to the societal domain

as a whole: in order to sustain a development process based on the use and durability of the global resources of a community (natural, knowledge, memory, etc.) it is necessary to provide an economic ordering that allows it to happen. That is what MINOM's manifest from 1996 suggests and also what can be placed within the trajectory of the Portuguese museology. In this way, direct interventions in the economical domain appear as a fundamental factor of sustainable/durable development, once they, in one hand, introduce alternatives to the devastating economic exploitation imposed from the outside and, in the other hand, introduce solutions that require an extensive use of local resources⁷⁹, as well as a need for their conservation as a requirement for the continuity of the development process.

Actually, such approach on sustainability/durability, besides being identified with the scope of new museology since the second half of the 90's, can also be seen extensively in the museological field as a whole; and its connection to the interference in the economical domain is found in a number discourses today, be them related more to conservation aspects (in special of the natural environment), be them related more to social aspects.

Durable development also came to integrate Mayrand's theories on ecomuseology by the end of the 90's. Making use of the stages theory (represented before as the "three-year" cycle of development), Mayrand (2000) evokes a logic in which, once it is understood that the societal objective precedes the museum's institutional mission in a context of community development, the museal function eventually escapes the museum, relying on a more global context of durable development. With this, one may understand that the ecomuseum's

⁷⁹ The use can also be understood as a factor of conservation, especially when talking about the conservation of intangible resources such as collective memory and know-how.

action⁸⁰ gives space to a methodology/attitude that finds its references in the principles of the ecomuseology and in the global conservation philosophy (sustainable/durable development).

Such transformation - feasible through the use of the heritage - is possible because the organization created by the ecomuseum becomes autonomous and gains distance from the museological institution. During this change, the ecomuseum still accompanies the development process (until it eventually arrives to the moment of disassociation). In this case, the museum continues to ensure a certain logistic support, remaining identified as a tool of reference to a “memory of development”, as a place of vigilance, as a cultural observatory on the world (MAYRAND, 2000).

The author explains that it was such transformation that took place in Haute-Beauce. Having entered the “para-museology” stage around 1989, the ecomuseum now enters the “post-museology” stage in a non-institutional way. According to Mayrand (2000), a new regrouping rises in Haute-Beauce around a concept of an “environmental triangle” (a reference to “creativity triangle”), associating people formed (trained) during the ecomuseum’s work. Structured on a co-operative, commercial, cultural, environmental and educational network, it appeals to existing associations, which own their development to the work of the ecomuseum. They are transformed in order to participate in the new development objectives, relying on the “solidarity fund” that characterizes the ecomuseum, as well as on new “stakes” and the debates that accompany them (civil society against multinationals, etc.).

Mayrand’s approach comes to clarify in which way the idea of ecomuseology extrapolates the ecomuseum in its contribution to community development – what can also be useful to clarify in which way museology extrapolates the museum within the context of

⁸⁰ Particularly of ecomuseums related to the concept of territorial museologies.

the work for development. What can be understood is that ecomuseology is much more than the action of the institution/process ecomuseum (this one representing a moment in the process of durable development). Ecomuseology contributes with an attitude, principles and methodologies; for Mayrand (2000) it can even be intended as philosophy for its ways of looking at the world and act on it, within the tradition of social animation.

The work developed by Hugues de Varine during this period has also brought important reflections to the dialectics museology/community development. Having moved from the field of museology to the field of development⁸¹, Varine provides museology with an interesting switch of perspective. Perspective which, instead of originating from the museological domain, departs from general conceptions on the local development process and places the museum – namely the community museum - within that context. Such association of museums with broader development concepts allows a progressive understanding of the actual and possible relations between the two fields of knowledge, as well as a clearer view of the socio-cultural role of museums. Finally, this type of association is to be seen as a “rare” contribution to the field of museology (and to field of development), once it has been carried out only in few opportunities by museology professionals, and, surely, even less by development professionals.

One may appreciate that, today, Varine’s ideas depart from a different perspective. However, in regard to the concept of museums as tools for development, he sustains old ideas developed from his own experience in Le Creusot and elsewhere – as well as from the observation of a number of other initiatives (which are related to the new museology school of thought), as he likes to stress. In this way, Varine’s assertions are grounded on the strong idea of collectivity

⁸¹ Today, Varine works as an international consultant for local and community development.

and community museums are taken as processes in constant adaptation and recreation; as community's option and community's instrument, of which life as a development tool depends on its utility for the community itself; as instruments of community empowerment; as educational agent in the service of change, etc.

As to its contents, Varine's assertions drive the actions of community museums towards what he considers to be the two fundamental resources of local development: people and heritage.

The population, the joint of inhabitants (who compose the community, but also must be seen as individuals and groups holders of "living cultures" that interact with one another) constitute the so-called human resources. They are the sources of work force, creativity and initiative, as well as of other competencies. It is necessary, thus, to approach and get to know them, to mobilize and call to action, to enrich, form and reinforce; always taking into consideration the sum of experiences, qualities and handicaps that they represent (VARINE, 2000).

People in a community own, collectively, a multiform heritage, which comprises natural and cultural elements (material and immaterial) on the territory, products of time or recently produced: sites, monuments, landscapes, raw materials, objects, living beings, beliefs, memories, knowledge and know-how, traditions, etc. Heritage is a resource to be used (and consequently transformed), enriched and transmitted; to be known, conserved⁸² and managed (VARINE, 2000).

Within the context of local development, the community museum finds its aims concentrated on these two domains and, specially, on their zones of interaction:

⁸² As can be understood by now, conservation in this case does not denote traditional museum conservation.

“The community museum is much more a process that integrates the essential resources of local development, i.e., the human resources and the heritage, natural and cultural (...). The community museum has the possibility and the mission to make a dynamic synthesis between the human resources and the global heritage that exists in the territory.” (VARINE, 2001, my underline).

By “dynamic synthesis” one may understand that while the museum, in one hand, is an instrument through which people can become acquainted, comprehend and value their heritage; in the other hand, once being an tool of participation and by making use of this same heritage, the museum has the chance to generate a number of qualities in the community which are fundamental for its empowerment, such as self-confidence, imagination and creativity.

It is important to say that in any moment Varine states that only museums are able to ferment dynamism in the heritage domain or such integration between human resources and the heritage of a community; or, by extension, that community museums play a role (or roles) throughout local development processes which cannot be replaced by the work of other types of initiatives. Differently, he stresses that community museums are privileged and very important instruments indeed⁸³, implying that they are products of a choice, instead of representing an exclusive or inevitable alternative for actions on community development (even for those actions focused on the idea of local heritage as resource, popular education, as well as other convictions on this subject sustained by the new museology school of thought). Yet, according to the author (2000), it must be clear that museums cannot be taken as lasting endeavours: a museum may be useful and necessary in a given moment of a

⁸³ On the condition that they are conceived as a global territory, or under the concept of territorial museologies.

development process, but its utility as an instrument of development comes to an end by the time development does not need the museum anymore.

As to the actual work of community museums, Varine's article "La place du musée communautaire dans les stratégies de développement" (2000) states that, once being conceived as a continuous process, the community museum has a place in all stages of development. That is to say, the museum has a place not only in the elaboration of a strategy⁸⁴ but also in its execution. In relation to planning strategy, the museum has a role to play in the different components of such process. Thus, the museum is able to contribute to:

- *the diagnosis of the situation*, by participating in co-operative research; by gathering (together with other actors), classifying and making explicit all the necessary data; by establishing relations and interactions among data; by presenting them to those responsible for the synthesis of the diagnosis; by presenting to the population the different choices of the diagnosis. The museum also contributes to the evolution of the diagnosis through its own action along the development process;
- *defining objectives*, by presenting them, stimulating discussions or even validating objectives, according to the principle of "simultaneous subjectivities"⁸⁵;

⁸⁴ Varine defines strategy as essentially a plan of action (leading to the development of a territory) that comprehends: diagnosis of the situation, a table of political and operational objectives, inventory of the available resources and means, a choice of actors to be mobilized and of methods to be used, a calendar (2000).

⁸⁵ "(...) each individual member of the community, each group, has its own appreciation of the problems (...) and of the solution that can be found. There is no objectivity in matter of strategies for development, but only a research of consensus and a kind of negotiation among the different approaches and the different subjective judgements that coexist in the core of the community". (VARINE, 2000)

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- *the inventory of resources*, by replacing each data into a complex context and giving it signification, in a way that is will be considered for its “potential” in terms of contribution to development;
 - *the inventory of means*, by making available its means of expression, education, formation, as well as its space (for storage, documentation, exhibitions, gatherings). The museum can also be used as a complement of means (e.g. by co-operating with economic actors with places and programmes to value their products and projects, if interesting for the development of a community);
 - *the choice of actors*, by being a meeting point, a place for debate, initiative taking and project assembly. The museum is also a privileged space for forming/educating actors, and is and actor itself;
 - *the choice of methods*, by presenting and interpreting the methodological choices (through the use of medias and modes of participant animation), so that they can be understood by the totality of actors.

Varine also reinforces that a development strategy must hold account and balance three essential dimensions: social, economic and cultural (which should prevail over the social and economic dimensions). In this case, the museum has an important role of valorising the cultural dimension, understood as “living culture” (i.e. the daily culture of a population) as the original and authentic culture of a community.

The actions proposed for the community museum in the course of strategy planning reveals that it assumes two fundamental roles during such stage of development. Firstly, the museum performs a very important communication role, based on its own language and media. The museum also plays an educational role, which appears as backbone of all actions for development and occupies a central position in Varine’s ideas.

Before proceeding with a brief examination of Varine's conceptions on education for development and the educational role of museums, it is necessary to appreciate the utility of community museums as communication and pedagogical agents in regard to the different stages of the development process. Already seen in the moment of strategy planning, these roles are extended to the whole execution of the development programme. Although the author does not mention it explicitly in the examined publications, one can understand that, in fact, they are also present at earlier stages of development, which precede the elaboration of strategies.

The matter for such notion can be found in the book "O tempo social", published in 1987, in which Varine presents a reflection on the dynamics of development, its components, stages, principles, definitions, etc. Although there are few mentions to the work of museums in particular, this work is extremely relevant, once it offers a view of a dynamic - or "logic" - of development based on principles and convictions that are dear to the field of museology.

In short, Varine presents development as a complexity of cycles that can be described as:

"(...) starting from an initial situation, and by a slow evolution in the core of the concerned society, we arrive to an initiative or to a more or less coordinated joint of initiatives. From there departs an action that evolves through conflicts, failures and changes along the way. Completed, this action ends in a transformation- minimal or important- of the initial situation: the society is not exactly the same; it has changed subtly, gained or changed parts of its matter. It is, then, ready to start a new cycle."

Communitarian initiative is conceived as condition and fundament of change and, consequently, of development⁸⁶. Initiative should be understood as a “revolutionary step”, which comprises a series of aspects: the communitarian decision to change and act, the mobilization of the whole community, the refusal to follow imported solutions and decision to take in its own hands the responsibility of setting objectives and elaborating programmes of action. It also depends on many factors, such as the quality of relations of trust among people, the degree of consciousness and opening to the exterior, among others. Taking these aspects into consideration, it is easy to understand why the initiative is presented as the accomplishment of an evolution within the development process (cycle), as well as the start for the actual action for development⁸⁷.

Thus, initiative becomes concrete through the action. For Varine, rather than words, action is the privileged language of culture and a means to reach community development. It is through the action that the community becomes strong and affirms itself as a political force and social entity. Most important is to realize that action carries a fundamental pedagogical essence. According to the author, the action for development must aim to, besides fulfilling its own objective (which corresponds to solving a given problem in the reality), enrich the communitarian capital (enhance the experience) and constitute a

⁸⁶ Once it is an answer based on the identification and analysis of a problem in its complexity, followed by a research of means, by the setting of an objective and, finally, by the choice for a project. “If this process is spontaneous or unconscious, or if it is not the result of a combined proposal, it does not matter. What matters is that it emanates from the concerned community and makes use of elements taken from a collective experience.” (VARINE, 1987)

⁸⁷ One can understand the “actual action for development” as the action that, belonging to a complex process, emanates from the initiative. It differs from pretext-actions (found in the stages that precede the initiative) once it follows a programme and will be judged from its results in relation to objectives set in advance. (VARINE, 1987)

stage of a collective evolution, stimulating new initiatives. These two last factors endow action with this pedagogical essence.

At this point, it is necessary to introduce shortly the concept of pedagogy behind Varine's ideas. Based on the work of Paulo Freire, Varine explains that the pedagogy of liberation involves all the actors of development indistinctly. It is the source of a consciousness-raising that aims to turn men - or social groups- from objects into actors of their lives and of their future. That is to say, by participating in the communitarian action (which is the result of a synergic effort of the members of a community) people become conscious of their autonomous capacity to think and to be, as individuals, as integrants of a community, as actors of their own lives and as actors of their own development.

As seen before, initiative and action mark the 3 stages of the development's cycles, which are:

- first stage: precedes the initiative;
- second stage: starts with the initiative and comprehends the action;
- third stage: follows the completion of the action⁸⁸.

The cycle, and consequently these stages, can be regarded in two dimensions. One is the dimension related to the punctual action, which correspond to a limited initiative, aiming to solve a particular problem within the general context of community development. The other dimension is related to the global action, which corresponds to a programme of community development that includes a certain number of complementary actions integrated in a joint plan. Despite

⁸⁸ This stage will not be described. In this regard, Varine talks about the destiny of the action and the importance of a continuous updating and adaptation in order to guarantee continuity of the cycle.

of being different, they co-exist in the scope of the development process and follow more or less the same logic.

One may understand by Varine's words that, although the description of the three stages concern both dimensions, in the case of the global action, the stage that precedes the first community initiative seems to assume a more dramatic statement. In other words, it is the beginning of everything, and, once being the beginning, it lacks a number of feedbacks and inputs (e.g. previous experience, a bigger familiarity with the development process, a certain degree of confidence, etc.) that would be present in later moments when the community resumes the cycle. That is way Varine affirms that the starting strategy of the global action is organized around the implementation of a self-management apparatus.

According to Varine, the first stage comprehends the pre-existence of favourable conditions (i.e. a "crisis", existence of organized leaders, a "flash incident"). It inaugurates a phase of "listening", which must be authentic (i.e. aim to reach the "truth" of the diverse interests and points of view of a community) and comprehensive (i.e. establish a clear communication between those who listen and those who are listened). In principle, the "listening" is opened to everything: opinions, problems, worries, etc, in order to generate the so-called "explicit demands". After initiating a phase of "listening", the stage proceeds with the organization of the "pretext-action"⁸⁹, a kind of micro-project that must concentrate its efforts in gathering a largest number possible of participants. The "pretext-action" holds two main aims: to refine the expression of an "explicit demand" (be it because actors can perceive better the reality and complexity of

⁸⁹ The difference between the "pretext-action" and the "actual action for development" also can be explained by the fact that the first does not aim to reach immediate results in terms of development; its aim is not conditioned to reaching objectives previously determined, i.e. to solving actual problems. As any action, it must be well organized, be evaluated and hold accountability.

problems through action, be it because there is a chance to correct conclusions taken from the “listening”) and to test the community’s capacity to act, the vitality of the population, the co-operation faculties, the existence of willingness and competencies.

Varine says that “pretext-action” is also an essential instrument of confidence raising (self-confidence and confidence in others) - the basic requirement of participation and, in a longer term, of autonomy and liberation. In a collective level, confidence is also a requirement of co-operation. Confidence is reached by valorising potentialities of individuals and groups, by using them as contributions to a collective endeavour (in this case, the “pretext-action”) and generating experience. To acquire confidence is to undermine inferiority complexes, to realize one’s equality before the action. Once acquired, such accomplishment must be permanently maintained and justified through a responsible and competent participation in the action, in special in decision-making moments. In order to enable such type of participation, it is necessary that members-actors of the community acquire complementary knowledge and skills, what will depend on: the access to information, learning of instruments of expression and action, the exchange and co-operation with other communities and external references.

In this way, this first stage inaugurates a process of collective learning and consciousness-raising, as well as a demand for formation and communitarian animation⁹⁰ (mediation that is a determinant factor for acquiring confidence and, because of his, for participation).

⁹⁰ Varine (1987) defines animation as a global answer for an endogenous demand. That is to say, animation accompanies the process of development and evokes the active and creative participation of users. It intends to be an energy catalyst, leading to a progressive consciousness-raising of the population, or of part of it. Animation is a condition for mobilization.

Finally, when the community reaches a certain degree of self-confidence to make it able to take an autonomous decision, it is mature to take initiative (VARINE, 1987).

The second stage comprehends, besides the initiative itself, the elaboration of a development programme and the actual action. According to Varine, the transition from the initiative to the elaboration of the development programme is concentrated in setting aims in the first place. In relation to community development, aims necessarily correspond to the community's view of its own interests and must be the result of a collective debate about priorities, which accompanies the moment of initiative taking. The same way, the elaboration of a programme (and the strategy) must depart from the population and follow the debate, as well as the negotiation among diverse interests. The action is to be seen as an integrant part of an articulated whole: it departs from an initiative and responds to previously determined objectives. Varine explains that action always count with a certain number of actors: members of the community (who are actors, uses, objects and subjects), community leaders (who by principle maintain a synergy with the community and are seen as "natural animators"), permanent animators (who become essential after a development programme is adopted and correspond to one end of the "double input" system), public institutions, local organizations (which bring, in their own view, inputs such as knowledge of problems, motivated actors, means, etc.) and external co-operators.

It seems clear that the processes initiated in second stage do not annul those from the first one. Actually, one could interpret that they are in a way fused. Together with the initiative taking, with the elaboration of a programme and with the actions for development, remain the processes of context analysis, "listening", inspiring actions, promotion of self-confidence, etc. The same way, the necessary factors ("tools") for that remain: education, animation, formation, communication. These are factors that promote a

progressive upgrading of qualities in the framework of the community. Besides enhancing confidence, the access to information or critical thinking they allow that, in time, the object of the animation also becomes the actor of animation; the object of actions on formation (in special the one related to forming actors for the communitarian work) becomes a formation agent, etc.

In this way, such demand for education, animation, formation and communication, which crosses the whole track of the community development process, leads to the conclusion that, since the first stages of development (which precede the initiative and the strategy planning), a museum is able to co-operate and play a role as an educational and communication agent, as said before⁹¹. In addition, if one considers the museum's work from the perspective of the action, it is possible to affirm that community museum are also conceived as a project for global action in the development process, assuming, with this, functions that extrapolate (or that introduces new dimensions to) its education and communication roles⁹².

Varine introduces two concepts that guide the work of community museums as educational (and communication) instruments. The first of them refers to the concept of popular education and the other to "heritage education"⁹³ (20003a and 2003c, respectively).

Popular education is a term that translates the principles of the pedagogy of liberation. It has found a fertile field for intervention since the late 70's, especially in countries from Latin America, but

⁹¹ As seen in many cases, people directly involved with the museum can also act as mediators for communitarian animation.

⁹² E.g. articulate actors, play a "spokesperson" role, stimulate economic activities, among others. Actually, Varine (1987) mentions the cases of Le Creusot and Haute-Beauce as projects concerned with the global action. The same way, it is possible to add proposals of the new museology to this list.

⁹³ From the Portuguese "Educação Patrimonial".

also gaining representatively worldwide⁹⁴. Popular education, as a vital factor of community development, is to be extended to the community as a whole. It could be seen as a factor of community empowerment, once it intends to endow the population with the necessary tools for conception, expression, planning and execution of projects, as well as for the internal and external co-operation. As seen before, this is reached through a process of consciousness-raising, which also includes the notions of capacity building and convey of skills.

According to Varine (2003a), it is the heritage that provides means to accomplish the four main aims of the popular education. These aims, in case a community museum is found as an instrument of popular education, also become the museum's aims. They refer to allowing an individual to:

- form a consciousness of his identity, of his territory and of the community to which he belongs;
- acquire self-confidence and confidence in others, conditions for participation and co-operation;
- rise the capacity of initiative and creativity, so he can pass from consumer and assisted to entrepreneur and promoter;
- master the expression and the tools for negotiation, allowing an effective intervention in the public domain.

As to the methods of popular education, they assume different facets in each particular situation. Nevertheless, it is possible to say that in general:

- they depart from the assessment and use of the heritage;

⁹⁴ Such concept has also been applied in the Ecomuseum of Haute-Beauce, as seen before.

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- they are based on the direct participation of the population in actions (i.e. they intend to allow processes to take place, rather than producing results);
 - they are based on the concept of knowledge sharing (the one who “educates” has the same value and input of the one who is “educated”);
 - they comprise formation (training) and animation.

The dynamics between heritage and education also provides material for the concept of “heritage education”. According to Varine (2003c), “heritage education” is a action of global character, integrated in the community development process, that aims to include the largest number possible of members of a community, so that they can know, master and use the common heritage of this community.

“Heritage education” can be regarded under the perspective of the pedagogy of liberation, once it participates in the efforts to promote consciousness-raising, capacity of initiative, to reinforce identity and social cohesion, through the sharing of a common heritage. It is also inspired by the method of knowledge sharing (mainly through a “double input” system) and must supply a comprehensive communication mechanism that aims to relate messages to the “living” culture of the population.

Varine stresses that “heritage education” must necessarily count with a human mediation, in order to create a link between heritage and people, to decode the message, listen to reactions, repair and valorise the inputs of each information term or suggestion, and finally to foresee a sequence to the action.

Once it is conceived as a global action, ‘heritage education’ involves a number of educational agents (parents, aged citizens, community workers, school teachers, etc.) and instruments to carry out such mediation. Among the instruments of mediation, it is possible to find

the museum, which, according to the author, is not the only, but it is certainly its most important instrument (on the condition that it has in the ‘heritage education’ a primal aim).

It is the practice that determines targets and methods for museum as instruments of “heritage education”. Nevertheless, Varine explains that, in general, methods concentrate on the accompanied observation (ex: excursion in the territory), mediation and exhibitions. He also presents a typology of actions, of which most examples are related to the work of community museums such as the ecomuseums of Le Creusot, Haute-Beauce and Santa Cruz (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil). This typology includes: participant research, exhibitions, interpretation centres, creation of small local museums, publication of documents, contests, workshops, and TV and radio transmissions.

Finally, Varine stresses that ‘heritage education’ has become a specialty developed mainly by Brazilian initiatives, which may comprise or not the interference of community museums. An example of such initiatives can be found in the Ecomuseum of Santa Cruz, experience that has provided many contributions to the reflection on museology’s utility for development⁹⁵.

The ecomuseum finds its origins in 1983, with the creation of a centre of historical research (so-called NOPH) on Santa Cruz - district in the West Zone of Rio de Janeiro. Product of a community initiative, NOPH was originally conceived to research, preserve and communicate the district’s history as well as its constructed heritage. According to Davis (1999), in time, the role of NOPH changed to include the conservation and promotion of other tangible and intangible evidences of the cultural heritage. This movement also

⁹⁵ Another very interesting initiative, which was not described in this thesis, refers to the Didactic-communitarian Museum (Museu didático comunitário) in Itapuã (Bahia, Brazil). More information can be found in SANTOS (1996, 2000 and 2002).

accompanied the notion of common-wealth (PRIOSTI, 1997), gradually endowing the initiative with a role in the mobilization of the population and local organizations around the efforts to solve common problems.

As can be read in the ecomuseum's website, by 1992, for occasion of the First International Meeting on Ecomuseums taken place in Rio de Janeiro, it was noticed that the movement originated in the community of Santa Cruz had much in common with the experiences reported in the meeting. As consequence, in the same year, the district witnessed the creation of the Ecomuseum of Santa Cruz⁹⁶, which became part of the City's cultural structure in 1995.

For Priosti (1997, 2000), the whole process that led to the creation of NOPH and culminated in the ecomuseum means nothing but a cultural response to the precarious situation in which the region was found after decades of abandon, yet aggravated due to authoritarian urban interventions carried out by the Government. Priosti explains that since the 60's the West Zone of Rio became home to several communities originated from the disarticulation of slums in richer parts of the city. Using as an excuse the opportunities offered by the newly implemented Industrial Pole in the region, many residential districts were built to host the new inhabitants. According to Priosti, such intervention generated drastic consequences: thousands of people were relocated to an area of difficult access, the infrastructure did not cope with the population growth and the local industry was not able to absorb the new work-force. The impoverishment of the new communities- and of the region as whole- accompanied the raising of social problems and the progressive degrading of life quality. The disorganization of the

⁹⁶ Today, the difference between the ecomuseum and NOPH is not so clear. Officially a non-governmental organization, NOPH is dedicated to the functions of research and documentation, also providing support to the Ecomuseum.

physical space and social structure (felt mainly in the lack of social cohesion) also brought negative impacts upon community's heritage and identity.

In this way, due to conflicts that can be regarded as of political order and social cohesion, the cultural response to which Priosti refers is characterized essentially by an attitude of resistance. According to the author (2000), the creation process of the ecomuseum represents a resistance to an imposed order, to the loss of identity and memory of the community, to the political and cultural abandon of the region. As a reaction against a passive attitude, such response foresees the accomplishment of the population's autonomy, so that this last can interfere- in a responsible and capable way- in the solutions of its own problems, establishing a dialogue with public authorities and not only being an object to decisions imposed from outside. This autonomy necessarily comprises social articulation, exercise of civil responsibility, the appropriation of collective spaces (physical, political and the space to express oneself) and responsibility-taking for the management of its own heritage.

Representing itself an evidence of such process of appropriation and autonomy, the ecomuseum is presented as an "instrument of expression, inclusion and development" (PRIOSTI, 2000), through which the population of Santa Cruz can exercise the expression of its "living" culture, mark its place in the political and cultural context of the city of Rio, as well as exercise its responsibility towards the society and towards the common heritage.

By acting as a community's instrument, the ecomuseum concentrates its actions on the following targets⁹⁷ :

⁹⁷ Based on PRIOSTI (1997, 2000, 2002, 2003b) and the Law which legalized the ecomuseum (1995).

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- preserve local identity and memory;
 - investigate local history and the region, as well as its relations with broader contexts;
 - valorise local culture (“living” culture) as a way to set a resistance to standardization (globalization);
 - establish an affective and communicative relation between the community and its heritage/territory (i.e. creation of identity bonds);
 - create conditions for the mobilization of the community in order to make the preservation of local identity and memory feasible;
 - articulate the participation (dialogue and co-operation) of the different sectors of the community;
 - assist development initiatives and participate in the claims for social improvements;
 - maintain the community opened to the exterior.

In order to accomplish these targets, the ecomuseum relies on the local heritage as a conductor lead of all the actions it performs. Heritage is seen as a political tool for community’s inclusion in the scenario of Rio de Janeiro (PRIOSTI, 2002) and as a tool of social cohesion. That is to say, it is taken, respectively, as an element of distinction and as an element of integration.

In practice, the heritage is the support and raw-material for the educational process the ecomuseum aims to carry out in the community and in which it plays a mediation role. Seen as the museum’s main strategy of intervention and change orientation (PRIOSTI, 2002), “heritage education” follows the ideas already mentioned previously: through an active participation of the population in actions which involve the management of its own heritage, there is a growing control over the territory and decision-making; there is a strengthening of self-esteem and self-confidence, of the community’s identity bonds and self-awareness of its conditions of existence; there is the raise of a critical consciousness and the promotion of citizenship.

As to the methods of “heritage education”, they have assumed many different forms during the life of the ecomuseum and, as can be notice in the referred publications and contacts with Odalice Priosti⁹⁸, they attend a will of constant renovation and experimentation.

The school is a steady partner in projects that strive to involve children and the youth in the research, interpretation and communication of the heritage. These projects, which are a constant in the work of the ecomuseum, comprise combined activities such as participant investigation, history reinterpretation, creation and participation in exhibitions, theatre plays, contests, among others.

The museum also co-operates with other community organizations and institutions (religious, civil, military) in projects that target different community groups (adults, families, areas from the periphery, etc.). Among them, it is possible to find:

- participant inventory;
- temporary exhibitions;
- workshops;
- forums on themes such as sustainability,
- lectures and seminars on current community issues;
- creation of a community development council.

It is interesting to highlight that the concept of exhibition assumes a very wide meaning in the work of the Ecomuseum of Santa Cruz. It refers to exhibitions in a more traditional sense⁹⁹, i.e. based on visual communication, as well as to activities such as a theatre play, or even a traditional party, where the population is able to experience its

⁹⁸ Via emails and personal contacts.

⁹⁹ Such as itinerant and “flash” exhibitions on historical and community subjects, or temporary exhibitions of local artists and those created by students.

“living” culture and heritage, be it by organizing the party itself, dancing or tasting traditional food. According to Priosti¹⁰⁰, these are also exhibitions, once they explore the information, research, participation, production and entertainment. Most important, they are the translation of a dynamic educational process.

The actions of the ecomuseum count with the support of historical research and the maintenance of collections on local history, archives and a library¹⁰¹. They can be regarded as the constitution of a data bank that supplies many activities of the ecomuseum, in special those related to the educational process, with information, documents, objects, etc.

The ecomuseum (via NOPH) also publishes a newsletter with the participation of community members, through which it communicates local history, current issues, community news, ongoing projects and information about elements of the heritage. Other aspects of the museum’s work refer to punctual actions that comprise a more political interference in the community domain. As examples, it is possible to mention the mobilization of the population against decisions imposed by public authorities and the efforts to revitalize a historical building through the establishment of a cultural centre and centre for professional training.

Many of these aspects of the Ecomuseum of Santa Cruz have been presented in different museology meetings in Brazil and abroad. This has been done mainly by Odalice Priosti¹⁰², school teacher, museologist, volunteer of the ecomuseum and member of the local community. The fact that Priosti has been the main “spokesperson”

¹⁰⁰ In a series of email exchanged in October 2003.

¹⁰¹ Done by the NOPH. There is no mention to collecting activities. According to Priosti, collections are originated from “loans” or “donations” of people who entrust the museum with the guard of valuable objects (i.e. of affective or representation value).

¹⁰² Today, Odalice Priosti is also vice-president of MINOM International.

of the ecomuseum's experiences to the outside world (at least to the museological field) drives one's attention to realizing that, among the examples explored in this thesis, this is the only case in which the speaker, besides being a museology or development professional, belongs originally to the community in which the initiative takes place.

Such acknowledgement naturally leads to a reflection on the nature the actor's inputs to the daily work of the ecomuseum. One may appreciate that, just like in cases of community museums seen previously, the ecomuseum counts with a "double input" system, which combines academic and empiric knowledge. However, the experience of Santa Cruz adds a new dimension to the idea of "double input", once actors with academic background (e.g. museologists, historians, educators) are in essence –and above all– community members. Contrary to other examples, where the "specialist" input - or great part of it- originated from the exterior, in the case of Santa Cruz it comes from inside the community and seems to be submitted to a feeling that the actor's roles as "specialists" is secondary when compared to their action as community members.

The particular example of Priosti illustrates well this aspect. Having studied museology exactly to understand the cultural movement of her own community, she stresses:

“We are not the specialists that you are thinking of; we only live this moment with intensity, trying not to hinder the initiative of the community with what I learned from the classic museology.”¹⁰³

In this way, academic and empiric input characterize the community input as a whole, which is obviously very high in all aspects of the

¹⁰³ Excerpt from an email message.

museum work. Public employees¹⁰⁴ and volunteers are responsible for the management, animation and programmes of the ecomuseum that, according to Priosti (2003b) cover significant parts of the local society. Community members and organizations participate actively in many different ways, by helping to organize activities, by offering logistic resources, by providing knowledge and expertise, by participating in the educational process (in the creation of exhibitions, research, etc.), by expressing demands, etc.

Finally, there is a special emphasis in the promotion of children and youth participation. Understood as strategic, they represent a “guarantee” of sustainability for the cultural process and through them it is possible to establish bonds with the territory, which their parents were not able to create once being relocated from their original homes.

A last aspect to be emphasized about the ecomuseum refers to its contribution to the conceptualization of ecomuseums and “territorial museologies”, through a concern in endowing the experience with continuous reflection, through communications to the outside world and the museological field in particular, as well as through the organization of international debates.

¹⁰⁴ Since it integrated the city’s structure in 1995, some public employees were designated to work in the ecomuseum. Priosti explained via email that they are not specialized. Two employees collaborate with the management and the organization of activities, a third works with cultural animation, although “they do a little bit of everything”. She adds that, unfortunately, they were integrated to the ecomuseum for their previous work relation with the City and not for having participated in the movement of Santa Cruz (although they live or were raised in the region). Finally, Priosti also mentions that the ecomuseum is participating in a study for the re-organization of City’s structures, what could lead to a change of this situation. The ecomuseum also has a director employed by the City, who is an active member of the community.

After providing an overview of some aspects that stand out in the new museology's discourse, it is possible to trace orientations that mark the concept of a museology in service of the local and global development (i.e. development of a community as a whole on its territory) today, adding other dimensions to the developments of the past decades. They are:

- the idea of a museological interference that extrapolates the museum and becomes explicit as “philosophy”, principles and way of action;
- the claims for a greater professionalism;
- the notion of community sustainable/durable development and, with this, the emphasis on conservation of resources or on the conservation of the relations between community and its resources¹⁰⁵;
- the growing response to the exterior, in special through interference in the economic domain and, in particular, through tourism;
- the confirmation of the educational role of museology and the notion of “heritage education” as global action for development.

“Traditional” museums in service of development

Proposals - concerning development issues- that extrapolate the scope of the new museology school of thought are mainly related to the work of “traditional” museums¹⁰⁶. Such assertion does not

¹⁰⁵ It is important to understand that conservation does not mean static preservation. One could understand conservation in this case as comprising use, exchange and preservation.

¹⁰⁶ Although recent developments may have added new dimensions to the idea of traditional museums as those museums focused on a building, a collection and a public (in opposition to “new museums”, which are focused on a territory, heritage and a population), it is still possible to identify a differentiation based on one or more of these premises- with a special attention to the idea of collections, which

disregard, though, actions taken place in other spheres of the museological field, which encompass mostly the academic environment, the work of ICOM and some of its committees (e.g. ICOFOM, ICOFOM-LAM, and ICTOP), as well as of other museum associations worldwide. Their contribution to community development can be seen in the organization of discussions and proposals to develop specific training and theoretical/ethical frameworks. It can also be found in the international co-operation for repatriation of cultural properties, conservation of cultural diversity and on other topics considered fundamental requirements in the different approaches to development.

Representing a significant part of the evolution of the critical museology school of thought (MENSCH, 1992) since the late 60's, of the efforts in endowing museums with a pro-active social role, as well as of the growing desire in aligning museums to development initiatives in the 90's, proposals on the contribution of museology – and specially of “traditional” museums- to community development can be found today in many discourses around the world. Nevertheless, they do not carry the same unity of the new museology school of thought, being rather spread and varied, what makes it sometimes difficult to identify consistent bodies of ideas.

One may argue that these proposals are still quite incipient (most dating from the late 90's) and, despite of making use of a number of concrete examples, they are very much concentrated on the claims for social responsibility and the possibilities/potential of museums and museology for the work related to community development.

In this way, this section will explore briefly two examples that combine the work of “traditional” museums with topics on community development. They correspond to approaches found in

today seem to characterise “traditional” museums more than matters of space or public.

the world development agendas and escape the predominance of the local community development concept (i.e. focused on the global action within the context of local communities). The examples will also address to actions originated from other spheres of the museological field when relevant.

Museums and sustainable development

Issues on sustainable development that escape the predominance of the territorial development approach are easily found in the discourses of those related to the work of ICOM and its committees. In this regard, one may consider their relations with the international co-operation environment and, particularly, with UNESCO, body which has taken a leading role in the international discussions regarding culture and sustainable development. In many cases, references to UNESCO's resolutions and an approach that finds roots in UN's philosophy contribute to make such relations explicit. A clear example of that can be seen in the discourse of ICOFOM-LAM, ICOFOM regional committee in Latin America and Caribbean.

For occasion of its 9th meeting, taken place in Rio de Janeiro (2000), ICOFOM-LAM members discussed the theme "Museology and Sustainable Development". Some conclusions from the meeting were addressed in the Charter of Santa Cruz, document which states the responsibility and capacity of museology and museum in contributing to development. Such contribution comprises, according to the charter, aims such as the valorisation of cultural diversity as a source of creative resources and way to "dominate the domination" (i.e. to decentralize processes and place development under diversity and self-management prospects); and the identification of the advantages offered by the global model (e.g. technology) to the material and immaterial heritage, which shall be used as tools rather than support.

ICOFOM-LAM's document brings, with this, three important aspects to understand those proposals related to the contribution of museology to sustainable development which are aimed at a broader level of society or that, in a local level, escape the range of the global action. These aspects refer to: the relevance of cultural diversity to sustainable development, the need to apply alternatives to the economic globalization and the focus on the management of the cultural and natural heritage.

Once responding to the paradigm of the Human Rights, values of diversity, dignity or social justice (which corroborate the claims for economic alternatives to the hegemonic global model) are to be found everywhere. In this particular case within the museological field, the application of such values finds significant support in the work of UNESCO and, specially, in its approach to culture and sustainable development.

UNESCO's approach departs from the acknowledgement that culture is an essential factor of sustainable development, once:

“People's attitudes and lifestyles, their responsiveness to educational programmes, their sense of ownership of the drive to preserve a decent future for ensuing generations, the reactions of national and local leaders to scientific and governance policy advice, are all intimately linked to their own cultural identities and values, and no worldwide commitment to sustainable development will get anywhere without that recognition.” (UNESCO website)

Placed in broader contexts, such recognition leads to the dimension of cultural diversity, of which promotion constitutes one of UNESCO's strategic objectives. In its strongest statement, the Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity (adopted in 2001), UNESCO affirms that cultural diversity is a source of tradition, exchange, innovation and creativity: it is as necessary for humankind

as biodiversity is for nature. Thus, cultural diversity is to be seen as the common heritage of humanity and one of the roots of development.

“If creativity is essential for sustainability, then memory is in turn vital to creativity. That holds true for individuals and for peoples, who find in their heritage – natural and cultural, tangible and intangible—the key to their identity and the source of their inspiration” (UNESCO website). In this regard, the Declaration states:

“Creation draws on the root of cultural traditional, and flourishes in contact with other cultures. For this reason heritage in all its forms must be preserved, enhanced and handed on to future generations as to foster creativity in all its diversity and to inspire genuine dialogue among cultures.” (Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity, article 7)

Considering the importance of the heritage for cultural diversity, creativity and development, it is easy to understand why heritage preservation and valorisation appears as a core target in ICOFOM-LAM’s discourse. From the Charter of Santa Cruz and other communication from the referred meeting, it is possible to highlight the following general targets proposed for museology:

- preserve and valorise heritage (with special attention to the intangible heritage, seen as a link between natural and cultural heritage);
- research, in a multi-disciplinary way, the socio-cultural situation in face of globalization;
- put people in touch with their heritage, specially by stimulating community participation in museums and self-management in a long-term period;

-
- train new professionals in order to respond to the new demands.

Once being a theoretical body, ICOFOM-Lam proposes to attend these targets by generating discussion and creating theoretical frameworks on the relations between museology and sustainable development, as well as by developing an ethical support for the actions and training basis (SCHEINER, 2000).

As to proposals that focus more on the action rather than on discourse, the meeting's records bring references mainly to the work of museums. Among them, it is possible to highlight the claims for the role of museums as educational institutions, orientation that exemplifies well one of the tendencies in the field of museology.

The Charter of Santa Cruz considers the museum as link between communities and heritage, as well as the institution's commitment to integrate both. There is a clear influence of the integral museum concept, which has left marks in the whole Latin American museological tradition since the Round Table of Santiago (1972), as well as of Paulo Freire's work. In this way, references to the educational role of museums and to the necessity to apply a multi-disciplinary approach come to draw some intersections between the proposals of ICOFOM-LAM and the new museology school of thought. In short, the educational role of museums refers to issues such as:

- facilitating relationships between community and heritage (with much of the integral museum educational approach and by promoting participation and gradual self-management in the institutions);
- conservation and diffusion of the heritage and cultural identities;
- cultural representation in collections and exhibitions;

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- perpetration of values of environmental preservation through a wide range of communication/educational media, but especially through exhibitions.

Another important orientation found within the efforts to endow museums with an active role in supporting sustainable development, which is mentioned in the meeting records but is better developed in other publications, refers to their contribution to promoting and regulating tourism.

As explained before¹⁰⁷, cultural tourism appears today as an important factor of sustainable development, not only for economic aspects, but also for social and cultural aspects. Besides the fact that tourism can represent an alternative to develop local economies and a potential asset for the improvement of community qualities and preservation of resources/heritage, as well as a channel of cultural exchange and understanding, professionals remind that to dominate tourism also means to control a powerful industry that can be predatory and extremely harmful.

Within this context, references to the work of “traditional” museums emerge in two different dimensions. The first refers to the role of museums as intermediates between local populations and tourism industry (e.g. PATRY, 1998). Coming close to the ideas of the new museology school of thought, proposals that endow museums with such intermediate role mention interferences related to supporting communities to program attractions, finding funding, training, marketing, etc. Museums are, with this, exhorted to expand their work beyond traditional functions and perform actions which could also be carried out by other organizations, such as community organizations or NGOs.

¹⁰⁷ See “Territorial museologies of development” on page 86.

The second dimension, which comprises far more numerous examples, is related to museums role as tourist attractions (e.g. COTE, 1998; BLAVIA, 1998). Assertions appeal to museums' communication capacities and their focus on the preservation/promotion of the heritage as a way to integrate tourism (and enhance it quantitatively as well as qualitatively), contribute to its promotion (by offering an attractive product) and regulation (in the context of offered activities and, in a broader context, by conveying values). In this way, museums as tourist attractions find their targets related to:

- acting as an information source of the region/country;
- promoting public interactions with cultural processes and products by conveying means, ideas and emotions¹⁰⁸; i.e. by transmitting (besides content) values – including values inherent to the idea of sustainable development (preservation, respect for diversity, etc.);
- offering an original product, an authentic experience.

In order to accomplish these targets, proposals rely on the use of museum services, which must be adapted to a specific public (tourists), and on the use of resources to be found outside the museums (particularly the heritage – monuments, sites, traditional products, etc.). Examples include:

- exhibitions and guided tours;
- events inside the museum;
- the use of services, such as museum shop and café, as part of “authentic experiences”;
- visits to sites of interest, discovery programmes (where tourists can travel through the city ad experience elements of the “living culture”).

¹⁰⁸ BLAVIA, 1998

One can understand that, placed in a given local or regional context, the proposed contribution of museums to sustainable development as tourist attractions address only indirect benefits to local populations. It is possible to imagine that many activities that involve, for example, the presentation of the “cultural routine” or “cultural traditions” to tourists should count with the input of those who live the culture (i.e. local population). In this case, the process of preparing, presenting and having encounters with outside visitors could possibly enhance populations’ competencies. However, much emphasis in the discourses is taken from the museum and the tourists perspectives solely. They demand too few from local populations in terms of input and refers primarily to museums’ contribution to develop the tourism industry, which would have positive benefits for sustainable development and, consequently, for the local populations.

Museums and social inclusion

Terms such as “social inequality” and “museum social value” can be found each time more in discourses of museums and museum professionals in Western-European countries, EUA, Australia, among others. They refer to the growing reflection on the responsibility of established museums in combating social problems related to the marginalization of individuals and groups within the society, approach which occupies a strong position in the agendas of community development today.

The case of museums and social inclusion in the United Kingdom offers a consistent example of such tendency, as well as of the struggles involved in the efforts to endow museums with a renovated social agency role.

In 1998, Richard Sandell wrote:

“Recent years have seen the emergence of the term ‘social exclusion’ within United Kingdom and European political rhetoric and discourse, increasingly used to refer to the process by which groups in society become disenfranchised and marginalized. Since the election of

New Labour in 1997, the United Kingdom has witnessed widespread acceptance of the concept which now appears central to many areas of government policy making. This growing importance is reflected in the government's creation, in December 1997, of the Social Exclusion Unit which adopts a multi-agency approach to tackle the causes and symptoms of exclusion.”

Following the new government's agenda, as well as a general societal pressure, museums have been exhorted to assume new roles and integrate the efforts in tackling social exclusion ever since (according to Sandell this became an official requirement from the government in 1998). One can understand from this situation that claims have placed museums in an early difficult position. According to Sandell and other authors¹⁰⁹, if, in one hand, museums were expected to assume new roles, in the other hand, little was discussed about the implications of social exclusion to the cultural domain amongst academics or policy makers. In addition, the authors constantly refer to a strong disbelief – or a resistance against museums' new social responsibilities. Thus, it is possible to notice from the examined publications an effort to develop theoretical frameworks that link museums to social exclusion and to reflect on museums potentialities. They also emphasise the need for evaluation models, as research tools and, perhaps, as the only way bring legitimacy to museums' role as social inclusion agents.

Sandell's work “Museums as agents of social inclusion” (1998) represents an early discussion on this subject. Although many publications and research papers have been developed in the UK since then, Sandell's work appears as an important source, once it offers a comprehensive approach on the dimension social inclusion has taken in the museum world, as well as a base of understanding for the appreciation of more recent proposals.

In his article from 1998, the author explains that social exclusion is largely accepted as a multi-dimensional phenomenon. Within the

¹⁰⁹ e.g. NEWMAN & MCLEAN, 2002

academic debate it is studied through three main dimensions: economic, social and political (which are interrelated and constantly overlap). Exclusion in the economic dimension refers to issues concerning income, production and access to goods and services. In the social dimension, it refers to the access to social services (e.g. health and education), access to labour market and the opportunity for social participation and its effects on the social fabric; hence concerns with self-worth, dignity, identity, participation in decision-making and the marginalisation of disadvantaged groups. Finally, the political dimension comprises the access to citizenship rights, i.e. civil rights, political rights, equality of opportunity, right to minimum welfare benefits, etc.¹¹⁰ Sandell also introduces a cultural dimension to exclusion, affirming that individuals can be excluded from representation (i.e. the extent to which an individual's cultural heritage is represented within the mainstream cultural arena); participation (i.e. the opportunities an individual has to participate in the process of cultural production) and access (i.e. the opportunities to enjoy and appreciate cultural services).

Departing from these dimensions, he proposes a typology for museums as agents of social inclusion, based on concrete examples and which comprise three approaches of intervention. The first approach refers to tackling social exclusion in the cultural dimension. According to Sandell, most museums have considered their role in combating social exclusion through seeking to become inclusive organizations (i.e. inclusive museums). With this, they pay attention to issues of representation, participation and access, launching "audience development" programmes. Although they can have an indirect effect on broader actions, one can understand that they maintain a passive attitude in relation to social inclusion¹¹¹.

¹¹⁰ Newman & MacLean (2002) also describe social exclusion as the denial of citizenship rights, which comprises elements of the social and economical dimensions described before.

¹¹¹ According to the author, around 1998, broader aims such as reinforcing identity, increase self-esteem, did not comprise the mission of most inclusive museums.

The other two approaches refer to a more active attitude, which extrapolates the cultural dimension and endow museums with a role in combating symptoms of social exclusion, such as unemployment, crime, racism, etc.¹¹² This happens mainly through museums as agents of social regeneration that aim to deliver positive social outcomes to defined audiences, making access and cultural inclusion means to reach broader goals of wider social inclusion and combating contemporary social problems (SANDELL, 1998); or through museums as vehicles of broad social change, which aim to educate and influence the public opinion by making use of their potential to communicate¹¹³.

Considering the different degrees of intervention –and particularly the proposals that comprise more active roles – today it is possible to place concrete and possible contributions of museums to social inclusion under the individual/ group of individuals (micro), community (meso) and broader societal (macro) levels. They constitute aims such as¹¹⁴:

- promote cultural equality;
- promote democratization within the institution;
- perpetrate values (e.g. tolerance, understanding, etc.) and
- in an individual/group level: forge a sense of self (identity) and its connection to others; develop self-awareness, self-

112 Sandell (1998) stresses that “despite a growing acceptance of the imperative to become more accessible, there is little evidence to suggest that many museums have embraced their potential to act directly as agents of social inclusion and to tackle contemporary social problems”, besides, the author explains that “today, for the majority of museum professionals, as well as social policy analysts, such claims are more likely to be considered quaint, naïve and inappropriate”. More recent works also bring similar claims.

113 This type of intervention has been very much emphasized in recent publications (e.g. SANDELL, 2002).

114 Condensation based on Sandell (1998, 2002), Newman & McLean (2002), Silverman (2002), Fleming (2002), Dodd (2002).

esteem, self-determination, self-confidence, creativity; convey skills;

- in a community level: contribute to empowerment (reinforce identity, enhance self-determination, creativity, build capacities, increase participation in decision making processes and democratic structures) and convey skills.

Some concrete examples show what museums do in fact in order to achieve these aims. In brief, museums propose to:

- represent culturally marginalized groups and minorities;
- improve public access and participation;
- communicate values, challenge stereotypes, represent diversity, act as a forum of debates;
- in an individual/ group level: participate in special programmes for defined groups (e.g. training programmes, group discussions, tailored services, volunteer programmes, therapy, reminiscence work, etc), mostly in partnership with other organizations (schools, social, services, community and health agencies, etc.);
- in a community level: provide means for communities to learn about themselves and learn/practice skills and attitudes needed for community problem solving, specially by co-operating with community initiatives and by offering special activities to defined communities;

These targets are executed through a varied number of activities. In general, they rely on the use of museum objects, exhibitions, environment, services (educational, outreach) and expertise as part of joint ventures with other organizations or community initiatives, aiming at the micro and meso levels – or as means to deliver speeches and provoke discussions at the macro level.

Among different methods, the exhibition is a privileged tool used to fulfil many of the proposed targets. It is the main media through which values are perpetrated and representation of minorities takes place. In some cases, exhibitions serve as support for special

programmes aiming at defined audiences and as a process for community participation and self-awareness. One can understand that, independently from exhibitions, the assessment of museum's objects and collections also constitute a way to deliver social outcomes. It can be seen, for example, in the collecting of testimonies (objects, oral history) from communities and underrepresented groups, in the use of museum objects to support educational/ therapeutic activities, to convey skills or to stimulate group and community dynamics (e.g. the case of the Open Museum¹¹⁵, where people are invited to loan museum objects and create their own exhibitions).

Besides exhibitions and collections, museums also make use of other resources. In the programmes in partnership with other organization, for instance, museums make exhibitions, collections, space, services and expertise available in order to provide the projects with comprehensive means of communication (very much based on the appeal of objects to people), with an environment for individual/collective social and educational experiences, and with matter for learning and acquiring skills.

The same way, museums apply several resources in the work with communities. Be it inside or outside their buildings, they use exhibitions as representation media and as participation experience, as mentioned before. Other resources (e.g. expertise, collections, and services) are used to convey skills, promote learning experiences, to develop activities (discussions, reminiscence and volunteer work, etc.) that aim to improve community qualities and exercise decision-making.¹¹⁶

Finally, other mentioned methods of work refer to the organization of events and debates on relevant social issues, which aim at broader

¹¹⁵ Dodd et al, 2002.

¹¹⁶ Sandell (2002) also mentions the example of an ecomuseum, which comes close to the principles of the new museology: it is seen as instrument of self-knowledge and as an educational process through which community can practice skills and attitudes needed for community problem solving.

audiences as part of museums' functions to perpetrate values; and actions on audience development, which aim to improve access to services and participation of defined groups in museum's activities. Audience development comprises several measures, going from matters of representation and educational programmes to accessible (or free) admission fees.

From what was discussed previously, it is possible to understand that the contribution of traditional museums to social inclusion is related to their communication -and somewhat political role- in the macro level and to their communication and educational roles in the micro and meso levels. Museums' interference is to be done mainly by delivering discourses and values through exhibitions and debates (and perhaps through collections and educational programmes as well) and by extending their activities and creating tailored projects (via educational and outreach staff mostly) to defined audiences and communities. In this case, if improvements are to be reached based on the input of audiences (be them individuals, groups or communities), this happens basically through their participation in determined activities or partnerships offered by the museums. In fact, there are few mentions to participation in museum's programme development and no mentions to participation in museum's management or policy making in the examined publications.