

CHAPTER 1

The relations between museology and community development: society changes, museology changes.

Much has been written about the critical atmosphere experienced in the 60's, when struggles for social justice, civil rights, individual freedom, world peace and democracy set a tune of change in society. Episodes such as the students mobilizations in Europe (which have in the May of 68 its celebrated climax), the hippie movement in USA, the voices against dictatorships in Latin America and countries from the Iberian Peninsula; and names such as Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King, among others, marked a decade of non-conformism and became to cast new social goals worldwide.

It is not by chance that the 60s also brought radical changes to the field of museology as a whole. From the reassessment of purpose and relevance of museology for society to the re-evaluation of effectiveness of the classic museum functions, transformations were profuse in “the traditionally stable and conservative museum world.¹²” (VARINE, 1996a)

As Hugues de Varine, Peter Davis (1999) reminds that, although the elitist attitude of museums continued into and beyond the 1960s, the changes in society claimed a response from the museological field:

“Museums had, of course, constantly changed the ways in which they worked, and the advances that were made in conservation, interpretation and education in the latter years of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth

¹² “(...) it was not abnormal that, even in the traditionally stable and conservative museum world, a number of original minds would look for solutions outside of the established standards.” (DE VARINE, 1996a)

century (...) are undeniable. However, it is the extent of self-criticism and the considerable speed of change which is immediately identifiable during and following the 1960s.” (DAVIS, 1999)

Societal struggles, being them of social, economic, political, cultural or environmental character, brought up relevant questions to the field and influenced the course museology would follow from then on. According to Maria Celia Santos (2002) many forces in the 60's contributed to this new shaping. As examples, she mentions the work of ecologists, the demands for the return of stolen or expatriated cultural properties to former colonial countries, and the claims of socialist groups regarding the access to monuments and museum collections until then reserved to a small share of the population. In this context, Maria Celia also identifies in the challenges against established institutions – which included critical assessments of the established powers- and in the review and consequent expansion of the concept of heritage the basis for the following developments in museology.

Still according to the author, ongoing changes through the 70's led to the development of progressive proposals in the fields of education and research, which had a significant influence in the world of museology. Aiming the promotion of a “social and popular consciousness” -what can be considered as both requirement and soul of the pursued articulation of non-dominant sectors in society- the ideas of popular education (very much based on the theories of Paulo Freire) and participant investigation grew specially in countries of the Third World, although reaching developed countries within a considerable amplitude. They put on focus the role of non-specialists in decision-making processes, the importance in allying investigation and action, as well as the commitment of researchers and specialists to social groups.

In 1992, Peter van Mensch contemplated under the image of the *second museum revolution*¹³ features of the transformations taken place in museology since the 60s and 70s. According to him, the second museum revolution period (1960/1980) corresponds to the crescent recognition of the social role of museums and their responsibilities towards society, as well as the raise of a political drive in the field. The “revolution” is also connected to the emergence of a *philosophical-critical* approach in museology, concentrated on the development of a critical social orientation, which encompassed the museum work, museum profession and museological theory. In the core of this new approach, he identifies three main schools of thought: marxist-leninist museology, new museology, and critical museology.

The marxist-leninist museology¹⁴ advocates the ideological character of museums and the role of museology in helping them in the accomplishment of the socialist project. While the marxist-leninist museology is “a very normative approach, where axiological norms are applied leading to a rather strict system of rules”, the new museology and critical museology “advocate an attitude rather than the application of rules (...) theorization should have the role of questioning, more than defining the frame for a systematic and systematizing work” (MENSCH, 1992).

Sharing a strong political drive with the marxist-leninist museology, the new museology¹⁵ advocates an essential commitment to people rather than to objects or the traditional museum functions.

¹³ The author justifies that the term *revolution* is used to emphasize the radical changes that took place in the field of museology in a rather short period of time (MENSCH, 1992)

¹⁴ Represented by authors from former socialist countries and seen by many as a reaction against a bourgeois museology. As P. van Mensch stresses, “at the moment when the political changes in Europe were settled, most militants supporters of a marxist-leninist museology were already retired or dead.”

¹⁵ Referring to the French concept of “*muséologie nouvelle*”.

Community development (in the different possible contexts it might take place) and the principle of community participation in decision-making processes lie in the centre of the concerns in the new museology.

The critical museology¹⁶, by its turn, advocates a change in attitude focused mainly on the museum's work and its functions. This, according to Peter van Mensch, encompasses approaches such as the critical museum (i.e. one that raises questions about myths, the national past and directions for the future); the critical restoration; critical curatorship (which starts by engaging non-specialist audiences in order to cope with issues of representation and others); and, more recently, critical evaluation.

The convergences and divergences among the examples above offer a good sight of the various facets of the *second museum revolution*. If, in one hand, such plurality can be regarded as an evidence of effective change in the field and attempt to adapt museums and museology to societal dynamics; in the other hand it reveals that, although one can summarize the face of change (by relating it to the raise of social and political awareness), the same is not possible for the wide-range of implied intentions, meanings, forms and methods that have permeated the professional action and the construction of the theoretical thinking through and since this period.

That is to say that various directions shared the crescent efforts in driving museums and museology towards the fulfilment of their social and political responsibilities. Together with approaches focused on audience development, enhancement of education and communication functions of the museum, or aiming more democratic representations in exhibitions, issues concerning community

¹⁶ According to P. van Mensch, the term "critical" has been adopted in different initiatives in the Netherlands, UK, USA, along the 80's and 90's.

development came to occupy an important position in the agenda of museology.

Starting effectively in the late 60's, the attempts to bring museology closer to the field of development and respond to its demands in the theoretical and practical dimensions have followed a continuous path until the present days. Today, one could say, community development represents a central issue of museology in different countries around the world¹⁷. Its relevancy to the international scene of museology as a whole has grown and tends to grow even more in the future.

However, in regard to the period of the *second museum revolution* - and until the early 90's, what can be visualized through evidences such as the theoretical production, actual initiatives and discussions in the field is a concentration of concrete proposals concerning the

dialectics museology/community development likely restricted to the sphere of the new museology¹⁸.

¹⁷ For instance: Portugal, Canada, United States and Australia.

¹⁸ Understood as a school of thought. At this point, it may be important to introduce a small difference between new museology as idea and new museology as movement. The movement of the new museology, which will be discussed later on this chapter, dates from the 80s and can be regarded as the result of aspirations, ideas and experiments developed since the late 60's. Having as backbone an essential commitment to people and their communities, those aspirations, ideas and experiments - starting in the late 60s and arriving to the present days- constitute the matter of the new museology as a school of thought (MENSCH, 1992). Hugues de Varine is clear in tracing back to the 60s the beginning of the new museology's 'long evolution' in the article "Ecomuseum or community museum?" (1996). He includes in this evolution a number of examples that encompasses the work of the neighbourhood museum, the formulation of the integral museum concept and the first experiments of ecomuseums, as well as the development of exhibition language and the ecological and educational approaches in the field of museology, among others.

Such statement obviously does not exclude from the broader field of museology a raising awareness on the political role of museums or their obligation to contribute to the improvement of their public's life. The outcomes of the General Assemblies of ICOM (International Council of Museums) attest that the image of museums as institutions in the service of society was largely debated, representing an important issue:

“They [the new aspects of change] surface first at the ninth meeting in Munich in August 1968. The first resolution agreed by this meeting was that ‘museums be recognized as major institutions in the service of development’, because of the contribution they can make to cultural, social and economic life. The tenth meeting (Grenoble, 1971) urged museums to ‘undertake a continuous and complete assessment of the needs of the public which they serve’ and ‘evolve methods of action which will in future more firmly establish their educational and cultural roles in the service of mankind.” (DAVIS, 1999)

About the meeting of 1971, Hugues de Varine (1996) clarifies that the attentions came to concentrate more in the contribution of museums to the study and protection of the environment. He also stresses that this ICOM conference helped to mobilize the innovators among the museum profession around the world, raising many controversial ideas.

Controversy seems to be, indeed, a recurrent word in the debates on the role of museology as a resource for community development during this period. As seen until now, the subject was present and discussed in the international scene, reaching the point that, in 1972, the Declaration of Santiago clearly stated that co-operation with different sectors of society in the promotion of development should be a primal aim of museology. For that, the Declaration proposed the

implementation of an integral approach in regional and local museums, which will be discussed later in the chapter.

What is important to consider about this matter is that, despite of the fact that the Round Table of Santiago counted with institutional support from ICOM, its outcomes- particularly in relation to political aspects of the Declaration- didn't have the same impact for the committee as they did for a small group of museologists who credited to community development related subjects a completely different emphasis. Those professionals, of whom some were members of ICOM¹⁹, can be associated in their majority –if not in their totality- with the new museology school of thought.

This way, taking into account this and other evidences, it is possible to affirm that the path which followed the emergence of the notion that museology could and should work for community development in the 60's was gradually directed to the new museology's practice and discourse.

In time, a crescent dichotomy between the “new” and the “traditional” museology took shape as new museologists firmed their political positioning against what they accused of being an impermeable and monolithic museological environment²⁰. In fact, in the course of all the transformations that were happening, many museums and museologists came to opt for inertia, while others assumed the need of promoting changes within different levels and amplitude- including those who integrated the “traditional” field of museology. An impermeable and monolithic museological environment was, obviously, a qualification to be regarded through the point of view of the new museology. And, in

¹⁹ Including Hugues de Varine, who was the General Secretary of ICOM from 1965 to 1974 (year when he left the organization).

²⁰ See “The ‘bloom’ of the new museology movement” on page 67.

such case, the field of museology showed to be, indeed, rather impermeable to the speed and dimension of the changes proposed by those related to the new museology school of thought.

Considering the dichotomy between the “two museologies”, it might not be precipitated to affirm that, in the referred period, the work with community development was taken by many as synonym of a radical political positioning; namely, a socialist approach to museology²¹. The same way, it does not seem incorrect to conclude that such situation consequently contributed to the confinement of community development related issues inside the limits of new museology.

Another important aspect that characterizes the nature of the dialects museology/community development until the early 90's refers to its growing distance from traditional and established museums. As can be traced in proposals from the 60's and 70's (e.g. VARINE, 1969; Declaration of Santiago, 1972), the mutation of existent regional and local museums into development agents constituted the alternative for reaching the rising goals on community development. This would be possible by shifting their main focus from the collections to the community, moving their subject matter based on academic disciplines to an interdisciplinary view of community's life and, in some cases, by promoting community participation in different levels of the museums' work. However, what reveals to be far more numerous –and represent nearly all of the concrete implementations related to this subject - is the creation of new museums, in fact museums of new type, such as the neighbourhood museum and the ecomuseum. It is also possible to include in this spectrum the development of proposals that did not foresee the creation or use of museums.

²¹ As reminded by Hugues de Varine during a conversation in November 2002.

Although this thesis does not intend to contemplate in depth the reasons why the work with community development moved far from traditional museums, at least two causes for that can be pointed out. The first one is related to the actual difficulties in implementing changes in the “traditional” field of museology and traditional museums, as discussed before. The second reason relies on the limitation of traditional museums in responding to the ambitions concerning the work of museology as an instrument for community development in the way they were being proposed, in special by new museologists. This issue will be subject of discussion later on chapter 3, when the body of ideas that constitute the image of museology as a resource for community development will be addressed and appreciated.

After presenting a general overview of the changes taken place in museology since the late 60’s and how community development can be placed in such context, the next sections of this chapter are dedicated to a brief introduction to some cases which played a decisive role in moulding the concept of museology as a resource for community development. They will serve as sources for the following analysis of the contents and characteristics of such concept in Chapter 3. The cases’ presentation also aims to provide a more detailed view of the societal changes, struggles and aspirations that directed the minds of museologists towards the work with community development in the period between the late 60’s and early 90’s.

The neighbourhood museum

The first concepts of the neighbourhood museum came to life in the Smithsonian Institution (USA) during the late 60’s.

The impetus for the creation of the neighbourhood museum could be regarded as the result of a general concern of professionals and government on the effectiveness of traditional museums in direct their educational services to the public. Added to this, the critical

atmosphere from the mid-sixties and the social pressure for civil rights of the ethnic minorities in USA, which associated traditional museums to discrimination against significant portions of the population, played an important role in driving authorities' attention to ethnic issues:

“John Kinard [...], the founding director [of the Anacostia Neighbourhood Museum], summarized the charges against established museums: “[...] they stand accused on three points: 1) failing to respond to the needs of the great majority of the people; 2) failing to relate knowledge of the past to the grave issues confronting us today or to participate in meeting those issues; and 3) failing to overcome not only their blatant disregard of minority cultures but their outright racism which is all too apparent in what they collect, study, and exhibit and in whom they employ.” (HAUENSCHILD, 1998)

As an answer to the claims for museums' social and political responsibilities, the Smithsonian Institution decided to implement an experimental small satellite museum in a low-income urban setting (MARSH, 1968). According to Hauenschild (1998), the purpose of such enterprise was originally to test an outreach concept, in which the new museum “was intended to mediate between the traditional, established Smithsonian museums and the African-American public they did not reach. That is, it was supposed to help break down barriers to access and create interest in visiting the large museums located a few miles away. By functioning as an outpost, so to speak, of the Smithsonian in a marginal urban community, the museums and exhibits of the large Smithsonian museums were to be brought nearer to people (...)”.

This way, a new type of museum was to be founded and work as a bridge between a deprived community and the cultural resources located in the downtown area of Washington D.C. Against lack of consensus among museum professionals, including those from

Smithsonian, the planners of the neighbourhood museum searched, since the beginning, for public involvement in the shaping of the new institution.

Nevertheless, the development of the neighbourhood museum into an agent of social change has to be credited to the work of the first and experimental neighbourhood museum: the Anacostia Neighbourhood Museum.

Following the first contacts of Smithsonian with representatives of different social groups and organizations, community leaders from the Anacostia neighbourhood – a rather isolated area from Washington and its white neighbourhoods, composed mostly by African-American descendents and suffering from well known “urban diseases” such as lack of essential public facilities and inappropriate housing; crime, drug abuse and unemployment - approached the institution and expressed their interest in being the site for the experimental museum. After the choice for Anacostia was made, an intensive planning took place with active participation of the community. Finally, in September 1967, the Anacostia Neighbourhood museum was opened in an old movie theatre.

As said before, in short time the Anacostia Museum extrapolated the first conceptions held by Smithsonian and proposed to move beyond, towards a meaningful role within the neighbourhood revitalization. According to Hauenschild, this shift was possible due to the strong leadership of the museum’s director, John Kinard, an African-American social worker.

Actually, it is possible to trace the difference in approaches through the speeches of Caryl Marsh, Smithsonian’s consultant for planning and development of the Anacostia Museum, and John Kinard.

Caryl Marsh described, in 1968, the Anacostia as an educational agent essentially. In order to exercise such educational vocation in an effective way, the museum should dip into community’s participation as the backbone of the new institution. From the first

arrangements for the establishment of the museum to the planning and participation in daily activities (exhibits, educational programming, etc), the public engagement was to be encouraged. The museum should come close to the visitors, make them feel part of it and fit in their reality, having always in mind that “the neighbourhood museum was not to be a substitute for use of the city’s cultural resources, but rather a bridge to encourage greater use of them” (my underline).

Although stressing many of the Smithsonian’s proposals in forms and ways, a different meaning for the museum can be pointed out in the articles of John Kinard. Serving as main references for the later discussions on the neighbourhood museum’s role as an agent for community development, they offer a resume of the ideas behind this period of the Anacostia²², when the concept of the museum as a “catalyst for social change” (KINARD, 1985) was developed from the daily work of the institution and its participants.

Understood as a tool in service of development, the neighbourhood museum was conceived as a cultural institution intimately committed to the area in which it was located and the life of its residents. In order to “satisfy the broader needs of (...) culturally impoverished communities” (KINARD, 1985; my underline), its responsibilities had to go further in meeting various dimensions of urban life, being them social, economic or cultural, as regarded below:

“While the problems of the people may vary from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, city to city, nation to

²² Such period lasted from the late 60’s until approximately the late 70’s/ early 80’s. After this time, the original aims of the institution moved from “an instrument effecting social changes to a *cultural stimulus*” (HAUENSCHILD, 1998). The reason for such change are not all clear, some refer to the museum’s minimal contribution in solving urban problems; others to the limitations of applied methods or to the crescent hardening (institutionalization) of the museum’s management.

nation, the need for action in meeting these problems is common to all. The neighbourhood museum is not unmindful of the frustrations that immobilize the people of the inner city. Because it is the centre of the neighbourhood life, the museum must be conscious of every aspect of that life” (KINARD & NIGHBERT, 1972).

For that, nearly the totality of targets and methods suggested or identified through the action of the neighbourhood museum departed from the assessment of the local community’s life and its heritage. That is to say, the community was to be the foundation and subject matter of the museum.

Among the specific targets that encompassed the work of the neighbourhood museum, it is possible to identify:

- investigate and communicate the history and contemporary issues concerning the neighbourhood²³, in a way to strengthen the ties between present and past; people and place.
- contribute to the community education;
- valorise local culture, in special the local knowledge;
- act as a forum for debates, trying to promote discussions on local issues.

In order to fulfil the aims of the neighbourhood museum as an active agent of social change, methods of work, such as research, exhibitions, educational programming, or socio-cultural activities were based on the use of local heritage, as mentioned before.

The heritage, for instance, appears as a primary source for new interpretations of history and contemporary issues, based explicitly on a local perspective. It was not the main interest whether the

²³ In the case of Anacostia, issues also related to African-American culture and history.

museum had a collection or not²⁴; once artefacts, documents and the oral history- elements of the heritage emphasized by Kinard (1985)- could be found and assessed everywhere in the community and don't need to be necessarily a part of the museum's collection. Actually, the only mentions to a collection or collecting procedure in the work of Anacostia refer to the maintenance of a mini zoo and the record of local oral history, as a way to produce documentation for research purposes.

One could add to the range of heritage the local culture (and the own local knowledge), valorised in the museum via the direct participation of the residents in the execution of exhibitions' educational programming and many side activities, such as lectures, artistic performances, and small local art exhibits.

Within the methods proposed to communicate the history and contemporary issues concerning the community the exhibition appears as a main communication media for the museum's work. Exhibitions were to be created in an unconventional way and its form oriented towards the neighbourhood (HAUENSCHILD, 1998). In order to involve residents, bring the subjects closer to their daily-life and enhance communication effectiveness, they should count with a varied number of side activities and educational programming.

The museum also aimed to dip into the appreciation of community problems as an important part of its communication responsibilities. In the Anacostia, for example, lectures on numerous issues (such as health care, labour and unemployment, race discrimination, etc)

²⁴ Actually, in the referred working period of the Anacostia, the museum didn't have a permanent collection. According to Hauenschild (1998), "as a 'branch' of the Smithsonian Institution, the Anacostia Neighbourhood Museum was originally planned not to have its own collection nor perform the collection activity of a traditional museum. All exhibits consist of loans form the Smithsonian or other institutions". Nevertheless, this condition initially set by the Smithsonian, met the philosophy of the neighbourhood museum as a catalyst for social change.

aimed to “[... offer] to the community a resource of information that can augment individual as well as further development of the community” (Speakers’ Bureau, 1970; quoted in HAUENSCHILD, 1998).

The vision of the neighbourhood museum as an institution that educates the community included the use of traditional education methods in order to convey skills and the collaboration to formal education organizations. As an example, the work of the Anacostia Museum comprised the offering of side classes for neighbourhood residents (art classes in special) and put at local school’s disposal mobile exhibitions, as well as educational material, for teaching on sciences and other disciplines.

It is not surprising that the neighbourhood museum proposed to act as a “community centre” in various occasions, moving away from the use of the object and the traditional functions of the museum in order to welcome community meetings as well as cultural activities, such as the classes mentioned above, festivals or even birthday parties or weddings.

Either acting as a “community centre”, either carrying through some of the traditional functions of the museum (i.e. research and communication), the survival and relevance of the neighbourhood museum as an instrument of social change relies on the ties established with the community. Kinard (1985) resumes this relationship in a short sentence:

“The destiny of the museum is the destiny of the community; their relationship is symbiotic and catalytic.”

The ties between the museum and the community are created mostly by the community’s direct input to a wide range of activities in the museum. Such input, however, assumes different faces and degrees of influence within the museum’s work. It can be considered of a

very high degree when addressing needs and priorities to the museum staff; when participating in offered activities and engaging in volunteer work; and, finally when providing the transference of local knowledge. In a lower degree, there are mentions to the involvement of grass roots organizations in the execution of research and the direct advice of the population in the museum's planning and financial collaboration. One could appreciate that the public engagement in the museum's management is very low, although special attention is given to hiring staff members who are close to the community that the neighbourhood museum serves.

Given the range of public participation in the museum's life, rather revolutionary for the time in which it has been proposed, a natural question that rises from such recognition is why the community input is so important and lies in the centre of attentions of the neighbourhood museum. The answer for that is not all clear in the speeches of those related to the new institution.

The Smithsonian Institution was responsible for bringing the issues of public access to the neighbourhood museum: in order to be relevant it should come closer to the needs of the visitors. Such belief, taken on during the development of the idea of the neighbourhood museum as a catalyst of social change, justifies the importance given to community input in addressing needs and priorities.

As to the other facets of community input, all leads to conclude that, besides matters of ideology and legitimacy of the museum work (which surely existed and played an important role but could not be identified in the examined articles), the community input is vital in providing important resources for the neighbourhood museum. Among those resources, it is possible to point out: work force; knowledge and expertise; and financial aid (in a lower degree). Besides, if community members and organizations, their lives and problems are, indeed, a very important subject matter for the

neighbourhood museum, their input can be considered the only effective way to provide contents for the institution.

This way, an articulated and participative community is a basic requirement to guarantee the museum's survival as an agent for community development. Concerning this subject, it is also possible to conclude that the neighbourhood museum depends exclusively on the community's power of self-mobilization. As Hauenschild (1998) stresses, there has never been references of any nature to the work of the neighbourhood museum in community mobilization or in improving public participation.

The ideas brought up from Anacostia Museum's experiences have been considered an important influence for further initiatives on community development. According to Hugues de Varine (1996), Anacostia represents one of the cases which did lay the foundations of a new approach to museums, strongly linked to the politics of development.

However, such aspect of Anacostia's proposals apparently has not been as significant for the development of others neighbourhood museums as it was for the new museology. Although it is clear that the Anacostia Museum inspired the creation of other neighbourhood museums in United States, it was not possible to trace effectively how much of its purposes and ways to promote community development were significant for the new enterprises. Actually, due to its celebrated importance and reputation as the "the most enduring and in some ways the revolutionary result of that professional preoccupation" (LEWIS, 1980; quoted in KINARD, 1985), it seems reasonable to admit that Anacostia represents an exceptional attempt in museology to work for the development of a neighbourhood, at least for the time and country in which it was created.

Differently, a number of publications (e.g. MAYRAND, 1985; MOUTINHO, 1995) emphasize the relevancy of the neighbourhood

museum²⁵ by including it in the core of new museology's traditions. A couple of reasons for that can be found in John Kinard's article published in 1985, where he offers an interesting insight on the relation between the neighbourhood museum and the development of ecomuseums. According to his words, the neighbourhood museum was an important initiative in introducing the community's participatory process and bringing new visions on the social and territorial integration of museums.

Finally, Peter Davis (1999) stresses that, in general, Anacostia demonstrated that audience development and community empowerment was possible and changed the ways that curators thought about museums. With this, he emphasizes the significance of Anacostia's public participatory processes, as well as the priority given to community related issues rather than to the museum's collections.

The integral museum approach

The concept of integral museum was introduced in 1972, for occasion of the Round Table of Santiago (Chile), meeting organized by UNESCO and ICOM which aimed the discussions on the role of museums in the contemporary Latin America.

Several authors entrust to the round table the innovation of calling together specialists from outside the field of museology, who were able to provide the meeting with a revealing picture of the current situation and problems faced in the South and Central American cities and rural areas. The impact of such initiative allowed that all following reflections on the role of museums "departed from a severe but realistic assessment on the conditions of material and cultural

²⁵ Although some of them do not mention any name in particular, it is implicit that they make reference to the concept of neighbourhood museum introduced by the Anacostia Museum.

development worldwide” (MOUTINHO, 1989). Still according to Mario Moutinho:

“In the first place, the disparities between the general world development (promoted by the crescent use of technology) and cultural development were recognized. In the same way, this disparity enlarged the gap between regions of substantial material development and the regions from the periphery. It was also considered that a large number of the problems in contemporary society correspond to situations of injustice.”

The assessment of museums in face of such context revealed that the institutions stood far from an astonished reality. They were not prepared to respond to the challenges of the continent and actually did too little on behalf of Latin American societies. Mario Teruggi (1973) explains that such criticism brought an immediate reflection on the ultimate purpose of museums. Discussions followed on whether museums were responsible for interfering in societal problems, which did not correspond to their traditional functions. In response, it was defended that museums could not close their eyes for the situation that afflicted the continent, even if they were meant to “fill the gap” left by other social organizations. Those and other considerations finally led to a revision of the traditional concept of museums and the formulation of the integral museum approach.

Hugues de Varine (1995) and Judite Primo (1999), when stressing the type and level of the integral approach’s influence within the museological field, dedicate their attention to a couple of aspects, which characterize the relevancy of this new concept. They are: a) the integral view, or view of the totality; b) museum as action.

a) Integral view, or view of the totality

According to the Declaration of Santiago, from an internal perspective, the functions of the integral museum (preservation, research and communication) should be inter-related in an

interdisciplinary approach (MENSCH, 1992). The quest for this interdisciplinary aspect also embraces the external advice from various disciplines, such as economics, social sciences and education, in order to promote a better understanding of the Latin American development and eventually enable men to *look on the world as one world, to be tackled as an integrated whole* (Declaration of Santiago, 1972).

From an external perspective, the integral museum should be inter-related to the natural and social environment of humanity – conceived as “global heritage”, which was to be managed in the behalf of men and their communities. The museological object of study would be cast towards the relation between man and his cultural heritage.

b) Museum as action

“The museum in an institution in the service of society of which it forms as inseparable part and, of its very nature, contains the elements which enable it to help in moulding the consciousness of the communities it serves, through which it can stimulate those communities to action by projecting forward its historical activities so that they culminate in the presentation of contemporary problems; that is to say, by linking together past and present, identifying itself with indispensable structural changes and calling forth others appropriate to its particular national context.” (Declaration of Santiago, 1972)

Within the scope of the Declaration of Santiago, the integrated museum is presented as a dynamic instrument of social change. The museum, as *an institution in the service of society of which it forms as inseparable part*, should join the efforts for the Latin American development, helping both rural and urban communities in the solution of their problems. That is to say, museology was called

upon an active intervention in the processes of social, economic and cultural transformations of society (MOUTINHO, 1989).

For that, the actions of the integral museum were conceived within a strong educational perspective that, in resume, aims to *help in moulding the consciousness of the communities it serves* and *stimulate those communities to action*, by:

- raising awareness of the problems faced by the communities;
- showing the visitors their place in the world as individual and members of a collectivity (raising awareness of their surrounding environment and its history);
- indicating constructive solutions and perspectives.

The Declaration of Santiago also proposes some methods in order to fulfil such educational role and achieve the integral museum's purposes. According to Mario Teruggi, they all depart from the use and interpretation of the object:

“It was accepted that the object is the museum's point of departure and its justification (...) [the object] will have to be supplemented, extrapolated; and interrelated in a multitude of ways for it to fit naturally into the panorama of social, economic and cultural development. The object would begin to be transformed into a kind of datum, a linkage with the past from which to develop propaganda sequences (...) to serve the community towards understanding itself and plotting its course. [The object] would remain a significant and crucial element.”
(TERUGGI, 1973)

It is not very clear whether the object is conceived as an element of the museum's collection or as any piece of the “global heritage”. By

the words of Teruggi - and the own definition of museum in the Declaration of Santiago, as an institution which *acquires, preserves and makes available exhibits illustrative of the natural and human evolution*– the object seems to be one housed inside the museum. This object would aim, then, to link the individuals to the reality of the communities (of which the heritage is an integrating part). In the other hand, extracts of the document open the possibilities to include in this “object category” the own heritage existing outside the museum, which would function as the institutional collected object for the museum’s purposes.

Using either the museum object either elements of the “global heritage” as data carrier, such approach suggests an enhancing of the museum’s communication function (which includes making collections available to researches and social institutions, updating exhibition techniques and establishing systems of evaluation) and its adaptation to the reality of the communities, in order to accomplish the effectiveness of the proposed methods.

As to the methods themselves, the document refers to the:

- creation of temporary and mobile exhibitions;
- offer of research facilities and
- offer of educational programming inside the museum and, in special, in an outreach basis.

This all lead to a decentralization of the museum work, which is done directly with the communities. The Declaration of Santiago affirms that *the new type of museum seems the most suited to function as a regional museum or as a museum for small and medium-sized population centres*. Going further in this local perspective, the integral museum is supposed to drive its attention into rural, urban and suburban areas, taking into account their needs, dynamic and specificities.

By introducing general notions of in which ways museums should function and relate to the society, the integral approach's relevancy for the relation between museology and community development does not rely precisely on the establishment of concrete forms to implement such aspirations (TERUGGI, 1973), but rather on stating the moral obligation of the museum professionals to contribute to the development policies and programmes of their respective countries (VARINE, 1996a).

It is important to keep in mind that the integral museum concept brought to the world of museology aspirations - rather than solutions - if one's purpose is to analyze its influence and importance for future actions in the field. The integral approach came to adopt different faces in different initiatives and not always its political content, related to social development issues, was applied.

As to the consequences of the integral approach to Latin American museology in particular, they cannot be dissociated from the political status of the region in the 70's. In a context of dictatorships and severe repression against any initiative for democratization, it is easy to consider that changes towards an integral museum would count with one extra and extremely powerful limitation.

Invited to discuss the significance of the ideas brought up in the Round Table of Santiago in 1995, Hugues de Varine (1995) resumed such situation: "What happened since Santiago? It didn't change much in the museums of Latin America. Most of the participants of Santiago could not implement the adopted resolutions (...)". Varine continues, emphasizing that the influence of the round table extrapolated the borders of Latin America: "(...) experiences were and still are done in America. In the rest of the world, the impact of Santiago was appreciable, although delayed to the beginning of the 80's". The same way, many other authors stress that Santiago's resolutions -and the integral museum concept- took some time to be

recognized but had an undeniable influence in the field of museology²⁶.

For the new museology in particular, their significance was enormous. Nearly all publications dedicated to the new museology's historical development consider the Declaration of Santiago, if not the birth certificate of the new museology, one of its most important foundations. This way, considering the nature of further initiatives on community development after 1972- and the explicit references to the Declaration of Santiago- it is possible to affirm that new museology and the tendencies that it represents were direct heirs to the integral museum's political content and aims of development.

Ecomuseology

While the Round Table of Santiago introduced the concept of integral museum in Latin America, the French province of Burgundy witnessed the initial movements towards the creation of the Museum of Man and Industry, which would be known later as the Ecomuseum of the Urban Community Le Creusot-Montceau les Mines.

The foundation of the Ecomuseum of Le Creusot marks the birth of the 'development ecomuseum', a new form taken by museology in its search for a significant role in the work with community development.

From the late 18th century until the mid-20th, the sites of Le Creusot and Montceau les Mines constituted one of the most important industrial regions in France. As Kenneth Hudson (1996) remarks, its prosperity had been built around the production of armaments and

²⁶ On a wide basis, the interdisciplinary approach, the notion of "global heritage", as well as the idea that the educational function of museums should mean more than the pure extension of school, seem to be the most important influences of the Declaration of Santiago to the broader field of museology.

railway locomotives, with the Schneider family as the major entrepreneurs. After the Second World War, the Schneiders fell into disgrace, as a result of collaboration with the Germans. Their manufacturing empire collapsed, leaving Le Creusot destitute.

According to Hugues de Varine (1987, 1996), who had a crucial participation in the planning of the new institution, the situation experienced in the region after the war imposed to the local economy a conversion into new and diversified industrial productions. The traditional coal mining activities slowly diminished and the population was called upon moving from a totally paternalistic era to a more modern and capitalistic industrial development. In addition, a new administrative structure- aiming to provide the area with a common planning, development and investment policy- united under a single urban community²⁷ sixteen independent and sometimes conflicting municipalities of the region. This all led to an internal crisis, reinforced in one hand by economic difficulties and, in the other hand, by the urge to respond to ongoing social and political changes.

It was in such atmosphere that, in 1971, a working group was created in order to study a request from the mayor of Le Creusot, who wished to open a local museum in a wing of the former Schneider's palace- the Château de la Verrerie. Besides Hugues de Varine (director of ICOM at the time), the group counted with Marcel Evrard (from the Musée de L'Homme) and Dr. Lyonnet (physician and a local militant).

Varine (1987) explains that, in short time, the initial idea of a traditional museum was developed into something different. The project would be expanded to the urban community as a whole; representatives of the population, grass-roots organizations, unions,

²⁷ The term community in this particular case refers to a legal administrative status used by the French Government.

schools, local authorities, private enterprises would be mobilized in order to set desires, needs, available resources and methods to be implemented.

As an answer to the specific demands of a region undergoing rapid changes and consequent social and economic crisis, a new type of institution was to be conceived as an instrument of action and local regeneration:

“The aim of the museum was clear. There was a serious unemployment in the region and morale was very low. Something was needed to make it possible for the local people to achieve some kind of common purpose and to use the past, with its successes and its disasters, as a way of discovering a new future.” (VARINE, 1993)

In order to enable the new institution to respond to different aspects of community’s life (being them social, cultural, economical, environmental, etc.) and effectively contribute to its global development, the urban complex of Le Creusot-Montceau became site for a pioneer experiment. Namely, it consisted in the application of the ecomuseum idea, not in the current sense of a tool for interpretation and protection of the natural environment, but regarded through an expanded meaning²⁸. In this way, the new museum would embrace the whole territory of the urban community, a semi-rural/semi-industrial area of about 500 square kilometres and 150.000 inhabitants, of which the majority belonged “to the poorest social classes, being composed of farm, mine and factory workers.” (VARINE, 1975)

Still considering the experimental aspect of such endeavour, Hugues de Varine (1978) tells that, in the beginning, the new concept of ecomuseum did not have much substance, so that it was necessary to

²⁸ The difference between both concepts can be seen on page 52.

depart from some general convictions and attempts of definition. He lists them as: the new institution will be the emanation of the territory and its population; the museum will be interested in the totality of the environment, its heritage and development. It will be distinguished from ordinary museums for two essential features: the idea of permanent collection will be replaced by the notion of collective heritage, the primal mission of the museum is not collecting anymore; besides, the instrument of conceptions, programming, control, animation²⁹ and evaluation of the museum will be a council composed by representatives of the community.

Starting from those ideas, the following years saw the genesis of ecomuseum with the establishment of a network of contacts, people's mobilization, and first activities and consequent structuring. Finally, in 1974, the museum was officially inaugurated as a legal entity.

It is by this time that *Museum International* published Varine's article "A fragmented museum: the museum of Man and Industry" (1975), through which some of the fundamental features of the ecomuseum were presented. Later on, Varine wrote about the Ecomuseum of Le Creusot in many opportunities, making it possible to go further in establishing the differences in approach between the new institution and traditional museums.

Certainly, what appears to be the most important aspect of the ecomuseum's approach is the fact that the institution has in the community its subject and object, its actor and user. As to the notion of community as subject and object of action, that is to say, community's life –and community's problems- are the theme of the museum and the reason for its existence. The legitimacy of the ecomuseum's work is to be found in the contribution it can make to improve the living conditions of the local population, especially by serving as a vehicle for participative planning and participative

²⁹ From the French "animation". See more on animation on note 35 of Chapter 2.

learning oriented towards community development. Considering such will to respond to actual demands, it is possible to affirm that the ecomuseum can only survive as tool for development (in the way it is proposed) when intimately connected to community dynamics, thus gaining the face of a process in constant recreation. In time, as Varine (1993) reminds, changes in structure and organization are inevitable, once they, as well as the methods of work, must adapt to a number of variables such as: available resources, development objectives, community's power relations and desires. This, in the last case, could even denote disregard to the ecomuseum's utility as a tool for development.

In order to accomplish its purposes, the ecomuseum relies on the vital resources from the community. The origin of those resources can be identified in the assessment of community's life as object of action and object of knowledge; in the community's action (input) itself; and, finally, in the use of the collective heritage, when this last becomes support and raw material for the ecomuseum's activities. Understood in the broader sense, the collective heritage encompasses all sorts of elements of the community's cultural and natural environment: traditions, memory, knowledge and know-how, tangible and intangible testimonies of its history, landscapes, etc. Within this framework, the idea of a traditional museum collection (permanent, acquired, etc.) is replaced by the notion of the 'collection' of a living heritage that can be accessed everywhere in the community and its territory³⁰:

“Any movable or immovable object within the community's perimeter is psychologically part of the museum. This

³⁰ Varine (1975) only mentions an exception to the creation of “reserve collections” for means of preservation, in case elements of the collective heritage, which are considered relevant for the museum's purposes, face a danger of disappearing or lost the functional and emotional value to their owners.

introduces the idea of a kind of ‘cultural’ property right, which has nothing to do with legal ownership. Accordingly, it is not the function of the museum as such to make acquisitions since every thing existing within its geographical area is already at its disposal.” (VARINE, 1975)

The range of action of the ecomuseum is, in this way, the totality of the community’s territory. Actually, one could consider that the ecomuseum is the territory, being the last one regarded not in the sense of a legal or administrative delimitation but as a setting geographically defined by community’s life itself and the extension of its relations with the surrounding environment. When assuming the idea of the ecomuseum as territory, it is important to have in mind that such vision is not limited to the physical dimension of space, once territory gains in this concept the connotation of “the subjects and community with which the museum engages” (DAVIS, 1999). That is to say, the ecomuseum’s territory is composed not only by the physical space, but also by the human activity (and its cultural, economic, political and social dimensions), its concrete manifestations and the web of interconnections with all aspects of the surrounding environment.

As to the range of action of the ecomuseum Varine (1975) writes:

“The museum’s only boundaries are those defined by the community it serves. Just as, in classical geometry, a plane is composed by an infinite number of points, so the museum is composed of an infinite number of places, closed or open, natural or artificial, situated in a geographical delimited area. These places may be, and are in fact, a mill, a miner’s house, a prehistoric site, a bakery, a canal, and so on. Groups of places can also be envisaged such as part of a town, a village a forest. The whole community constitutes a living museum, its public being permanently inside (...) This does not mean,

of course, that there are not some parts of the museum which are singled out, for practical reasons, as places for organized activities. A certain site or monument will thus be selected for admiration, examination and explanation, while a certain building will be adapted to accommodate an exhibition, a series of events promoted by organizations or community events. This is essential, but only when it serves a specific purpose...”

Such choice for spreading the institution’s action all over the territory gives shape to the concept of “fragmented museum”, of which ways of intervention take place in the so-called antennae, decentralized hosts and interpretative itineraries, as well as in an interpretation centre of the community as whole, based in the Château de la Verrerie.

Once the ecomuseum aims to serve the local community, this last one constitutes, obviously, its main beneficiary and user. In this regard, it is important to consider that in the life of the ecomuseum the notion of user cannot be dissociated from the notion of actor. The same way as the ecomuseum does not have visitors but inhabitants, it also does not count with separate groups of programme deliverers and receivers. The community is a participative user, not only being beneficiary of the ecomuseum’s actions, but also promoter of those actions:

“[The museum] only has actors, namely all the inhabitants in the community. These inhabitants possess, individually and jointly, the museum and its collections; they live in it, they participate in its management, in making the inventory of their common cultural wealth, and in the organization of cultural activities. They give their opinion about programmes. (...) They are therefore real actors, although in varying degrees as regards awareness, responsibilities and initiative. The whole population is concerned with

everything: objects, exhibitions, studies, etc... By their eagerness or by their absence, by the suggestions, opinions or advice, they contribute on every occasion, they express themselves and co-operate.” (VARINE, 1975)

This way, the degree of community direct input is very high in all aspects of the museum’s work, representing, indeed, a requirement for the institution’s own existence in the terms it is sustained. Nevertheless, such input is not exclusive, as can be noticed by the word of Hugues de Varine. A “double input” system, which brings together “specialists” (academic knowledge) and “amateurs” (empirical knowledge), aims to add another dimension of interference to the communitarian activity. It seeks, with this, to ensure continuity to the actions of the ecomuseum, serve as catalyst for community mobilization, fulfil technical demands and, finally, to contribute in keeping the community in touch with the external world. Within this framework, two other categories of actors come into scene: the museum staff and external collaborators- in general specialists in various academic disciplines. Their interference can be regarded, in brief, as a support for decision-making processes, which have to find their final word in the voices of the community.

It is also possible to appreciate the concern in endowing the museum’s management with a structure that aims to guarantee democratic participation and balance of power relations among inside and outside actors (e.g. financing parties) and representatives of the local population themselves. Such concern is translated into the organization of separate committees (user’s committee, scientific and technical committee and management committee), which, together, form the governing body of the ecomuseum.

As to the activities of Le Creusot, Varine (1975) stresses that it is quite impossible to list them, once being so numerous and varied. Actually, if the ecomuseum proposes to act as community’s tool by responding to available resources and all the variety of potential

demands, on principle the institution could perform any type of activity, be it related or not to the traditional sense of museums functions. Such statement, however, does not exclude the choice for a general methodology that may leave open the opportunities for developing different kinds of activities at the same time it draws the main lines for the museum's ways of action. Three characteristics stand out from such methodology, namely:

- the use of the collective heritage as point of departure for the majority of the museum's activities;
- the extensive use of the museological language and traditional museums functions, understood as means to achieve the ecomuseum's purposes;
- the exploitation of a varied number of activities as a way to fulfil objectives related to community mobilization and empowerment.

Within this framework, Varine (1975, 1987) calls attention for some privileged methods and 'traditional' activities of the ecomuseum. Among them, it is possible to find:

- temporary and semi-temporary (constantly updated) exhibitions about the community's life and its environment, and thematic itineraries in the territory;
- research (in special surveys *in situ*), inventory and creation of archives;
- preservation (via conservation, acquisition of 'reserve' collections, registration, etc.) of the tangible heritage and the collective memory as a whole;
- communication to the exterior, via publications, oriented exhibitions, among others;
- programmes on life-long learning and co-operation with educational establishments;
- co-operation with several activities in the community (e.g. debates, programmes on capacity building or youth development);

- ‘training’ and assistance to museum staff, animators, community militants, researchers, etc.

It is essential to add that, in the scheme of the ecomuseum’s operations, traditional museum functions are direct or indirectly mingled with actions of social character in order to provide effective means for the interventions on the territory. In this regard, the ecomuseum seems to go further in the notion that its activities do not hold a purpose in themselves; they are a medium and, as medium, must serve the broader objectives of development collectively and in every possible ways.

A manifestation of such flexibility can be found in the development of activities that aim to attend a spectrum of multiple purposes. That is to say, in such case, the immediate aim of a research is not limited to collecting and interpreting data, or an exhibition project does not have in the final result (the exhibition itself) its main goal and so on. The purpose of these and others activities is extended to the social sphere of community’s life, by means of a direct interference in this domain. Such interference has, in particular, community mobilization/empowerment as conductor lead. As mentioned previously, the population’s engagement in the core of the activities performed by the ecomuseum extrapolates the notion of passive participation and stimulating its co-operation (by calling to action and building capacity) turns out to be indispensable. For that purpose, actions on community mobilization become integrant part of the processes which involve the planning, execution and evaluation of activities.

An exemplar case of having activities serving multiple purposes and aiming at community mobilization is what Varine calls “pretext-actions”. They are temporary exhibitions on a specific area of the ecomuseum’s territory, where teams of young people are invited to make a survey on the life of its inhabitants (listing objects, housing conditions, oral traditions, etc.) under the supervision of technical

staff. Subsequently, an exhibition plan is drawn based on the survey and adults are asked to mount the exhibition by bringing, displaying and commenting their own possessions (VARINE, 1975). These exhibitions intend to respond to a purely local matter (VARINE, 1975); constituting a way to produce an inventory of objects and the local history at the same time it promotes a direct effect on the community. First, by allowing that people explore history and reality themselves, they involve the population and create awareness. In this case, and in a number of other examples, the process is more important than the result of the activity; the same way, community learning does not start after the exhibition is mounted, it takes place but during the whole creation process. Second, by mobilizing forces around a common task, they are able to stimulate the establishment of voluntary groups, which become concerned with the ecomuseum's affairs.

As reminded by Peter Davis (1999), much was learned about the practicalities of developing a new methodology for museums at Le Creusot. Be it in relation to the work with community development in particular, or be it in relation to the establishment and testing of ecomuseum patterns (e.g. museum as territory, "fragmented" range of action, living heritage, etc.), the experiments of Le Creusot became important references for the museological theory and further initiatives in the field³¹. Varine (1996) stresses that, indeed, the museum came to be a sort of "model" in France and around the world.

Nevertheless, despite of its significance and degree of influence, it is vital to understand that the experiences of Le Creusot- as well as the

³¹ Particularly for its work carried out until the mid-80s. Varine (1996) explains that after this period "this Ecomuseum underwent a crisis (...), due to the aging of its main leaders and actors and a change in generation: the founding fathers were by then at retirement age, while a new active population was faced more with economic difficulties and unemployment than with the recognition and salvage of a collapsed industrial past."

concept of “development ecomuseum”- represent only one facet of the complex origin and development of ecomuseology. Thus, it seems important to address some brief considerations on the origin of ecomuseology and its following course(s) in order to clarify the place that proposals related to community development have taken within such context.

Since the birth of the first ecomuseums in France, the field of ecomuseology was far from comprising a homogeneous idea. Varine wrote in 1978: “the richness of ecomuseology resides in its diversity and in the bloom of interpretations, experiences, and active research on all directions, departing from a minimum of common ideas.” He stresses that in the base of these common ideas is the search for an alternative to traditional museums (with a special attention to visitors and communities), which could be also be extended to a number of proposals that reflect the rise of the *second museum revolution* period.

Added to this, authors such as Clair (1976) and Davis (1999) explain that the origin of ecomuseology is intimately associated with the new ways museums came to deal with the environment in the XX Century. The creation of open-air museums, the heritage movement in UK, site interpretation and the raise of environmentalism in museology after the II World War are some of the evidences of the new approaches to the natural environment and ecology (of particular importance for ecomuseology) that have permeated the museological field.

Considering that new social goals and new approaches to environment/ecology represent the “minimum of common ideas” of ecomuseology and that these are, in fact, much opened issues, it seems evident that further developments would be certainly susceptible to a multitude of interpretations and concrete applications. Such diversity (which, one could say, increased along

the years) was already clear in the first acts taken place in France during the late 60's and early 70's.

The initial conceptualization of ecomuseums, dating back to the beginning of the 50's, is attributed to Georges Henri Rivière. Steeped in traditions of French ethnography, Rivière developed for years a work closely connected to the interpretation of history and culture in an environmental context (DAVIS, 1999). It was also under his guidance that since the late 60's the first experiments on ecomuseums were carried out within the framework of environmental conservation and management of regional natural parks in France (DAVIS, 1999). Meanwhile, the term "ecomuseum", created by Hugues de Varine and publicly used for the first time in 1971, gained prominence and the experiments of Le Creusot laid a path for ecomuseology beyond objectives related to the protection and interpretation of the natural environment.

By 1972, an international colloquium organized by ICOM and the French Ministry of the Environment proceeded with the first attempts to create a definition for ecomuseums. Although the meeting's outcomes restrained the notion of ecomuseums to the research, preservation and communication on the whole of environmental elements, the proposals of Le Creusot were brought up, revealing that distinct tendencies shared label "ecomuseum".

Making use of the normatization of René Rivard, Peter Davis (1999) explains that the referred tendencies were divided into "discovery ecomuseums" and "development ecomuseums". "Discovery ecomuseums", intimately allied to the nature reserve movement in France, were those based on ecological principles, as Varine (1978) describes:

“Certain ecomuseums, faithful to the initial model of the Landes museum³², are institutions specifically associated to the environment and to the framework of natural and cultural life. These ecomuseum are instruments of a new pedagogy in environment, based on the “real” things (objects, monuments, sites, etc.) replaced in time and space. It is a modernization and improvement of two types of museums combined: the open-air museum of Scandinavian origin and the visitor’s centre of natural parks in USA. The French version, called ecomuseum, shares these two models. It uses the natural space and the traditional habitat as well as contemporary problems, in a global perspective, without replacing the elements that are conserved in their normal [original] context. This ecomuseum addresses to a national public, which look for conciliation with its environment. It takes into account, in a certain degree, the local population, considered sometimes as subject of study and as a privileged public of educational action.”

The “development ecomuseums”, differently, were more closely geared to the needs of communities (DAVIS, 1999):

“The other ecomuseums, in the way imagined since 1971 in Le Creusot, are more a formula in constant evolution that carries a character definitively experimental, refuting all normatizations, justifying essentially the function as an instrument for community development. They rely on the same techniques and the same temporal and spatial principles of the other category of ecomuseums; they distinguish themselves very clearly by their communitarian character (...). Actual and future problems foment the

³²Officially recognized in 1970 under the name of Regional Natural Park of the Landes de Gascogne. It represents one of the first initiatives on “discovery ecomuseum” and also counted with the guidance of Rivière.

programming basis. These ecomuseums have a predominant urban character in its dimensions, where their [territorial] ‘plate’ is constituted by the organized collectivities and by the associations of all genres that are developed in the core of these collectivities.” (VARINE, 1978)

According to Varine (1978), in this case, the prefix “eco” refers to the notion of “human ecology” and to the dynamic relations that men and society establish with their tradition, environment and transformation processes of their elements.

Keeping constantly in mind that ecomuseology has always counted with a diversity of approaches, it is possible to affirm, though, that the rising objectives of “development ecomuseums” had a very important influence in the field. Actually, they came to mould what Davis (1999) calls the “original ecomuseum philosophy”, of which shaping he attributes in great part to the work of Varine and Rivière. According the author, such philosophy postulated the application of community museology³³ to a specified territory, sharing the same essence with other initiatives associated to the new museology school of thought. He also stresses that the philosophy has been adapted and moulded for use in a variety of situations along the years.

In this way, it is possible to identify a whole palette of approaches among the ecomuseums influenced by the “original philosophy”. Some have foreseen community involvement and other principles sustained by new museology but did not have in community development a primal aim necessarily- or even an aim at all. In the other hand, a number of ecomuseums around the world responded to the philosophy’s development objectives, elaborating further forms and ways of interference in the territory. Some of the professionals

³³ Term ‘community museology’ denotes community development as the primal aim of museology (MENSCH, 1995)

involved with those museums also provided valuable contributions to the theories of ecomuseology as a resource for development.

In 1978, the Canadian journal *Gazette* published Varine's article "L'écomusée", in which the author offers a "personal contribution to the elaboration of a way of action relevant for development, departing from the museal language" (VARINE, 1978). His work, largely based on the experiences of Le Creusot, provides a theoretical overview of "development ecomuseums" (Varine uses the term "community ecomuseums", emphasizing their communitarian emanation). Besides bringing a number of considerations presented in previous publications about Le Creusot, the article sets up main targets for ecomuseums and additional reflections on the role of ecomuseums as a pedagogical process. Varine starts by summarizing the theory of "community ecomuseums" as following:

"The community ecomuseum works with a community and with one objective: the development of that community. It uses a global pedagogy based on the heritage and actors of a community. It is a prominent model of co-operative organization for development and a critical process of continuous evaluation and correction."

In order to accomplish a significant role in community development, five principal targets³⁴ for the ecomuseum are put on focus. They are:

- provide a data bank of all elements of the heritage and knowledge that can contribute to community development;

³⁴ In 1988, Varine (quoted in Davis, 1999) provided a list with four main objectives, which brings a review of the ecomuseum's targets, keeping the same essence: as an object and data bank for the community; to serve as an observatory of change (and to help the community react to changes); to become a laboratory- a focal point for meetings, discussions, new initiatives; and a showcase- revealing the community and its region to visitors.

- present the community to itself and its visitors;
- create conditions (by providing information and stimulating operational research) for decision-making on issues related to organization and development;
- open the community to the exterior, in order to encourage innovation and comparative analysis;
- ensure the interactions between the school system and community dynamics.

The methods applied to fulfil such targets convey the characteristics already mentioned in the core of activities of Le Creusot: they are numerous and varied; they are based on the assessment and use of local heritage; many have as point of reference traditional museum functions (exhibitions, inventories, preservation); they aim to serve multiple purposes and have a strong bias on community mobilization/ empowerment.

Varine adds that all the actions performed by the ecomuseum carry a global pedagogy as fundamental background. It is this pedagogy that brings together and associates various activities around the major objective of community development, endowing them with an elemental principle of the ecomuseum, which is:

“(…) to dispose to the community, simultaneously, the elements of information needed for the understanding of existing problems and the effective will to unfasten an original solution by the combination of the elements and factors taken from the past, the repertoire of available technical means and from the possibility of innovation.”
(VARINE, 1978).

When analyzing the impact of the global pedagogy in the work of the ecomuseum, it becomes clear that targets and applied methods do not aim to manufacture results. Instead, they aim to create conditions and stimulate processes (related to decision-making, learning,

consciousness-raising, etc.) to take place. Together, these processes, in which the community is actor and beneficiary, constitute the essence of the ecomuseum's development "strategy" and, why not to say, the essence of the 'community ecomuseum' itself.

According to the author, before achieving this "state of consciousness" and being able to act effectively as an instrument for development, the ecomuseum must go across a number of steps. He lists them as:

- acquaintance with community's identity, by a repeated process of collective reflection, inventory and study of the heritage;
- acquaintance with the complexity of the community problematic, by the organization of repeated contacts among population groups on diverse subjects;
- opening to external contributions, by the multiplication of extra-communitarian references and introduction of thematic activities that reflect radically different situation from those experienced in the community;
- testing of community's initiative, ability to cope with problems and find solutions, by carrying out pilot-projects in which the community or one of its groups goes through the entire process of development (location of problems, study, research and choice for solutions, application, critic and evaluation).

These steps also serve as a learning process for the community: forces are mobilized, there is a raising awareness about community's life and its identity, the population is called upon performing interventions in its actual reality. The results of such process, according to Varine, could even cause the ecomuseum to become a superfluous instrument, once the degrees of consciousness and initiative of the community are sufficient to allow a spontaneous

development. Another possibility is that the museum survives as the elected instrument for community development instead.

A corresponding insight on the processes that should precede the establishment of ecomuseums (particularly those oriented towards development) occupies a privileged position in the theories of the Canadian museologist Pierre Mayrand, who came to play an important role in the field of ecomuseology since the late 70's. Mayrand's theories, as well as their actual applications, stand a complementation and at the same time a counterpoint to the ideas of Hugues de Varine. Above all, such acknowledgment offers a good example of alternative approaches to community development- and the ways to reach it.

Just as the 'steps' introduced in Varine's article, Mayrand proposes the accomplishment of some preceding phases before the ecomuseum is able to act as a tool for development. Those phases have been represented through the "creativity triangle", a scheme drawn for the Ecomuseum of Haute-Beauce (Quebec, Canada), the first to be established in North America (DAVIS, 1999).

The foundation of Haute-Beauce followed a period marked by profound reforms of cultural institutions in Quebec. Echoing a growing awareness on the region's heritage- its interpretation and potentialities- as well as a strong desire to establish Quebec's unique identity³⁵, they offered the favourable conditions for the

³⁵ Matters of identity have been a central subject for Quebec in the last decades. According to Bélanger (2000), the Quebec "Quiet Revolution" (1960-1966)- period when the Canadian province witnessed intense changes and modernisation under the liberal party – brought, together with the questioning of the social order, a redefinition of the role and place of French Canadians in Canada. "Demand for change was heard everywhere: for bilingualism, for biculturalism, for the respect of the autonomy of Quebec, for equal status in Confederation (...) There was no doubt that the Quebecois, governed for so long by "Negro Kings" in the interest of foreign powers, economical and political, had to become masters of their destiny (...) as the

development of ecomuseums and came to place the Canadian province in the forefront of the experiments on ecomuseology together with France (DAVIS, 1999)³⁶.

Rivard (1985) adds that much of the interest for ecomuseums was developed due to exchanges between French and Canadian professionals since 1974. Among those, the ideas of the new museology – and in special Varine’s article, “L’*écomusée*”- were of particular interest, as Mayrand (1984) attests:

“(…)the ecomuseum, as defined by Hugues de Varine in an article in the CMA’s Gazette, will be the vehicle favoured in Quebec in that it corresponds most closely to the demands of democratization, popularization and decentralization of cultural activities.”

It is also important to emphasize that, behind those demands, issues on affirmation of identity remained as an important -if not primary- goal for the region’s development at the time, helping to shape both theory and action of the Ecomuseum of Haute-Beauce and of other ecomuseums in Quebec as well.

state became increasingly the foundation of the nation, rather than the ethnic group as before, it focused the nationalism less on ethnocentric impulses and more on collective goals for all of Quebec. It also gave rise to a powerful separatism movement and even to terrorist manifestations, both of which linked strongly the ideology of nationalism and the desire for social change.” (BÉLANGER, 2000)

³⁶ Between 1978 and 1979, province witnessed the bloom of the “Quebec movement” (MAYRAND, 1984), which comprised the creation of its first three ecomuseums: Haute-Beauce, Fier-Monde and Insulaire. According to Davis (1999), “from Quebec the ideology of the ecomuseum has gradually permeated into other provinces of Canada and to some degree into the USA, where ecomuseum ideas, if not terminology, have been applied in new community museums, and particularly those initiated by Native American communities”.

As to the Ecomuseum of Haute-Beauce, its origin can be dated back to 1978, year when the Musée et Centre Regional d'Interprétation de la Haute-Beauce was created under the direction of Pierre Mayrand³⁷. Hauenschild (1998) explains that Mayrand, after being contacted by a local inhabitant who wished to dispose of his private collection, has decided to take on a project that combined keeping the objects in the region and erecting a museum or interpretation centre³⁸. This came to be the opportunity to proceed with the first experiments on ecomuseology.

A promotional campaign followed the project. After one year the museum was able to purchase the collection with the population's financial support and was officially opened to public visitation (HAUENSCHILD, 1998). According to Stevenson (1982), the idea was to have an institution concerned not only with the preservation of Haute-Beauce's heritage but also with cultural service³⁹; in this way the museum "would be an organization concerned with the present and future as well as the past; its role would be to reveal the identity of that particular part of Quebec". In addition, Rivard (1985) reminds of the museum's purpose of helping the "neglected region" to recover a measure of pride through its own identity and the relevance of developing an institution supported by its own people.

³⁷ Haute-Beauce has been described as a rather isolated rural area in the southeast part of Quebec, located in the south-western hinterland of the Beauce region proper, which consists of flourishing small towns. Comprising thirteen rural parishes, the Haute-Beauce region is physically separated from this centre of small town principally by its position on a high plateau that reaches as much as 873 meter in elevation (HAUENSCHILD, 1998).

³⁸ Mayrand was "an art historian and museologist of the University of Quebec and Montreal (UQAM, who owned a second home in St. Hilaire de Dorset [one of Haute-Beauce's rural parishes) and had visited the small private museum several times." (CÉRÉ, 1982 quoted in HAUENSCHILD, 1998).

³⁹ The author reminds of the conditions of Haute-Beauce, "which has been sleeping for a century and with virtually no cultural facilities."

If, for some, the perspectives offered by the new museum were taken somewhat as a finished concept, for Pierre Mayrand and the educator Maude Céré they were regarded as initial steps of a careful plan to transform the institution into an ecomuseum⁴⁰. Such plan, implemented by means of the “creativity triangle”, “paved the way for eventual acceptance of the ecomuseum, the appropriation and interpretation of territory, and research into collective memory and popular creativity” (RIVARD, 1985).

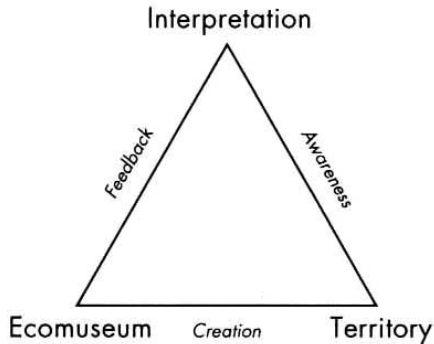
As practical outcomes, it is possible to note that, in the same year when the “triangle” was drawn up (1980), a user’s committee was created and the museum offered the first courses on popular museology. Three years later, an operation so-called “Haute-Beauce Créatrice” gave the “thirteen villages of the ecomuseum an opportunity to express their appropriation of their territory by means of monumental symbols and creative activities” (RIVARD, 1985) and the Ecomuseum of Haute-Beauce was officially recognized as such.

It is clear that Haute-Beauce’s establishment followed a completely different path from Le Creusot’s. Nevertheless, just like in the case of the French museum, the actions planned and performed by the Ecomuseum of Haute-Beauce have attended a will to concretely contribute to local development, as can be seen in Mayrand (1984) Céré (1985, quoted in HAUENSCHILD, 1998). In this way, if one takes such perspective as a final objective of the ecomuseum, eventually he will be faced with different strategies from those

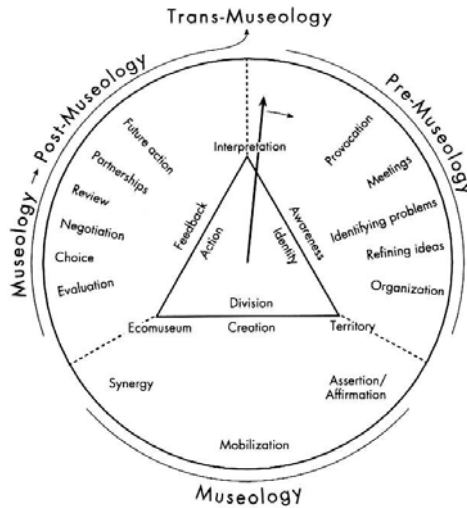
⁴⁰ When talking about the organizational development of the Ecomuseum of Haute-Beauce, Hauenschild (1998) explains: “After five years of building awareness in the Haute-Beauce, Mayrand and Céré succeeded in officially founding the Ecomusée de la Haute-Beauce. This for them had been the aim from the beginning. But, at first, it was not discussed openly and in the end met resistance. It was not possible to consummate the founding of the ecomuseum without losses: it was preceded by the resignation of the museum’s advisory board, which held a more traditional concept of a museum and distanced itself from the attempts to found an ecomuseum.”

applied in Le Creusot and – the most important – he will realize that, although Varine and the Canadian museologists share much in common, they present distinct approaches to community development.

The first evidences of that can be found in the examination of the “creativity triangle”. In 1999, Peter Davis provided a detailed description of the scheme. The author writes:



“The Canadian museologist, Pierre Mayrand, when setting up the Ecomuseum of Haute-Beauce in Quebec, expressed the process in the form of a ‘creativity triangle’, which shows the ecomuseum developing as a result of interpretative activities within its geographical area. An interpretation centre lies at the apex, which increases public awareness of the geographical area or territory through its activities, which would include the creation of antennae. As the territory (and its natural and cultural heritage) becomes better known, there is a demand for the creation of an ecomuseum and the involvement of the local community. Once the ecomuseum is established, there is a feedback from local people and professionals to the interpretative process.(...)



Mayrand has subsequently refined his ‘creativity triangle’ and placed it within a theoretical ‘three year circle’⁴¹; the implication is that within three years it is possible to move from idea to foundation, from apathy to empathy, and to pass through transitional stages of museology which he identifies as pre-museology, museology, para-museology, post-museology and trans-museology. Pre-museology exists before the theoretical framework has been established. The museology stage witnesses the framework based on a museum and a collection, the later encouraging research and communication. Para-museology transcends the museum and collection base, involving other institutions and the community, and includes elements of new museology. These three museological stages are roughly equivalent to the three

⁴¹ Although the addition of the ‘three year circle’ to the ‘creativity triangle’ dates from the 90’s, in the 80’s the idea of the three-year development already existed, as can be attested in Rivard (1985).

sides of the triangle. Mayrand two further stages of museum development are perhaps more controversial, with post-museology demanding the emergence of social role as dominant force (the museum curator as social worker), and trans-museology being a utopian stage where individuals within the community no longer need the social services of the museum.” (DAVIS, 1999)

In addition, Céré (1985, quoted in HAUENSCHILD, 1998) stresses:

“The creation process of the ecomuseum began with an interpretation initiative taken by specialists. Its power of diffusion made it possible to sensitize the population to the ideas of identity and appropriation of the heritage-action in order to be able to release clearly the sense of territorialization. Thanks to the techniques of creativity, the ecomuseum was produced. Through a phenomenon of retroaction, this population itself can now interpret what it is and determine the directions of its development.”

The statements above clearly present the formation and action of the ecomuseum as part of a wider process, which aims to fulfil specific objectives related to community development⁴². They also suggest that the ecomuseum, while integrating a process, is fated to extinguishment by the time such process accomplishes its objectives. In other words, an ultimate proof of the ecomuseum’s success – and of the process as a whole- relies exactly on reaching their own termination, which, according to Céré, would correspond to the full capacity of the local population to work for its development. Pierre Mayrand (1984) also refers to this approach when he stresses that “the new museography [understood as the practices applied in new

⁴² This perspective is reinforced by Mayrand’s (1984) definition of ecomuseum: “(...) the ecomuseum is not and end in itself: it is defined as an objective to be attained.”

museum, such as the ecomuseum and in particular Haute-Beauce] can enable communities to achieve their own development objectives.”

In this way, it is possible to affirm that the process described in the “creativity triangle” aims to improve a number of conditions in community’s life. These conditions, according to Céré and Mayrand, allude to its capacity to determine development objectives and the directions to be followed afterwards.

In order to achieve such stage, the scheme foresees, during the “pre-museology” phase, actions that culminate in the appropriation of the territory by the local community. This appropriation also launches a continuous process of communitarian animation, which will accompany the whole “three year circle” in different levels. Throughout “pre-museology”, a process of “sensitisation” aims to increase community awareness of the territory and its features. In this way, besides being fundamental for the ecomuseum’s creation, consolidating a sense of territorialization allows the population to start knowing better the value of its region and heritage. This, according to the scheme, leads to a state of “assertion/affirmation” of identity and, one could say, brings the community closer to mastering resources (e.g. heritage, collective memory, etc.) that are crucial for its development.

In the “museology” phase, after a sense of identity is first established, community “sensitisation” gains the connotation of “mobilization”. Here, the objective is to promote a growing involvement of the community in the process and, with this, create “synergy” (concept that combines the ideas of action and co-operation). This corresponds to the moment when the ecomuseum is created.

The ecomuseum’s establishment inaugurates the transition to the “post-museology” phase. From this point on, people are expected to

act each time more actively, together with the ecomuseum. Within this relationship, the ecomuseum becomes an instrument of community mobilization (call to action), supports actions of social character⁴³ and works with the population in order to build capacities (which are related to the strengthening of identity and promotion of community's self-awareness and self-initiate). The community, by its turn, provides feedback to the ecomuseum and can interpret its own history, identity, needs, problems, wishes, etc.

By the closing of the cycle and the end of the "post-museology" phase, eventually the community is expected to master the directions of its development without the services of the ecomuseum (what corresponds to the final aim of the process and the "trans-museology" phase). This stage would correspond to the "plenitude" of community empowerment, understood as a state in which the population has the actual power to interfere in its reality (i.e., from an internal perspective, because it has the awareness, can master resources, take decisions, etc.). As the name suggests, "trans-museology" extrapolates the museological action and, in consequence, suppresses the role proposed for the ecomuseum in face to new demands.

It is interesting to note that, according to Mayrand's theory, there is a gradual transformation which endows the process initiated by the ecomuseum with new aspects of social work at each accomplished phase, until the moment when such process is confounded with the global action for development itself, as Mayrand (2000) suggests. At this stage, the ecomuseum is supposed to work as a support, a reference in the context of development, finally arriving to the point where its existence becomes superfluous (what corresponds to the "post-museology" phase). In this way, the museological action passes from "sensitisation" to "mobilization", from "creating

⁴³ Such as alphabetization, social work and others which are not considered as museum services in the common sense (MAYRAND, 2000).

awareness” to “leading to action”, until it becomes a mark and reference. At the same time, it is understood that the community accompanies the ecomuseum’s evolution, passing from the “appropriation of the territory” (in the “pre-museology” phase) to involvement (“museology” phase), initiative (“para-museology”) and finally to proper action for development (“post-museology” and “trans-museology”).

Perhaps such idea of transformation can explain some of the differences between Varine’s and the Canadian museologists’ discourses during this period. These differences, which are inherent to each other, refer to the type and level of interference that the ecomuseum proposes to carry out within the community, as well as to the notion of collectivity.

As it will be seen later, for Varine the ecomuseum comprises an active/direct role in community development planning. Differently, the Canadian museologists do not endow the work of the Ecomuseum of Haute-Beauce with such function⁴⁴. Differently from when the ecomuseum aimed to help the population to reach self-awareness, self-initiative and strength its identity in earlier stages, the institution does not foresee actions in helping the community to determine development objectives or directions to be followed. Besides, Varine’s ideas are grounded on a strong notion of collectivity. His emphasis relies on the collective level of community dynamics and target actions that intend to promote a “critical communitarian consciousness”.

On the other hand, the Canadian museologists show to focus more on targets that deal with the individual level of community’s life as means to reach development:

⁴⁴ I.e., the museum does not foresee specific actions in this domain. Nevertheless, one can understand that its work provides the accomplishment of the essential requirements to allow the community to master its own development.

“There is individual development, where each person can find its place and develop, can use the museum as a personal spring board, but this is also a tool of regional development. I believe that for me these are the two great objectives of the ecomuseum.” (CÉRÉ, 1985, quoted in HAUENSCHILD, 1998)

In this regard, Mayrand (quoted in HAUENSCHILD, 1998) justifies that without autonomy and self-determination an individual cannot act as a community member and contribute effectively to its development:

“It seems to me that development is very closely linked to the people’s autonomy, to their basic capacity to make these decisions and not to wait for others to impose them, to be capable of taking their own matters into hand and not having them imposed or fabricated, rather than saying “let’s wait for the government to give us something before starting”.

Therefore, it is possible to say that Varine presents the ecomuseum as an instrument of community empowerment, which, among other things, aims to “guide” (or create conditions for) decision-making processes related to development planning, mainly on a collective basis. The Canadian museologists, by their turn, present the ecomuseum (at least during this period) as an instrument of community mobilization/sensitisation, which, among other things, aims to promote a “long term process of self-awareness” MAYRAND, 1984) with a view to development, mainly on an individual basis⁴⁵.

⁴⁵ It is important to stress that the comparison between these approaches show is a difference in emphasis mainly. This does not mean that for Varine the collective level excludes the individual level or vice-versa in the case of the Canadian museologists. What changes is the hierarchy in which collective and individual levels appear within both ideas and strategies proposed for the ecomuseums.

Finally, all these differences can be explained by each particular situation and certainly cannot be dissociated from their social context. However, one may also consider appreciating them within a theoretical perspective. By doing this, it is possible to affirm that the Canadian case provides evidences to believe that Mayrand and Céré interpret community development as the result of a collective development of individuals in a community, standing a fundamental contrast to Varine's approach.

This focus on an individual approach is also reflected in the ideas proposed for and carried out in the Ecomuseum of Haute-Beauce. The first of them refers to its essential educational role. In 1984, Mayrand defined ecomuseum as such:

“The ecomuseum... is a collective, a workshop expanded to include the whole population of a given area; its basic tools remain those of critical analysis and research. The ecomuseum should be considered an educational process, using the methods of popular education... The ecomuseum is not an end in itself: it is defined as an objective to be attained.”

Aiming at objectives related to community development, the educational character of the museum process calls for action and a direct interference in community's reality. As Stevenson (1982) stresses, “what the population learns and understands [through this educational process] guides the decision they make, particularly on a community level, about their present and future.”

For this, the ecomuseum strives to initiate a learning process based on the methods of popular education, which comprises the notions of “learning through participation”, “learning through experience” and “learning through action” (HAUENSCHILD, 1998); rather than the idea of learning as passive assimilation of given contents. This is

done mainly in an individual basis and follows the mechanism of a geometric progression: knowledge is multiplied from individual to individual, who, together, will take decision collectively.

In order to exercise its educational role, the ecomuseum focus its activities on the following targets:

- act as people's university (educate the population through active participation in the museum so that it can answer the questions: "Where do we come from?", "Who are we?" and "Where do we want to go?"⁴⁶);
- provide means for the population to learn work skills (to reflect, to work collegially, to plan, etc...) and take responsibility;
- stimulate contact with external references and open the community to the outside world.

Among the methods applied to fulfil such targets, courses on popular museology have a strategic role. By giving individuals basic museological knowledge and the opportunity to participate in practical museum projects, the courses aim to train "competent workers for community action" (RIVARD, 1985). The idea is that individuals who take the courses will play an active role in the ecomuseum and disseminate their knowledge to others, multiplying the effect and range of action of the educational process. Besides the fact that the courses on popular museology are a way to promote participation and qualify human resources, they also stimulate the replacement of professional specialists for community members.

⁴⁶ Hauenschild, 1998.

Other methods refer to traditional museum functions. They all depart from the assessment of the local heritage⁴⁷. Among those, the authors highlight:

- temporary thematic exhibitions and open-air exhibits (developed in local interpretation centres- ecomuseum's antennae- and spread in the territory) with workshops, and discussions with the community about the themes;
- *in situ* conservation;
- research on collective memory and local history.

⁴⁷ As to the concept of heritage, Rivard (1985) stresses: "the collective memory of the public is the primary heritage of the ecomuseum".

Such activities aim to fulfil different purposes. First of all, they intend to “develop awareness of the significance and value” (STEVENSON, 1982) of the local heritage and issues that concern community’s life, and also bring discussions into a present and future-oriented perspective. They are also regarded as means to motivate community members to take initiative, act, deal with responsibilities and, finally, develop their work skills (once they are the ones who are supposed to plan and execute such activities). In regard to this last aspect, Mayrand (quoted in HAUENSCHILD, 1998) emphasizes the importance of stimulating participation in the management of the institution:

“By definition and in accordance with our objectives... administrative and organizational education was one of the priority objectives. In order to be independent, these people needed to take themselves in hand, to set themselves objectives and to be capable of managing the objectives collectively (...)”.

In addition, considerably attention is given to forging links with the outside world. This is done mainly by setting a network of contacts and exchange programmes with other ecomuseums or “any organization working in the field of popular education, economic development and heritage appreciation” (RIVARD, 1985). As another facet of such opening to the outside world, Hauenschild (1998) mentions the work with small-scale tourism (by creating tourist routes), which, besides raising awareness and a sense of value in relation to Haute-Beauce’s territory, also has a view to community’s economical development.

Just like in Le Creusot, the community appears as subject and object, actor and user of the ecomuseum. The degree of community direct input, in this way, is very high in all aspects of the museum’s work. Although it is clear that Haute-Beauce combines community input with specialists’ input (“double input” system), there is a general

belief that the role of the professional/specialist should be minimized during the course of the ecomuseum's life. Some evidences of that can be found in the popular museology training itself, as well as in the organizational structure of the ecomuseum:

“The approach of the ecomuseums in Quebec is at once interdisciplinary and non-disciplinary, in that none of them has the scientific committee the French ecomuseums have. This fact does not in any way denote fear or disdain of the strict, scientific approach. It shows a preference for integrating professional researchers with the local people and, through the user's committee, ensuring that they are neither isolated nor made remote from the popular objectives given to their research work by the ecomuseum.” (RIVARD, 1985)

Besides the volunteer work, community input is also high in the ecomuseum's management and financial support. Actually, financial support is taken as a crucial aspect of participation and proof of the community's ownership of the ecomuseum, as well as of the institution's independence. It is done mainly through family memberships and contributions from individuals and local business, representing an important funding source.

Finally, the ecomuseum's participation structure reflects an effort to decentralize responsibility and decision-making. Local committees carry out activities and are able to take decisions independently from the central governing bodies of the ecomuseum - which, in theory, would respond to the main directions of the ecomuseum's programming, day-to-day operations and financial affairs.

The cases of Le Creusot and Haute-Beauce are only examples among other approaches to “development ecomuseums”. It is true, however, that they counted with the direct involvement of two of the most outstanding theorists of ecomuseology (Hugues de Varine and Pierre

Mayrand) and carry the most substantial theoretical frameworks of “development ecomuseum” during this period.

Despite of their differences, it is possible to say that both share the same essence; which is not exclusive to “development ecomuseums”, but also can be extended to a number of other initiatives that followed the development of the new museology school of thought.

One must take such aspect into account when thinking of the relations between ecomuseology and community development, once a number of different –and sometimes discrepant- initiatives shared the label “ecomuseum”, as discussed previously. This becomes even more dramatic when one realizes that, for many who work with community development, ecomuseum became a “distorted” word and does not have the power to express its implicit philosophy. An example of that can be seen in Varine’s attitude:

“For one who invented the word ecomuseum almost by accident, its destiny is difficult to comprehend. As for the phenomenon itself, its substance varies from one place to another, despite the efforts of Georges Henri Rivière to give it specific form and meaning. In some cases it is an interpretation centre; in others an instrument for development; elsewhere a park or makeshift museum; yet elsewhere a centre for ethnographic conservation or for the industrial heritage.” (VARINE, 1985)

Today, Varine shows a preference for replacing the term “ecomuseum” for “community museum”⁴⁸. By doing this, he is

⁴⁸ In 1993, Varine defined community museum as: “(...) one which grows from below, rather than imposed from above. It arises in response to the needs and wishes of people living and working in the area and it actively involves them at every stage while it is being planned and created and afterwards when it is open and functioning. It makes use of experts, but it is essentially a co-operative venture, in which professionals are no more than partners in a total community effort.”

emphasizing, instead of its form, the museum's essence as a community instrument and as a process. And it is such idea (which is not exclusive to ecomuseums) that will arrive strongly to the core of the new museology movement in the 80's.

The "bloom" of the new museology movement

The "bloom" of the new museology movement was a phenomenon witnessed specially in countries of Europe, Latin America and Canada during the 80's. In resume, it could be appreciated as the result of a convergence of various tendencies in museology (which existed before and beyond this movement and, in general terms, correspond to the new museology school of thought) around the common desire to change radically museology's role within the society and drive it towards an essential stage of social concern.

Just like in the cases showed previously, the development of the new museology movement followed a crescent dissatisfaction with the meanings and methods of the traditional museology. Museology's typical form of action - the classical museum- was regarded as an institution lost in the past and obsolete, isolated from the public and incapable to respond to contemporary societal changes or everyday life challenges. Besides the torpor, more disquieting accusations referred to the use of the traditional museum as an instrument of oppression, a way to impose the dominant cultural view of a minority (the elite) to the national populations as a whole. This view has provided several critics along the time. An early example can be found in Varine (1969):

“It is normal that the institution [museum] is contested and even rejected globally, that it is considered as an instrument of propaganda and oppression in the service of a caste

supposedly in possession of the truth, be it ideological, aesthetic, moral or others.”

César Lopes and Fernando João Moreira (1986) go further:

“More important than indicating, or adjusting to something, is to provide the populations with the chance to realize all this intoxication, colonization and attempts of adulteration of which they are victims – for that we must dare to produce something alternative, genuine e sincere, something *de facto* new and free.” (LOPES & MOREIRA, 1986)

Within this context, during the decades of 70 and 80, the new museology began to arise as a movement of criticism and renovation in the core of the international scene of museology. Numerous experiences (such as ecomuseums, local museums, neighbourhood museums and others on community museology, popular museology, etc.) carried out alternatives to overcome traditional approaches, facing disagreements and resistance -a segregation according to some⁴⁹ - in the professional environment.

As different authors attest, in time, the frustration of some museologists in addressing debates and their points of view during international bodies meetings, as well as in promoting reforms in established museums, led to the shaping of the new museology as an independent movement from the established circles. That is to say, at this first stage, such congregation has been set mostly as a political positioning and protest against conservative approaches - and attitudes - in the field of museology. Pierre Mayrand, in the article “The new museology proclaimed” (1985), offers a resume of the materialization of the new movement:

⁴⁹ For instance, Moutinho (1995).

“This emerged from the first public pronouncements of a group who met in London in 1983, at the General Conference of ICOM, and then in Quebec in 1984 at the first International Workshop on “Ecomuseums and the New Museology”⁵⁰. The protest first voiced in ICOM’s International Committee for Museology (ICOFOM) developed rapidly into a movement with its own momentum and structure which is expected to lead the establishment, in November 1985 (Second International Workshop, Lisbon, Portugal), of an international federation for the new museology.” (MAYRAND, 1985)

The first and the second International Workshops referred in Mayrand’s article promoted, respectively, the creation of the Declaration of Quebec and the International Movement for a New Museology (MINOM).

Moutinho (1995) explains that the objectives of the workshop held in Quebec in 1984 were to create conditions for exchanging experiences on ecomuseology and new museology; clarify the relations between them and the established museology; and deepen concepts as well as encourage new practices on ecomuseology and new museology in general. In this way, besides developing theoretical reflections, the meeting aimed to organize “what was felt to be a simultaneous movement in many countries, of which interlocutors were found, in a way, isolated from each other” (MOUTINHO, 1995). Moutinho continues:

“From a vague idea of new forms of museology (...) the workshop evolved to the recognition of a movement with such amplitude that could not be disregarded as a new reality of museology”.

⁵⁰ Mayrand (1984) also explains that the organization of the workshop was part of the efforts in Quebec to promote exchanges among ecomuseums throughout the world.

It is true that differences in forms and museological expressions led to many disagreements, in special in relation to the protagonist role claimed for ecomuseums within new museology, according to Moutinho. However, the will to give shape to a movement rooted in pluralities finally overcame and the Declaration of Quebec was formulated as a charter of the new museology movement, being adopted in the Second International Workshop in Lisbon.

Still during the meeting of 1984, a resolution was adopted for the creation of an ICOM international committee “Ecomuseums/Community museums” and an international federation for the new museology. The ICOM committee never came into being, but the international federation was instituted under the name of International Movement for a New Museology (MINOM) in 1985 and later recognized by ICOM as an affiliated organization. Since then, MINOM has organized international workshops and regional meetings, in particular through the Portuguese cluster⁵¹ (this last happening on an annual basis since 1988).

When analyzing the contents of these and other implementations, one might take into consideration that, indeed, there isn't a formula for new museology movement. According to Andrea Hauenschild (1998), its discourse is essentially cultural and political, not scientific. She argues that it is not possible to talk about a theory of new museology; at best, one can speak of a “collection of ideas”. She also emphasizes the empiric nature of the new museology, quoting both Hugues de Varine (1983) and Michel Roy (1987):

“There are no established rules or models, just theories that have been immediately belied by practice [...]

⁵¹ Today, MINOM has 3 clusters: Canada, Portugal and Mexico.

These practices are characterized by a refusal to develop a precise museological model, a practice based on a precise theory. Exploration and experimentation are still underway.”

Other theorists of the new museology have reinforced this idea, such as Cesar Lopes, who described in 1988 the new museology as a “body of theoretic-practical proposals”. Mayrand also addresses to this matter. In 1989, he wrote with criticism: “the practices that openly claim to be part of the new museology are rarely connected to a structured, continuous museological reflection”. In addition, it seems to be a general consensus that, due to its empiric nature and diversity of initiatives, the new museology can only be defined by “its concerns, positioning and actions.” (Provisory working group, 1985)

Nevertheless, along the 80’s, efforts aimed the definition of basic principles, objectives and means of new museology through the creation of collective documents and publication of various individual papers of those related to the movement’s philosophies. Some of such statements will serve as sources to analyze the proposals related to community development at this first stage of the new museology movement.

In the first place, community development appears as the primal objective of the new museology, as the Declaration of Quebec states:

“While preserving the material achievements of past civilizations and protecting the achievements characteristic of the aspirations and technology of today, the new museology – ecomuseology, community museology and all other forms of active museology – is primarily concerned with community development, reflecting the driving forces in social progress and associating them in its plans for the future.”

Echoing the ideas introduced in the Round Table of Santiago, the Declaration of Quebec therefore reaffirms the social role of museology and evokes an essential commitment to people in opposition to the “sacrosanct principles of the profession” (MAYRAND, 1985), i.e. the emphasis on collections and artefacts.

Just like in the integral museum concept, new museology’s claims for a global view of reality lead to the adoption of an interdisciplinary approach; and museological interference is regarded as a mean to generate action within communities. In addition to this last purpose, the actions of new museology, in general terms, also aim to⁵²:

- strength community’s identity and sense of ownership of its territory and heritage;
- raise community’s awareness of itself and its conditions of existence;
- stimulate creativity and self-confidence;
- favour cultural exchanges inside the community and between the community and the outside.

Such aims depart from and respond to the principle of community participation, which is crucial to the new museology movement and can be understood as:

“(...) holders of a cultural identity and knowledge must be the protagonists of this same culture. That is to say, instead of consumers to a certain cultural product, which is outlandish to them, individuals and communities must be the

⁵² This is a condensation based on: resolutions of the I International Workshop, 1984 (quoted in MOUTINHO, 1989); Provisory working group, 1985 (quoted in MOUTINHO, 1989); Maure (1985); resolutions of the IV International Workshop, 1987 (quoted in LOPES, 1988); Lopes (1988); and Hauenschild (1998).

ones to create their own culture, their own development, they must be the actors of change ...” (LOPES, 1988)

In this way, community is taken as user and actor/ subject and object of the museological action and, just like in the cases seen previously, it is expected to deliver direct and high input to the processes in which it is engaged (this happens together with specialists’ input, characterizing the “double input system”).

Assertions also refer to the general orientations of applied methods. They basically correspond to the conceptions that were already being developed since the Round Table of Santiago: departing from the assessment of community’s global heritage (defined in relation to its relevance for the “collective memory”), methods in the new museology are largely based on traditional museum functions and the museological language, which are extended in order to respond to defined targets on community development. Thus, methods do not hold an end in themselves. Instead, they are regarded only as means and integrant parts of a broader methodology that strives to achieve social objectives.

Within this philosophy, the “new museum” is the favoured vehicle for the museological action. The museum is conceived as a tool to be used by the community and through which the new museology’s methodology will be delivered. As to its definition, in the same way as happens with the opposition between “new” and “traditional” museology, the new museum’s characteristics are set in counterpoint to the traditional museum:

“The new type of museum could be described as essentially a cultural process, identified with a community (population), on a territory, using the common heritage as a resource for development, as opposed to the more classical museum, an institution characterized by a collection, in a building, for a public of visitors” (VARINE, 1996)

In regard to the distinct types of “new museums” (ecomuseums, local museums, neighbourhood museums, etc.), it is possible to say that the differences in their form simply result from the way they “legally” interact with the territory. Ecomuseology, for instance, consider the whole territory to be the museum; Portuguese museologists consider the territory as an “area of influence” of some of the local museums, etc. Despite of this, they share the same view: the territory is defined by the interactions between community and its natural environment; its contents (people, tangible and intangible heritage, collective memory) are the raw matter for the museological actions; the range of action comprises the territory as whole, mainly through open and decentralized structures.

As to the work of new museums, it is the practice that determines to what extend the main contributions to community development proposed by the new museology movement are actually reflected in their action and come to determine main targets, as well as how methods will be applied.

In 1996, Hugues de Varine offered an insight into numerous initiatives in the 80’s related to the philosophy of the new museology. They all target actions on community development but lay emphasis on different aims:

“The notion of the social role of museums was developed, discussed, studied, particularly in Portugal and Spain. In the North, it was more the question of community mobilisation and strengthening which was debated. In France, the new museology was applied to problems like the conversion of industrial sites in crisis, the salvage of rural areas in the process of desertification, cultural tourism, etc. In 1986, in Jokmökk, a forum of the world oppressed minorities discussed the question of the possible role of museums in

helping these populations to liberate themselves by reinforcing their identities and defending their values.”

In this way, understood as a process and “(...) product of different populations, eventually with different problems e also different responses” (LOPES & MOREIRA, 1986), the work of the new museum is susceptible not only to community demands, but also to a range of interpretations and wider societal contexts. Such regard for particularities has provided new museology with a number of different examples on the ways in which museums deal with community’s life and community’s needs. The case of Haute-Beauce represents one of them. Another example that is important mentioning refers to local museums and the Portuguese context.

By the end of the 70’s, Portugal witnessed the development of several museums based on local initiatives from official authorities or cultural associations⁵³. Known as local museums, some of these organizations became to play an active role in local development programmes throughout the country, aligning their experiences with the new museology movement.

Outcomes from regional Minom meetings, as well as publications of militant museologists such as Mario Moutinho, Cesar Lopes and Fernando João Moreira, show that the characteristics of the Portuguese museology in the field of development are marked by a direct interference in communities’ daily problems. Such interference comprises, in special, a need to respond to social challenges which result from the negative impact of the Portuguese political and economical contexts. According to the authors, this negative impact can be noticed in issues related to the inequity between rural and

⁵³ This movement correspond to the changes occurred in Portugal since the revolution of April 1974, which brought more than 20 years of dictatorship to an end.

urban areas, unemployment, the threaten brought by mass tourism, among others.

The aims of local museums are, with this, broaden beyond those already mentioned in the core of the new museology movement in order to include community empowerment -as well as the active intervention in the economical, social or even political domains- as part of local development strategies. Thus, actions that aim, for instance, to ferment employment or minimize negative impact of mass tourism are carried out in the museums' territories or "areas of influence"; what in some cases means to fill a gap left by other social institutions (MOUTINHO, 1989).

For these purposes, proposals for local museums concentrate in the following targets⁵⁴:

- act as a data bank of all elements of the heritage and knowledge (know-how, knowledge of physical and human environment) useful for development, act as a source of collective memory;
- protect heritage (i.e. movable, immovable, intangible: air, buildings, professions, etc.) in the sense of protecting local resources;
- value local resources (human, natural, material), in special the traditional know-how;
- build capacities (by forming human resources for the museum/communitarian work and stimulating innovations in the domain of professional know-how)
- promote region and organize the space (territory);
- support school teaching ;

⁵⁴ This is a condensation based on: Lopes & Moreira (1986); Moutinho (1989), resolutions of the Second International Workshop (quoted in MOUTINHO, 1989), Museum de Monte Redondo: brochure (n.d.)

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- co-operate with other institutions or individuals that carry out similar projects.

The same way, methods are broadened beyond the traditional sense of museum functions, once local museums' "collections" are ultimately composed by community's problems (MOUTINHO, 1989) and museums propose to co-operate with the community in order to solve these problems. Among a variety of activities that local museums supposedly carry out, authors emphasize:

- participant investigation of community problems and elements of the heritage;
- participant conservation and documentation of community's heritage;
- communication of investigation's outcomes on community problems and heritage (having exhibition as important media);
- support to community planning and critical evaluation of current situation, problems, etc.;
- professional workshops on traditional techniques.

Other methods, as said before, refer to a more direct and immediate interference in the social, economical and political domains. As a relevant example, it is possible to mention the work with politicians and local authorities in order to raise awareness of the museum's work and, with this, of community demands. In short, one could interpret these interventions as a "spokesperson's" role the museum takes on behalf of local populations, what ultimately characterizes an exercise of community empowerment, once the museum conceived as an instrument of the community and represents it legitimately.

Such last aspect of the museum's work also offers opportunities to cast actions towards a wider level of interference in society. That is to say, besides working in a meso-level (directly with communities), local museums expect to play a political role on behalf of local

communities in the regional and national levels, as can be attested in the resolutions of the first meeting on the “Social Function of Museums” (Jornadas sobre a Função Social dos Museus; Seção “Museologia e Desenvolvimento”, 1988).

In general, the Portuguese experience has provided valuable contributions to the work of museology as a resource for community development; be them in regard to theoretical constructions, training⁵⁵, dissemination of ideas, organization of the new museology movement, actual co-operation in development programmes or raising awareness of methodologies and their usefulness for society. Its contents, and the contents of the new museology worldwide, have crossed the 90’s and arrived to the new century as a concrete and substantial body of proposals for the active contribution to community development.

The next section will contemplate the development of new museology’s proposals during this period, as well as of the museology as whole, in face to wider societal changes taken place since the early 90’s

⁵⁵ Since 1989, the Universidade Lusófona de Humanidades e Tecnologias (Lisbon) has offered courses on Social Museology, which have counted with the organization and participation of MINOM members.