

Ethnographic Representations of Self and the Other in Museums To whom do they speak, and what do they say?

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Abstract

The article examines how ethnography museums, in inventing and reinforcing the desire for modernity through their exhibiting clout, have been representing Self and the Other via the nexus that connects issues of identity, race, and difference. Based on research conducted using textual analysis and interviews to museum visitors, the article examines whether modern ethnography museums are moving past their colonial frameworks and managing to integrate the voices and experiences of the post-colonial Other through the lenses of heritage, history, and memory.

Introduction

In the quest of the industrialized West to push forward towards utopian ideals of modernity, western cultural institutions have been collecting and classifying non-western peoples and their cultures for the last couple of centuries. Based on a chronological and evolutionary timeline that charts the progress of civilization as going from a less desirable, simple, backward existence to an enlightened, advanced and complex society, this has inevitably ranked cultures that are unfamiliar as being non-modern and undesirable. However, in responding to the changing global socio-political debate over the last three decades, ethnography museums have been seeking to employ more holistic and participatory approaches in portraying non-western cultures (Royal Museum for Central Africa, 2011).

Museums - ethnography museums in particular - may not often be thought of as agents of social change. However, because they are in essence the community storyteller, with the power to create myths and characters that inform the global dominant narrative in which we live, ethnography museums act in fact as significant external forces that shape and maintain ideas and opinions in our meaning production processes. As members of social communities, we derive meanings of who we are and who we are not 'from our own experiences, or from cultural definitions put upon experience, especially by those in positions of power, authority and control' (Pickering, 2008, p.18). Simply put, museums are considered legitimate sources of knowledge depository by virtue of the epistemological guarantee bestowed upon public institutions, of which they are a part.

In looking at ethnography museums' role in the formation of public knowledge as well as in inclusion/exclusion politics, there are relevant questions to ask from a communication for development¹ perspective: Who are the ethnographic exhibitions speaking for? Are they multi-vocal or do they only represent the museum or the source community? Who are they speaking to, i.e. who is the audience? What are their key messages?

Methodology

I used textual analysis to analyze the *Fetish Modernity* travelling exhibition (2011-2014) as an example of how modern ethnography museums and exhibitions frame their messages. Looking at the narratology of an exhibition can expose the connection between its narratives and its spatial design, and studying the textuality of museum exhibitions helps draw the big picture by examining its individual components. This approach has the potential to reveal the internal inconsistencies between the museum's intentions and the effect it produces – that is, between the visitor's experience vis-à-vis the curator's ability to control how the exhibition is to be received (Mason, 2008). For a hermeneutic interpretation, I also reviewed multiple pieces of cultural critique, academic articles and blog entry posts for the Exhibition.

To complement my investigation of the *Fetish Modernity* exhibition, I selected two museums, the District Six Museum in Cape Town and the Museum of Immigration in London, as examples of how grassroots efforts and community involvement can serve as inspiration to creating counter-colonial museums that portray representations of Self that are homegrown.

I interviewed museum visitors as a complementary methodology (Nightingale, 2008). An unstructured approach allowing for open and variable responses was used for the interviews (Meyer, 2008). I interviewed 6 people for *Fetish Modernity*, 3 for District Six and sent email questions to a young cultural blogger who visited the Museum of Immigration in London. Those I personally interviewed are either friends or friends of friends, and are ethnic European except for one. With one exception, the informants are all female in the age range from early 30s to early 60s, and though they have different professional backgrounds, they consider themselves well-traveled cosmopolites. All informants were asked the same broad questions based on general impressions about their museum/exhibition visits, including how they felt before and after the visit, specific exhibit or objects that they liked or didn't like, and suggestions for improving the visit experience.

Theoretical framework

Museum visits can be nuanced based on our social positions and the perspectives we each hold relative to that, such as our gender, social background, ethnicity, faith, age group, etc (Pickering, 2008). The museum experience can be a *first-hand* or *second-hand* experience, a process that juxtaposes 'agency against ideology', and helps us interrogate any narrative schemes that can complement or challenge our existing experiences or knowledge base (ibid). *Strategic essentialism*, which relies on making representative conceptions of random experiences as evidence for authentic ones, could likely lead to relativism, and works in opposition to genuine new experiences (ibid). *Mediated experiences*, as opposed to situated ones, can also lead us down the essentialist and relativist road, as can be seen in tendencies to romanticize the struggles of the subalterns (ibid).

Visitors are usually left with either one of two responses after museum visits: they have interpreted their experience of the museum visit so as to fit into the existing mold of ideas and knowledge about the world; or they have reorganized what they already know in ways that would complement the new knowledge gained from the museum visit (Karp, 1991). Building from these are the two types of experiences that usually result from visiting exhibitions: *resonance* and *wonder*. Resonance occurs when the viewer reaches an understanding of a

larger, more complex set of cultural dynamics associated with the object, while wonder is evoked when a displayed object captures the attention of the viewer only to a point of awe (Greenblatt, 1991). Ideally speaking, the goal for cultural producers would be to create exhibitions that would induce the latter response (Karp, 1991), while from a C4D perspective resonance would be the preferable museum experience, since it typically signifies that the visitor has broadened his/her cultural horizons by having learned new information from the displayed exhibit, rather than experienced the more superficial feeling of looking at a spectacle (ibid).

Viewing a museum object also involves active conceptual processes that take place in the 'intellectual space' between the object maker and the exhibitor– the space where the viewer makes a connection that results in an understanding of the intended message behind the object of display (Mason, 2008). If not properly managed, it can lead the visitors to misunderstanding messages of the exhibit/exhibition (ibid).

The rise of the representation of others in museums

As public sites, museums are often disputed terrains in terms of identities, stories and sense of place. Foucault defines museums as *heterotopias* - “sites within the culture that are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted” (Bennett, 1995, p.1). Serving as the link between media and development, museums are the conduit that bridges the audiences' search for knowledge about, or their expectations of having certain emotions and experiences connected to an historical event or particular subject matter. Museums can thus become “sites of urban memory as we collectively experience together” and offer “forms of political education and negotiation of understanding of what we are doing here” (Dekel, 2013).

With the advent of industrialization and urbanization in the 18th century, modernity and progress as a representation of a future were created as goals to strive towards, coinciding with the notion of the imperialistic 'white man's burden' to civilize the colonies' so-called primitives and savages (Walsh, 1992). Western national museums were created during the time of newly-forming nation states in the late 18th to 19th century, to serve the purpose of displaying the wealth of its colonies, to legitimize its colonial might and to cultivate national pride and identity (Macdonald, 2008).

As colonial conquests and expeditions became rampant, collecting ethnographic artefacts and hosting world fairs, where non-western cultures and peoples were exhibited in Western capitals in 'human zoos', gave further rise to the concept of The Other as a barbaric version of the civilized European Self (Lidchi, 2013; Bennett, 1995). World fairs and colonial expositions of the 19th and 20th centuries demonstrated the non-western people on a 'sliding scale of humanity', ranging from savage to almost civilized (Bennett, 1995).

Historically speaking, western ethnographic exhibitions tend to follow a discursive formation that presents a grand narrative of a specific worldview that espouses a colonial mentality. Consequently, over time, the visitors' experience came to comprise a particular 'way of seeing' in museum settings – that of a strong emphasis on looking intently at objects that have been taken out of their context of origin, solely for their visual interest (Alpers, 1991; Lidchi, 2013).

Just like visits to look at historical sites or tours of parts of a city/town, the *museum effect* is the practice that is vested with symbolic power to turn “quotidian objects into the spectacular” only because they have been placed/framed in an ethnographic venue/setting (Alpers, 1991, p.26-27, quoting Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1991, p. 410-413).

Objects that fulfill a variety of other functions in their original context exist as ethnographic objects only because they have been created by ethnographers as items for display to represent a culture (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1991). Most artifacts are meant to be understood in relation to other artifacts and not intended to be displayed for individual inspection, and the more singularly they stand, the more an ethnographic object will be seen as being art rather than an ethnographic specimen (ibid). One might think that such practice would elevate the status of ‘primitive’ or traditional art, given the exclusivity of art objects, but the fundamental dilemma of the *ethnographic gaze* remains – ethnographic objects devoid of their original meaning and lauded based only as objects of visual interest objectify and demean the culture they represents, because the objects/subjects are turned into signs of a culture or a people, as parts that represent the whole, thereby contributing to the essentialism of non-western peoples (ibid).

Other forms of ethnographic colonial framework in museums include the 3-Age Classification System (stone-bronze-iron) employed in ethnographic museums in the 19th century. This practice “established an institutionalized form of racism, in which historical and archaeological finds have been used as evidence to support white superiority”, as it rested on the belief that civilization, and the tools it uses and objects it creates, exist on a one directional spectrum that ascends from simple to complex (Walsh, 1992, p.17). Dubbed *evolution time* by Foucault, this temporal construct in incremental components against a ‘linear path of evolution’ is the same basis that museums continue to use today to create a narrative thread to guide the visitor’s route, thereby presenting yet another case of entrenched colonialist practice in art and ethnography museums (Bennett, 1995).

Often employed together with the above display modes is the *panoptic mode* – a panoramic layout of the exhibition or collection using a ‘big picture’ focus along an evolutionary plot, so that it offers the viewer complete control of what is to be seen, but at the same time allows them to be seen by others (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1991). Naturally, the panoptic mode has a surveillance function but also a voyeuristic feature, in that objects are displayed behind enclosed cabinets to fulfill the desire of optical consumption. The panoptic mode also positions the viewer as a ‘detached observer’, as an external entity outside of the exhibition, with an overall view of the production, inevitably rendering those who look and those being looked at into two distinct and isolated groups (Beier-de Haan, 2008).

Ethnography museums attempting to engage visitors in their displays have sought to change this way of positioning subjects by making them a part of the ensemble through exhibits that challenge viewers’ ideas and provoke their emotions (ibid). This serves to blur the lines between the audience and those being exhibited, and brings about a deeper understanding of the messages of the exhibition and first-hand experience for the visitor. Sometimes the museum experience can function in relay mode, as stories that get retold, relived and remembered in the mind combined with continuous interactions with the social milieu (Pickering, 2008).

New museology: from self-reflection to contact zones

With rapid changes in terms of access to knowledge and transglobal cultural flows brought upon by globalization in the last few decades (Hopper, 2007), ethnography museums have been pushed to reestablish themselves in a new paradigm in order to adapt to changing times. Starting from the concept of ‘new museology’ of the late 1980s, ethnography museums have developed throughout the 1990s as places for inter-cultural exchanges to take place, or as ‘contact zones’ that focuses on “participation, public accountability and moral probity” (Lidchi, 2013, p.177-178). Since then, ethnography museums have been concentrating on their purpose and role as public institutions responsible for creating social knowledge and visitor interaction rather than on technical methods of display (Macdonald, 2008; Nederveen Pieterse, 1997). In this vein, exhibitions have also begun to employ a self-reflective mode.

*Fetish Modernity*² is a European Commission funded exhibition made up of previously hidden artefacts from 11 ethnography museums, which toured 5 European ethnography museums for 3 years, from March 2011 to March 2014. Kicking off at the Royal Museum of Central Africa (RMCA), the exhibition’s lead museum in Tervuren, Belgium, it was displayed at Museo de America in Madrid, Naprstek Museum in Prague, Museum für Völkerkunde in Vienna, and the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden before reaching its final destination in Stockholm, at Etnografiska Museet. It was created as a self-critical showcase of how, through ethnographic displays, the West has had a monopoly in creating images of the Self as being modern against misrepresentations of non-western cultures as primitive, unchanging and espousing essentialist traits.

The exhibition is not a large one, but is nevertheless densely populated with objects and items arranged around sub-groupings that require contemplative unpacking of the intermingling of core messages and complex ideas. Exhibits, clustered in sub-themes dealing with concepts of modernity, colonization, cultural clichés, the appropriation and trans-cultural flow of cultural ideas, strived to demonstrate the connecting thread that links how we form our cultural conceptions of The Other through all the subthemes of the exhibition.

To some extent, the exhibition’s design and artefact collection managed to illustrate the myth of ‘modernity’ that revolves around industrialized progress and mass urbanization, and highlighted the harsh realities of illegal migration and globalization entailed by the pursuit of modernity. There is an obvious will to expose the dark underbelly of the colonial pasts of European ethnography museums, but my study suggests that the exhibition ultimately failed to present that idea in a clear and consistent manner.

Firstly, getting such a value- and concept-laden message across in ethnographic exhibitions requires significant coding and encoding processes from the producer and consumer (Dahl & Stade, 2000). The curators’ intended lofty meta-messages aimed at visitors are likely to be all but lost as the visitors are left to wander around a stimuli-filled, multimodal exhibition without sufficient contextualization to help them connect the many sub-themes and subtexts. It should be mentioned that methods to provoke critical thinking surround the exhibits were used, such as written texts on banners and insightful quotes displayed on neon cubes intended to function as ‘anchorage’ - to steer the viewer towards a certain ideology while making the connection to the images (Rose, 2007). However, if one happened to overlook these written

texts (which could easily happen in an over-stimulated exhibition with multi-modal texts), this could render the signifying process incomplete, compromising the visitor's experience.



Sub-grouping at the Fetish Modernity Exhibition in Etnografiska Museet, Stockholm.
Photo: A. Andersson.

My interviews show that the visitors' conclusions resulted in confused and uneven cultural exchanges. Interview data also reported that visitors felt the exhibition was chaotic and unpleasant, and expressed disappointment that the exhibits of non-western cultures did not really meet their expectations.

In addition, given the paradigm of local cooperation and inclusion policies of new museology (Lidchi, 2013), the non-west, indigenous and diaspora community in Sweden/Stockholm could have been involved as partners or co-authors in the exhibition. For example, seminars or exhibits surrounding immigration issues/views in Sweden or the Sami struggle for rights to their land could have been included. Except for a leather artwork on a Sami drum, there was no mention of these Nordic tribes. With this oversight, the museum missed an opportunity to serve as a place for debate and dialogue on important socio-political discussions in the community.

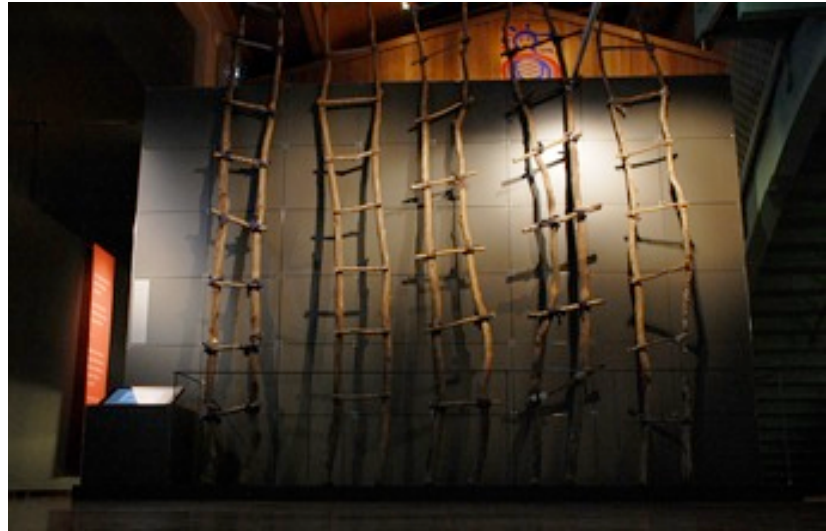
With the RMCA in Tervuren, Belgium as the lead museum and a history of having perpetuated the colonial ethnographic gaze in the case of some of the other participating museums, it was remiss of the curators to overlook the history and consequences of Western colonization. A self-critical view of ethnography museums should include a look at their colonial past (Nederveen Pieterse, 1997). This European Commission-funded exhibition carefully avoided sensitive and controversial issues having to do with the effects of European colonization, including Belgium's horrific reign in Congo in the late 19th century by King Leopold II, who coincidentally founded the RMCA to display his Congolese exploits. Two exhibit pieces on the Congo in *Fetish Modernity* showcased children's missionary schooling and the mineral mining work, conveniently sidestepping the horrors of the Congolese genocide and the related brutality of the rubber concession activities.

Museum goers may not necessarily want to be faced with too much unpleasant information, but sharing information about 'lifeworlds' should be the public role of ethnography museums (Dahl & Stade, 2000). However, there were exhibits that dealt with human suffering. The 'Melilla Ladders', used by African migrants to gain illegal entry into Spain, and two large

photographs depicting the dangers of jumping fences in Mexico, were displayed. Although visually arresting, the lack of contextual information surrounding these exhibits produced the effect of an optical ‘shock and awe’ rather than a thoughtful contemplation of these heartbreaking situations, creating a gap in the ‘intellectual space’. The ladders were framed in the

dark contrast of the hall with ‘pool boutique lighting’ - an art-gallery

influenced exhibiting approach that focuses the attention on the aesthetic quality of the object (Greenblatt, 1991; Vogel, 1991). This approach could lead to mediated experiences and strategic essentialism that generalizes the struggles of the subalterns by lumping them into one suffering mass, i.e. pity of the European Self for all Migrant Others who unequivocally face the same extreme hardships. Such empathy can create “internalized ideal truths and the loss of critical distance”, which hinders meaningful comprehension of an ethnographic event or situation (Dahl & Stade, 2000). This exhibit produced ‘an outsider looking in’ vantage point effect, rather than creating a connection that encompasses a wider context for resonance. For example, the situation with the Melilla border has a gender angle that could have been presented.



The ‘Service Stairs’ exhibit featuring the Melilla Ladders at the Fetish Modernity Exhibition. Photo: A. Andersson.

While the exhibition did not have an evolutionary narrative path so as to avoid ranking cultures or enforcing an authoritative agenda, the lack of contextual information about many of the objects gives the impression that these objects, both contemporary and traditional, exist in the same time period, thereby consigning them to an unchanging temporal existence. Traditional objects that have been collected in the past are displayed in the ‘ethnographic present’, resulting in them being stuck in time. When crucial information is missing, it further eliminates the social life of the object beyond its points of origin and destination (the museum) (Dahl & Stade, 2000). This anthropological practice of denying non-western people their right to co-exist in the same time frame as their western counterparts, known as denial of ‘coevalness’, makes them look unmodern and backward in ethnographic exhibitions, and effectively eliminates the possibility of their histories and real-life stories being told from their point of view (Fabian, 1983).

Reclaiming the identity of the Self

In the last three decades, social movements have given rise to local or community based ‘identity’ or ‘memory’ museums, which work to preserve particular heritage and historical events, emphasizing the context and encouraging visitors to feel empathy and develop an understanding of the issue or site (Beier-de Haan, 2008).

An ethnography museum concerned with a new museology school of thought should actively cultivate its role as a community facilitator and a local public service entity, to serve those who are interested in understanding the past of a place or culture (Walsh, 1992). In addition to engaging the visitors in interactive displays, the museum should involve them in “the production of their own pasts” (ibid, p.160-161). Deliberating from the point of view that context is of paramount importance, “Any interpretation will be, by its very nature, a cross-cultural interpretation before it is anything” (ibid, p.157).

In working with displays that define a sense of belonging and the creation of social relationships with the community, museums can be used as a public policy tool to offer a range of services to the public while moving away from the grand-narratives of national museums so that they make room for local stories (Cooke, 2008). Conveying a culture as localized, placed-based authentic experience recreates a sense of place of what was, what could have been and what is to come, thereby offering a much broader and encapsulating inter-cultural connection. The two community museums introduced below epitomize how ethnography can function to reclaim the identity of the Self, visualized as part of a larger network and of a community, through working with the past and promoting collective experiences that involve grassroots and inclusive approaches.

District Six Museum

Since its establishment in December 1994, the museum was envisaged as a community project to reclaim the local identity and heritage of the District 6 neighborhood in Cape Town, South Africa. It works to maintain the memories of the District Six experience and deals with issues of forced removals. The museum houses items salvaged during the destruction of the neighborhood and donated by former residents, and comprises objects from the seemingly mundane (recipes) to the nearly impossible (dirt from the roads) to reconstruct the memory and experience of life in District Six. The museum serves as a meeting place for former residents to reminisce and reconnect to their past and identities.



The interior of District Six Museum.
Photo: S. Rudehill.

As informed by the interviews I conducted, visitors are also compelled to connect to this particular historical era and location in ways that promote healing, remembrance and cross-cultural connecting. My informants reported that many of the exhibits -articles that had been part of the life of the District Six residents, such as a hair comb, or old photographs or an entire, intact hair salon-helped them envision not only what life was like in that neighborhood decades ago, but also that those objects highlighted similarities rather than differences between themselves and the ‘selves’ exhibited.

Museum of Immigration

Located in the historic area of Spitalfields in London, and housed in an old building dating back to the 16th century, the Museum of Immigration is run by the Spitalfields Charity Centre. It aims to preserve the building as a space to hold permanent and temporary exhibitions on stories of immigration across generations and cultures, in order “to build the understanding and respect needed to create a truly diverse, fair and equal society”³.

In a way similar to the views expressed by the District Six Museum’s informants, London-based blogger Flora Tonking describes how the exhibitions held in the museum fostered understanding and thinking about crucial topics at hand, such as displacement, race relations and one’s own place in society: “The museum currently hosts two exhibitions; 'Suitcases and Sanctuary' and 'Leave to Remain', which explore themes of migration, home and displacement. Spread over three floors of the building, 'Suitcases and Sanctuary' takes the form of multiple piles of luggage, cases filled with pictures, diary extracts and audio material. Each suitcase, created by local schools, imagines how different nationals that wound up in Spitalfields might have felt about their new neighbourhood and their new country, and all that they left behind. Tucked into a large alcove on the first floor, 'Leave to Remain' explores the flip-side of immigration, asking how a host country perceives those who seek a new life within the UK. A series of vox pop interviews - which appear to have been conducted on a train, given the matching seats all the interviewees are sat on in their polaroid shots - asks Brits what they think about immigration in the UK. Some of the responses are non-committal, uninformed, unconcerned. Others border on xenophobic. On the opposite wall is arranged a miserable bed-sit, with further derogatory comments made by an immigrant him or herself pinned to the mirror, the narrow bed, and a hooded sweatshirt. It makes me feel horribly sad, and incredibly lucky to be so sure that I belong here as much as the next person.”

As evidenced in the quote above, C4D approaches that include the voices of those being represented in cultural exhibits are vital to creating museum experiences that resonate with the visitor. Installing cross-cultural elements in an exhibit and indicating cultural differences in a respectful way not only creates relevance, but also provides information about the object that goes beyond the descriptive. This allows for the necessary space for the viewer to engage their own interpretations and personal reflections in making the connection to those being exhibited whilst questioning the constitution of the notions of Self and The Other (Baxandall, 1991).

Audience development – a step in the right direction

As part of the new movement of contact zone museums in the last three decades, ethnography museums have nevertheless been putting importance on visitor interaction and learning as well as museum education (Macdonald, 2008). A case in point is the Musée du Quai Branly (MQB) in Paris. One of the biggest and most popular European ethnographic museums, MQB has been making efforts to shed its colonial anchoring, as exemplified in its more contemporaneous exhibitions like the extensively documented *Tattooists, Tattooed*, reportedly the largest tattoo exhibition ever held, covering all the cultures that practice tattooing, and showing a historical timeline as well as the inter-cultural influences and global networks in the industry⁴.

Another exhibition at the MQB, the *Indians of the Plains*, showcased the artistic tradition of Native American tribes of the American Plains spanning centuries and generations, by drawing on museum experience approaches that is based both on ‘resonance’ and ‘wonder’ (Greenblatt, 1991). Using a variety of mediums, from interviews and film montages to touch-only displays as well as multimedia tools, the exhibition showed how historical events and socio-cultural changes have affected the Native American artistic heritage. The exhibition, illustrated by beautiful artworks and handicrafts, from old, traditional pieces to newer works, showed not only the culture’s pride and majestic qualities, but also that it is changing and progressing towards a shared future in interaction with its surroundings. Stories and contextual information regarding both the achievements and challenges of the people in terms of their lifestyle and livelihood were presented to the viewer for a well-rounded museum experience.

With technology advancements such as augmented reality (AR), there are also many up-and-coming approaches that could facilitate the representation of cultures in interesting and participatory ways. Renowned museum curator Kenneth Hudson stated more than two decades ago that ethnography museums should consider abandoning their focus on conservation work and “fondness for empire building” and instead focus on making the museum experience more than a two-senses affair (seeing and listening), since real life is a five-senses experience (Hudson, 1991). He suggested creating ‘climate and region’ museums that would allow the visitor to immerse in how a place or culture would feel like, rather than a building that houses objects to be looked at. As shown in the previous section, the representation of cultures in connection with a sense of place provides a more fulfilling and enriching experience, supporting Hudson’s arguments.

Conclusion

The framing of non-western cultures through the decontextualization of the object, and the complex interpretation process that takes place between the intentions of the curators, the reception by the visitors and the ethical considerations of the culture being exhibited, make fair representation a failed enterprise from the set-up (Dahl & Stade, 2000). This includes well-intentioned, reflexive exhibitions like *Fetish Modernity*, because its starting point is a top-down approach stipulated by default Western standards, so that it risks speaking in place of the Other with a strong curatorial voice. Trapped within the museum discourse that employs common catchall terms and frameworks that rewrite history and negate unfavorable events, exhibitions often fall short of making critical local analyses of social processes (ibid). This poses the impasse facing Western ethnography museums in the 21st century – can they truly change their outlook if the *raison d’être* is to present the cultures of The Other? Or to be even more provocative – are Western ethnography museums a thing of the past as the former ‘Exhibited Group’, i.e. third world, post-colonial Other, begins to find avenues to make their own stories heard, as seen in the momentum gained by community-based museums that represent themselves?

In the meanwhile, two related causes that Western Ethnography can (and many argue should) take up in creating their exhibitions are that of ‘autoethnography’ – the process where the Other speaks of self but through the colonial framework of Self/Other (Boast, 2011) and the repatriation of ethnographic artefacts (Conley, 2010). Efforts to include the voices of the post-colonial Other would not only require the dismantling of the colonial ethnographic

framework, but also cross-cultural/international reconciliation efforts to address the past and rectify related unjust socio-political consequences.

As shown in those aspects of my Master's research introduced in this article, there is promising potentiality for interactive, inclusive and bottom-up approaches in the representation of Self and The Other in contributing to social changes in the field of identity politics and museum education. These gradual changes in contemporary ethnographic work seem to suggest a shift towards embracing history and our collective pasts as a path towards a new, shared modernity and future.

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¹ From now on, C4D.

² See <https://www.varldskulturmuseerna.se/en/etnografiskamuseet/exhibitions/previous-exhibitions/fetish-modernity/> [accessed 6 November 2014].

³ See www.19princeletstreet.org.uk/charity.html [accessed 6 November 2014]

⁴ See <http://yatzler.com/tatoueurs-tatoues-pascal-bagot> [accessed 6 November 2014].