

# ICOFOM

International Committee for Museology. Comité International Pour La Muséologie. Comité Internacional Para La Museología.

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## Call for Papers – ICOFOM 2003

(dead-line: July 15, 2003)

Offers of papers for ICOFOM Study Series 34 are invited in respect of the general topic:

### Museology - an Instrument for Unity and Cultural Diversity?

The corresponding sub-themes are as follows:

#### 1. Museology and Indigenous Cultures

- Museology, indigenous people and ethnic minorities
- The role of Museums concerning testimonies and originals of indigenous people/ethnic groups
- Museology and the transformation of societies

#### 2. Transition Project - From Oppression to Democracy

- Museology in regard to political changes in different states
- The dark side of history as a museological tool
- Museology and the challenge to democratisation
- Museology and the philosophy of international understanding

#### 3. Ethical responsibility

- The role of Museology in the integration-process
- Religion as a way to encounter ideological pseudo-religion
- The individual responsibility of Museologists in different countries

ICOFOM will accept contributions (up to 8 pages, references and literature included) to the academic discussions on Museum theory. They must be written in digital technique. Pages must be size A4, text written in Arial 11-size, saved as "doc."- files. If not possible, please use "rtf."- or "txt."- files. Please, use flow-text and don't format. Don't forget: Name and address of the author, the country and the institution. Offers of papers should be submitted as soon as possible. The absolute **dead-line is July 15, 2003**. Papers presented after this dead-line cannot be included in ICOFOM Study Series. Contributions may be sent to: Dr. Hildegard Vieregg, President of ICOFOM, Barer Straße 29. 80 799 Munich/Germany. E-mail: vieregg@mpz.bayern.de

Many thanks to Prof. Dr. Vinos Sofka who created the provocative statements in order to promote the ideas of other members of ICOFOM concerning an own paper for ISS 34.

#### Statement 1: Museology and Indigenous Cultures (Vinos Sofka)

Changes of another character, aiming at the international transformation of societies, are going on in the world. They include the formation of international groups, such as the European Community, the association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Southern African Development Coordination conference (SADCC), and the attempts to establish similar collaboration in Latin America. They mirror the growing political will to find effective ways to build a better world.

Many problems of political, social, natural and economic character have to be solved. The integration process of Europe is witness to this.

In the field of culture, the problems of various peoples' national identity, in terms of regional ethnic units, have been laid open when addressing the issue of the integration of national states and of preservation of cultural heritage.

The new philosophy of international understanding puts this identity process into another context. The respect for ethnic groups – former minorities in different national states – is now part of this new concept. The broad debate during which the new relations successively take form is the guarantee for ensuring democratic approaches and solutions.

In spite of many remaining problems, of societies still not free, of deterioration of the environment, of misery, hunger and abuse in the world, the atmosphere of international politics shows signs of willingness to improve the conditions of human life. ...

Human society faces problems that are global. These are problems for all of us.

### **Statement 2: Transition Project – From Oppression to Democracy (Vinos Sofka)**

The world does not look like itself any more. To say this is no exaggeration these days. Profound social, economic and cultural changes sweep over the Earth and bring with them tremendous upheavals of political systems and structures in their respective societies and, as a consequence, modifications at the international level.

The changes in the former socialistic bloc in Europe and, in addition, those in the relations between the two former super-powers, dominated the international scene during the past decades. Some of these changes came about in a peaceful way, through reflections and negotiations, and others – more often – through confrontations and violence.

Due to unresolved relations of power, some of them are carried out with drawn-out processes of successive compromises and adjustments, accompanied by repeated redistribution of power between the old and new structures. In others, political power has been taken over during a few days loaded with drama.

In both cases, however, they set off very complicated processes of renewing and restructuring the existing political order in respective countries, aiming to overcome deep social, economic and cultural crises which lay behind the political explosions and revolutionary disruptions, and to establish freedom and democracy in their societies.

Looking around we can see much evidence of these “revolutionary” events, not only in our Old World, in Europe, but also in other parts of the world. Carrying out free elections, of transition to multi-party systems in some states in Africa, Asia and Latin America, are examples of such changes.

Even if they have sometimes different ideological backgrounds and take place under different conditions, their starting point, the transition from a totalitarian to a democratic society, gives them the appearance of proceeding in similar ways. ...

Several totalitarian regimes have seen their end during the past years, especially those of central and eastern Europe, and a procedure of establishing democratic mechanisms is under way to replace the once securely entrenched systems in those countries they held in their power.

There are other countries in the world where the struggle between totalitarianism and democracy now goes on. Democracy is not yet installed all over the world, and there is still misery and suffering to be abolished.

### **Comment (Hildegard Vieregg)**

Prof. Vinos Sofka initiated and developed the International Movement from Oppression to Democracy with the “Transition Project – From Oppression to Democracy” that is also most important from the point of ICOFOM. It was firstly presented on the occasion of the opening of Mährisches Landesmuseum in Brno/Czech Republic in October 1991. In this context an international cultural meeting with the title: “Changes in the World and European Upheavals – Heritage, Museums, the Museum Profession and Museology was organised, too. This title assumes that there is both a positive cultural heritage - we usually meet in museums -, and the „negative“ heritage exemplary embodied by the former Gulag Camps in Soviet Union. In this case the dark side of history is also becoming a museological tool. The project is particularly focused on the heritage of the 20<sup>th</sup> century from totalitarian states. In these labour camps thousands of people were exploited and worked to death - among them numerous opponents to the tyranny.

There is still some doubt whether the infamous Gulag camps in the former Soviet Union will become permanent memorials. On the other hand, it is clear that if they disappeared it would be very difficult to inform and educate people adequately. In my view memorial sites in the former Gulag camps should be treated not only as places of contemplation and mourning but also as reminders of past human atrocities. They should be preserved and transformed into places of research, intensive study and multicultural education. They should also be places of consciousness-raising where visitors can be encouraged to study the twentieth century, to trace its history and to learn to deal with political issues.

### **V Krasnoyarsk Museum Biennale: "Fiction of History"**

(Michael Shoubsky, Sergey Kovalevsky, Victor Sachivko, Irina Gurova)

Aiming to development of creative approaches and reinforcement of communication in sphere of museum communication, the Krasnoyarsk museum Center under patronage of Ministry of Culture of Russian Federation and Administration of Krasnoyarsk region is conducting the Fifth Krasnoyarsk Museum Biennale from 4 till 8 September 2003.

Dedicated to definition of contemporary *art of memory* limits as a core of museum creative work, the IV Biennale 2001 has approved cultural profile of the Krasnoyarsk exposition forum, the basic nerve of which always appeared a meeting of artist and museum on the basis of common project.

We hope that contemporary museum, performing as communication centre of creative culture, a site, where relations among Past and Future are elucidating, is able and intend to fulfil a function of providing society by *impulse of historic creative work*. Without creative museum as a mechanism of articulation of actual time experience, humanitarian culture loses its fundamental basis.

Today to "invent history" becomes a real task also for PR-activity that is anxious by socialization and introduction into culture serious management and business-innovations. New Russian corporations experience high need in an image of their own history. In this row museum gets a real chance to become a strategic partner on equal rights with political and economical institutions of civil society.

We think that contemporary artist, anxious by limits of his own art, searching for creative sense in widening material and communicative field of artistic action, presents a real power of ex-positioning cultural values and abilities of existing in time.

Mutually interested in the Past, a museum and an artist are forming a platform of finding new cultural experience and productive imagination, creating a new socio-landscape identity. ...

For choice of the best exposition works of the V Krasnoyarsk Museum Biennale the Expert Council from advanced Russian and foreign culturologists, art historians and museologists is formed.