INTRODUCTION:
SCIENCE, MAGIC AND RELIGION:
THE RITUAL PROCESSES OF
MUSEUM MAGIC

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> This was a museum of technology, after all. You're in a museum of technology, I told myself, an honest place, a little dull perhaps, but the dead here are harmless. You know what museums are, no one's ever been devoured by the Mona Lisa – an androgynous Medusa only for esthetes – and you are even less likely to be devoured by Watt's engine, a bugbear only for Ossianic and Neo-Gothic gentlemen, a pathetic compromise, really, between function and Corinthian elegance, handle and capital, boiler and column, wheel and tympanum. Jacapo Belbo, though he was far away, was trying to draw me into the hallucinations that had undone him. You must behave like a scientist, I told myself. A vulcanologist does not burn like Empedocles. Frazer did not flee, hounded, into the wood of Nemi. Come, you're supposed to be Sam Spade. (Eco [1989] 2001: 12)

This passage from Umberto Eco's celebrated novel *Foucault's Pendulum* captures succinctly the central theme of this book: how are places such as the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers in Paris, one of the key settings of Eco's novel, transformed into ritual sites? How can scientific and technological relics, monuments to rationality and Enlightenment thinking, be infected by the strong enchantment of magical and ritual procedures? A museum of technology is, as Eco puts it, scarcely the venue one would expect for a bizarre ritual. Yet, unfolding as it does through time compressed inside the periscope where Casaubon stows away after closing time, the plot brings us relentlessly to the point where we are prepared to suspend our disbelief. The long chain of events leading up to this moment invests the place and its collection with the fathomless webs of meaning spun by the actors involved in the plot.

This is exactly the point made – in a different way – by Donald Tuzin in his analysis of the construction of the Ilahita Arapesh *tambaran* house, venue for the Nggwal initiation ceremonies in north-eastern Papua New Guinea. 'It took me sometime to rid myself of Judeo-Christian preconceptions as to what a ritual is – that it is not the substance of an activity which defines it thus, but rather the significance that attaches to it – and to realise that the ritual according to Nggwal truly began before the men went out to cut the first timbers' (Tuzin 1980: 122–23). Ritual thus generates meaningful action long before the event. Concrete social activities, such as the construction of a spirit house and the flow of yams and pigs between exchange partners, are geared towards this future moment but govern life long beforehand.

We argue that these two instances do not belong to the realms of extravagant fiction and exotic ethnography, but suggest new approaches to the comparative analysis of the museum as a ritual site and as a ritual process. Let us briefly consider a case closer to home to underline this point. Museums (or similar sites[1]) are repeatedly used as venues for the opening ceremonies of international scientific organisations such as the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA).

Visiting Malinowski

The reception party for the European Association of Social Anthropology's conference in 2000, 'Crossing categorical boundaries: Religion as politics/ politics as religion', took place in the National Museum of Krakow and was combined with the opening of the exhibition *Malinowski – Witkacy. Photography: Between Science and Art*. The ceremonial opening of an exhibition devoted to one of the key ancestral figures of modern social anthropology, Bronislaw Malinowski, exemplifies how the museum may be pressed into service by and for particular groups.[2] The differing stakes held by museum staff, conference organisers, EASA members and wider publics in this specific event in Krakow, reflect a common pattern that can be found in connection with museums and related sites the world over. A place, a collection, a building is filled with various meanings and therefore worth visiting as – for different reasons – an anthropologist, a tourist, or as a Polish or European citizen.

In the case of the *Malinowki – Witkacy* exhibition, the European anthropologists present were paying homage to one of the founding fathers of the discipline, in the hometown of the Jagiellonian University. The narrative structure of the exhibition was built around the friendship between Malinowski, the scholar, and Witkacy, the artist, combining Malinowski photographs from the London School of Economics' archive collection with paintings and drawings by Witkacy. *Between Science and Art* is a good

metaphor not only for photography, but also for anthropology and for the museum. The exhibition was dramatised by the convergence of anthropologists from across the world on this town and in the reception hall of this museum to be present at the inauguration ceremonies. Participants arrived in Krakow to the accompaniment of a dramatic thunderstorm; the conference was inaugurated at the Philharmonic Hall, complete with ritual doorway and a piano recital (Chopin and Paderewski); and followed by the reception and opening at the National Museum. The exhibition opened in the presence of Helena Wayne, Malinowski's daughter. And when everyone had had something to eat and drink, the EASA congregation climbed the stairs to the exhibition entrance and made its way through the dimly lit exhibition halls, looking, exclaiming in small groups and encountering familiar as well as new faces throughout.

A ceremonial visit to an exhibition of this kind obviously concentrates and solidifies meaning for a group such as this one. Performing this itinerary, conference participants (re-)encountered one another, while simultaneously engaged with one of their own culture heroes summoned up in situ. Malinowski became a tangible presence in the exhibition which, by focussing on a relatively unknown relationship, gave further depth and richness to anthropology as the common factor uniting everybody. The invitation to identify oneself as a member of the congregation in the act of collectively remembering Malinowski is one that few anthropologists would have difficulty with. Malinowski belongs to the past and anthropology has moved on, yet the revelation of this new dimension of the founding father of the ethnographic method endows his memory with a kind of generative immortality. This was not simply a case of remembering a completed curriculum, but of opening up a new chapter – and one that resonates with some of the innovative directions being taken by contemporary anthropology. It is with this generative capacity of the exhibitionary complex that the chapters of this volume are concerned.

Secular rituals, such as this one from EASA's history, seem in some sense to fill a void created by the 'crossed-out God' of rational, post-Enlightenment mankind (Latour 1993: 33), conceptualised by Weber in terms of the 'disenchantment of the world'. This book sets out to explore how museums and similar sites may be invested with ritual meaning by both museum staff and visitors. Carol Duncan's (1995) seminal work on the art museum as a ritual site is our point of departure. We aim to extend the scope of ethnographic analysis beyond the modern western art museum to other kinds of museum (zoo, science museum, former colonial mission) and sites (natural parks, former Nazi rallying grounds), both in Europe and in Africa. In this introduction we set out the coordinates that enable us to develop the theoretical range of Duncan's argument beyond the exhibitionary site as 'script', to examine the actors taking a hand in museum choreography (in both the long

and short terms); to go beyond Duncan's 'ideal visitor', whom she conceives as performing a rite confirming citizenship, to examine ways in which museum publics actively use the museum for their own performances; and to consider how their performances dovetail (or fail to) with curatorial agency in the kinds of encounters that take place between different parties on the ritual site.

To accomplish this, the authors adopt a strictly ethnographic approach that allows the comparison of exhibitionary situations. Contributors examine ways in which museum collections are constituted and technologically manipulated (Harvey, Wiekzorcewicz, Silva), through the interplay of science and magic; how collections or collection elements are actively transformed through time and context (Wastiau); how the constitution of sites may involve both architectural and sculptural elements (Saunders); the way landscape may be turned into a museum without walls (Heatherington); or an existing complex be musealised, reframing its cultural significance by contextual strategy (Fairweather); or how a site may become implicated in thwarting curatorial intention (Wolbert); and finally, posing dilemmas about the contemporary enchantment of haunted sites (Macdonald). The actors' share in constituting collections and their settings, imbuing them with meaning or engaging with them as visitors, is central to nearly all the chapters. The issue of agency is therefore a central concern: in the processes of constituting artefacts, collections and sites; in officially mediating public meanings accessible through personal guides or technological devices; and in visitors' performances, appropriation or even rejection of what is on offer. This introduction reviews the forms of agency involved in the constitution, mediation and reception of contemporary museums and related sites, proceeding towards a theoretical formulation of the museum as a ritual site in which longer term processes converge.

Constituting Ritual Substances: the Beholder's Share

One of Duncan's principal arguments is that although post-Enlightenment culture dichotomises the categories of secular and religious, 'our supposedly secular, even anti-ritual, culture is full of ritual situations and events', few of which take place in religious settings (Duncan 1995: 2). She argues that 'we too build sites that publicly represent beliefs about the order of the world, its past and present, and the individual's place within it' (*ibid*).

Duncan's analysis of (mainly Anglo-American) public art museums proved inspiring as a framework for understanding contemporary, secular ritual. However, her focus on these specific sites also circumscribes the explanatory horizons of such a model. Our first concern has been to put these limitations to the test by examining how her insights might be applied to other sorts of

museum, collections and related sites and also beyond Europe and America. The ethnographic cases under consideration stretch the term museum[3] to the limits of its application, dealing with museological apparatuses which, even if developed beyond the museum walls, may nonetheless be conceptualised as part of 'museum culture' (Sherman and Rogoff 1994). 'Museum culture' provides a useful framework for putting Duncan's model into perspective.

According to Sherman and Rogoff, the museum engenders its own specific practices and representations which they explain through four main concepts. Object, context, public, and reception provide through their interaction a means of specifying what the museum is about, beyond the conventional definition of a collection-based place. Such articulation paves the way for considering visitor agency in the process. An urban (context) art (object) general (public) museum – such as the Louvre – is likely to be experienced by its local Parisian 'regular' quite differently than, say, a Japanese visitor on a week's *tour de France* that includes a Saturday afternoon whistle stop whiz through the Louvre in the two days spent in Paris. In fact, everything is altered by including reception in the analysis. Although, however, this notion does accord some role to visitor agency in the museum process, it does not in itself address the issue of *how* that agency works on the museum as a ritual site. The contributors to this volume go beyond the museum as an institution to consider the processes and underlying rationales whereby different exhibitionary situations become ritualised.

Thumbnail Overview of the Volume

The volume is divided into four sections: Part I concerns key moments in the life trajectories of two distinctive museum objects – a reconstruction of the first computer ('Baby') at the Museum of Science and Industry (MSI) in Manchester (Penelope Harvey), and the unwrapping of Egyptian mummies in various museums (Anna Wieczorkiewicz). In both cases, the objects are enfolded in powerful narratives: the 'birth' of an enormous machine as a public media event and the culmination of a race against time; and the engagement of various kinds of narrative to reanimate the mortal remains of ancient Egyptians. Casting them in narratives of life and death, involving a subtle intersection between the techniques of science and magic, is compounded by specific ways of interpreting these objects in the museums concerned.

Part II zooms in on the Royal Museum for Central Africa in Tervuren, Belgium, from two distinctive perspectives: as a ritual site where artistic embellishment produces a very directed way of seeing – 'Congo Vision' – the former Belgian colony of Congo (Barbara Saunders); and a curatorial account of subverting that vision through meticulous historicisation of the paths of

two 'masterpieces', which were part of the temporary exhibition *ExItCongo-Museum* (Boris Wastiau).

Part III comprises four cases of encounters between different curatorial and public actors and exhibited objects. The guided tour brings visitors to emotional as well as rational understandings of wildlife and its predicament at Artis Zoo in Amsterdam, the Netherlands (Natasha Silva). Visitors to Monte San Giovanni in Sardinia are received into a landscape that is a source of local pride and pastoral identity (a 'cathedral'), turned symbol of the global environment by a park authority applying external scientific criteria of ecological management; both discourses produce 'ritual bodies' that are transformed by the 'natural magic' of the place (Tracey Heatherington). The encounter between tourists visiting the Nakambale Mission Museum to experience 'real, traditional Africa' and locals who, in performing their tour of the mission and homestead, confirm a sense of their own modernity, is one of 'creative misunderstanding' (Ian Fairweather). Curatorial scripting of the 'Rise and Fall of Modernism' exhibition in Weimar failed to anticipate the unintended consequences of creating this narrative of failed modernity in three different locations in the city, provoking 'resistance fighter' reactions among critics and the public (Barbara Wolbert). The zoo in the Dutch capital, the Sardinian heterotopic park, the modernist mission-turned-museum in northern Namibia, and an exhibit dealing with the rise and fall of modernism that stranded in Weimar, all point to site-specific meanings produced through interactions between the different parties engaged in creating and performing scripts with outcomes that are by no means predictable.

The 'magic' can go seriously astray, leading to conflicts (between zoo guides and keepers, or between park personnel and locals, or between curators and the public) about 'proper' curation; but it may also lead to forms of 'creative misunderstanding' between tourist and local.

In Part IV, Sharon Macdonald revisits and explores the religion/museum analogy, reviewing ways in which work on new religious movements contributes to understanding recent developments in museums. Macdonald goes on to illuminate how contributions to this volume reflect these wider developments concerning canonical authority/knowledge and subjective experience. She also analyses the dilemmas of trying to achieve a balance between science and magic, enchantment and authority, for as 'difficult' a heritage site as the former Nazi rallying grounds in Nuremberg. She shows there are contexts in which the semi-religious aura of ritual sites can pose extraordinary and even moral dilemmas; where something has to be done with the past, however unsavoury, simply because of the way it obtrudes into the present. Macdonald concludes with the reminder that, since museums are such deeply political agencies in public culture, their responsibility is not simply to enchant but also to educate – in the broadest sense of the term. Let us turn now in more detail to the complex constitution of that agency in the wide variety of settings that this volume includes.

Part I   Objects of Science? Baby and the Mummies

Science, as the sequence of terms in the title of this volume indicates, is the point of departure for trying to understand contemporary developments in museum culture rather than a final destination. Many objects on public display in science museums today are clearly subject to interpretative procedures that exceed their status as objects of knowledge. The very idea of memorialising the future by devoting a gallery to how people conceptualised the future in the past aims, as Harvey argues in the opening chapter, to engage the audience with the objects on view in an exercise of 'imaginative reasoning'. Imaginative reasoning is also involved in the dramatisation of events, profiling scientists as 'personalities' and playing down the rational scientific process of their work behind the closed doors of the laboratory (cf. Barry 1998). This exhibitionary strategy can clearly be seen in the 'birth' (commemorative unveiling) of a reconstruction of the first computer, known as 'the Baby' at the MSI in Manchester. Conversely, the scientific procedures may themselves be harnessed to enhance museum drama. Subjecting the mortal remains of dead Egyptians ('mummies') to ritualised scientific medical procedures may be incorporated to great effect in museum spectacle, as Wieczorkiewicz demonstrates in the second chapter.

Birth of the Baby in Manchester

Reconstructing the first computer in terms of a Baby, for public 'delivery' on a given date, involved both the creation of a 'cradle' (the newly restored MSI in Manchester) and midwifery by scientific 'personalities'. The race against the clock by the scientists involved in building this first computer turned the whole event into a kind of dramatised family narrative. Harvey argues that in themselves objects have no intrinsic power to enchant; this depends upon the exhibition makers. She suggests that museums are increasingly becoming places where the relationships between objects and people are brought out and explored. Creating settings where people can make imaginative sense of objects that have changed the world, nowadays often seem to involve recourse to mixtures of art and science reminiscent of the seventeenth-century Kunstkammer. The rituals surrounding the birth of the Baby played down the rationalized scientific process, while playing up the human passions and struggle involved in making a machine work.

   This family narrative fits well with Manchester's localising claim to be the new brain centre of England. The birth was given full media coverage *via* satellite communication, appealing in a commonsense way to the brave new world of Manchester. The birth was about giving substance to genius: making an object whose genealogy or creation story had been 'lost' quite literally materialise, and rendering the human agents involved as highly visible media

personalities. While it may be a little uncharitable to observe that Michel Serre's *History of Science* refers to neither of the Manchester personalities in connection with the development of the computer, it does suggest that this is a very local origin story (cf. Lévy in Serres, 1989 [1996]).

Celebrating the Baby in this way gives voice and credence to Manchester's global ambitions to being a science capital. The social drama of the birth attempts to establish this machine as a specifically local form of competence that will make Manchester renowned throughout the world. In this respect the MSI birth ritual makes an interesting contrast with the eminently modern performance of tradition at Nakambale (see Fairweather, Chapter 7 in this volume) which, by confining the past to the museum, brings the world to a remote place in Namibia. Manchester, by contrast, attempts to impose its claim upon the world by metaphorising it as that most incontrovertible of events: the birth of a baby. The hope of drawing visitors to Manchester is of course also there.

Egyptian ancestors

If birth refers to the beginning of a person's life which, by museum magic, can be extended to the unveiling of a reconstructed machine, so too can death – or more specifically the dead bodies of Egyptians treated with preservatives and wrapped in linen – be manipulated to great effect.

Egyptian collections are in several respects a key case. In her discussion of Van Gennep's and Turner's concepts of the ritual state of liminality – the betwixt-and-between, out-of-this-world, zone through which initiates pass as they transit from one social status to another – Duncan emphasises how museum visitors are led to commune with the spirits of the dead in their aesthetic contemplation of particular works of art. How might this liminal state work for other kinds of collections and more particularly for Egyptian mortal remains?

A related question is why Egyptian mummies are considered to be a suitable, indeed an educational, source of fascination for children. Spooky but at the same time susceptible to neutralisation by scientific procedures, Egyptian remains have been pressed into service in contemporary stories, rather than dealing with the incorporation of Egypt into European history. Contemporary Egyptian exhibitions anticipate and cater for visitors' (and above all, children's) fascination with mummies. Wieczorkiewicz unravels this fascination in her chapter by examining the narrative genres in which they are commonly placed, and then focussing on the transgressive act of unwrapping mummies and subjecting them to scientific procedures, such as medical diagnoses and plastic reconstruction. By personalising these remains but at the same time distancing the viewer from them, the fact of death is somehow

suspended for the duration of the visitor encounter with these objects and may even involve the creation of a new ritual (as in Krakow). This particular way of exposing children (and adults) to the ancient dead bodies of Egyptians is also of interest because of what it suppresses about the nineteenth-century European context of colonial collection.

French campaigns in Egypt were part of Napoleonic imperial expansion and competition with other colonial powers, especially Britain and Germany, for control over strategic trading routes and oil. Egyptian objects were retrieved from ruins and brought to Europe on the grounds that these were the ancestors of the Greeks and therefore of western civilisation. Deciphering the hieroglyphics on the Rosetta Stone was one of the crucial events in assigning this African civilisation to Europe, welding it onto the western genealogy and thus adding extra historical depth and a new identity component to the period before the Greeks. The presence of Egyptian collections in the newly constituted national museums that began to appear in the wake of the revolutionary act of opening the royal palace of the Louvre to the people (1793) added depth and richness to the genealogies of the respective nation states. For the new citizens of those states, the presence of Egyptian ancestors assigned to specific spaces within their national 'temples', effectively demarcated the frontier between civilisation and savagery. In Kristiania (now Oslo), for example, Egyptian items were the first to be registered in the new ethnographic museum collection, underlining both the Napoleonic origin of Norway's assignment to Sweden in the early nineteenth-century and the nationalist aspirations which later came to centre on that museum (Bouquet 1996: 102–105). The African identity, as well as the colonial circumstances under which these collections came to Europe, are missing from many Egyptian narratives in European and American museums. These missing factors greatly contribute to the specific ways that Egyptian materials have been ritually charged and are received outside as well as inside the museum. Focussing on mortal remains is an almost magical procedure that deflects attention from the historical manoeuvre involved, diverting it into the performance of a play. Domesticated into contemporary popular culture by inflecting them with 'horror', science then takes over to neutralise and re-enchant the resulting materials – especially for children but also, according to Wieczorkiewicz, to enable us to face up to the existential dilemma of death.

If nineteenth-century Egyptian collections helped to constitute the historical depth of western civilisation by splicing them onto the classical Greek genealogy and purging them of their African identity, their removal nonetheless implied that contemporary Egyptians (like their Greek counterparts) were unable to take care of this heritage. This was the explicit justification for transporting archaeological materials to places where they would be valued, protected and placed on display for modern citizens who would be able to draw the proper conclusions. The mainly positive reception of the ancient

Egyptians (notwithstanding 'horror movies' showing reanimated mummies) is almost diametrically opposed to the way that contemporary Congo populations were evaluated during the same colonial period, as the case of the Belgian Royal Museum for Central Africa (hereafter RMCA) at Tervuren aptly demonstrates.

Part II   Site Specifics: the Case of Tervuren

Context, as the cases of Manchester and Krakow demonstrate, can be decisive for the specific meanings attaching to museum objects. The 'same' scientific procedures for diagnosing and reconstructing Egyptian mummies were quite differently interpreted in Manchester and Krakow. In order to examine the workings of site specificity in more detail, this section dwells upon two different approaches to the RMCA, Tervuren, in Belgium: Saunders analyses the visual parameters imposed by the sculptures used to decorate the building, and Wastiau gives an account of ongoing transformations in the meanings of two objects now in the Tervuren collection.

(Belgian) Congolese others

The sculptures adorning the RMCA cupola entrance at Tervuren are, as Saunders explains in her chapter, twofold in character: above, the allegorical figures of art embody the civilising Belgian input to the relationship with the Congo: 'Civilisation', 'Support', 'Prosperity' and (the end of) 'Slavery'. Below, the naturalised figures of the African 'Artist', 'Chief', 'Woodcutter/Idolmaker', and 'Making Fire', make native culture visible for the Belgian public. Tervuren was also a propaganda machine for the early twentieth-century Belgian colonial project, including missionaries as well as commercial interests, in Africa. The museum was privately financed with the aim of showing what there was to be developed there. As a day trip out of town for the Brussels public, Tervuren in its park setting was both entertaining and inviting: King Leopold II's civilising mission for his people included showing them the enormous possibilities for making money in the Congo. The 1898–99 'Congo State solution' divided equatorial Africa into forty huge territorial units, each of which was leased to a state-administered company to exploit and rule.

It is perhaps worth underlining the obviously international dimension of colonial projects in the context of national collections and museums. Belgian colonialism included many non-Belgian nationals (merchants, explorers, missionaries and state representatives) who were integrated into local political activity during the 1870s and 1880s. In this way the Norwegian medical doctor Heiberg's collection of nine hundred Congo pieces was donated to the

Norwegian Ethnographic Museum from 1902 onwards (Bouquet 1996: 74–77). This example demonstrates the powerful model established by the Belgian RMCA – not least for an aspirant nation state such as nineteenth-century Norway, which was under colonial (Danish and later Swedish) rule. The Ethnographic Museum became in fact a rallying point for nationalist aspirations. Founding an ethnographic museum was an important way of presenting the nation's credentials, thereby constituting a conventional model of the world (Prösler 1996).

Saunders argues that the Tervuren entrance cupola actively coerces the visitor into seeing the Congo in certain ways. The relations embodied in the figures physically engage the viewer (whose gaze goes 'up' to the allegorical figures and 'down' to the naturalistic ones), without requiring any mediation of 'representations' or interiorisations of consciousness. This physical engagement echoes that identified by Wieczorkiewicz, for whom visitors' stooping to examine the tilted sarcophagus in Krakow marks the inception of a new ritual. Saunders' visitors to Tervuren are in some respects comparable to Duncan's ideal visitor: they perform a disquieting ritual of citizenship within a scenario that has frozen early-twentieth-century Belgian understandings of the colonial project. The spell has yet to be broken. The final part of her chapter turns to the exhibition *ExItCongo Museum* as an attempt to do just that. The extent to which meaning can be transformed by active curatorial intervention that unsettles the meanings embedded in the site, is the subject of Wastiau's chapter.

Curatorial magic

Anthropologist-curator Wastiau's account of the life histories of two Congolese 'masterpieces', which were included in the temporary exhibition, *ExItCongo-Museum* held at the RMCA 2000–01, explores the issue of agency from the curator's perspective, as well as considering how collections are constituted and how they are charged with meaning in the course of their life histories. Wastiau exemplifies the creative and generative use of sites and collections, in which curatorial intention and mediation can play a critical role.

Wastiau's curatorial aim was to break the spell of Tervuren (Wastiau 2000). His chapter focusses on a pair of objects and one collector, illuminating the making of 'masterpieces', as certain well-known and well-travelled Congo pieces are nowadays classified. Artistic intervention contemporised the historical narrative of the first part of the exhibition (Exit Congo) in the second and third parts (Ex-Congo Museum; Exit Museum).

This exhibition succeeded in generating controversy and debate, demonstrating not only hostility and lament about breaking the spell of the masterpieces not to mention the RMCA itself, but also support for doing just

that (see Arnaut 2001; Corbey 2001). This polemic was conducted beyond the range of the RMCA, which meant that it could elude the agency of the museum (cf. Porto 2000). One of the most interesting outcomes of this temporary exhibition was to revive academic/university interest in the museum. There is a good chance that this will actively contribute to the creation of a new identity for the museum and new interest in it on the part of contemporary Belgian and international publics.

Does such an intervention break with the ceremonial role of the curator if that is understood as mediating the museum's officially approved message to the public? The notion that a curator could somehow betray the trust placed in him by the museum (as was the case with Wastiau, cf. Bouquet 1998) indicates the centrality of agency – including the curator's – in constituting the museum as a ritual site. This agency, along with its contradictory potential, is missing from Duncan's model of the museum as a ritual site for reaffirming citizenship, which anticipates identification with what is shown and the narrative behind it. In some ways, of course, curatorial authority has been undermined by what Macdonald and Silverstone refer to as the 'cultural revolution' that took place in many museums from the late 1980s onwards (Macdonald and Silverstone 1991). Curatorial authority has been tempered in many museums by new marketing practices aimed at producing 'public-friendly' exhibitions for entrance-fee-paying customers, thereby giving a whole range of other museum staff (notably from Communications, Presentation, Design, Education and Marketing departments) as important a voice in the exhibition-making process as that of the curator, at least in theory. Despite all this, successful cultural production in museums as in other institutions depends upon the ability to develop and unveil new creations, which relies heavily on curatorial knowledge and creativity. Many contemporary blockbuster exhibitions stress completely new interpretations of works of art resulting from research; for example, careful scrutiny of the relationship between Van Gogh and Gauguin formed the basis of an exhibition which made strategic use of both painters' work (Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, 2001).

However much of a rupture ExItCongoMuseum may represent in the way that Central Africa was constituted at Tervuren, the question remains: to what extent is any curator bound by the very nature of the location, space and collection at his or her disposal to reformulate, certainly, but still to enchant? The fact that the curatorial team intends a specific message does not guarantee that the message will be received in the same form. For Wastiau, the exhibition actually starts with fragments of the third part: contemporary artworks were interjected from the entrance hall and throughout the permanent galleries deliberately disturbing the conventional displays. The first part encouraged visitors to reflect on the histories and stories of the artworks, by their unconventional placement, lighting and documentation. The second section questioned the way Congolese artefacts were naturalised in the

museum's space. Between the first section, dealing with the objects' provenance, and the second about 'after acquisition' (their use and abuse in private and public displays), was a transitional room evoking transportation. A tall white wall marked the passage to section three, with installations directly questioning Tervuren's museography and practice. Behind the wall were installations by guest artists relating to broader issues including race, history, exhibiting, and interpretation, some of which were exhibited on the ground floor in the permanent galleries.

There is, however, no guarantee that the visitor will receive the curator's message precisely as it was intended (cf. Wolbert, Chapter 8 in this volume). Wastiau and his colleagues' choreography of Tervuren space could in fact be interpreted as pursuing a quite Turnerian formulation, despite intending a diametrically opposed argument: up the spiral staircase on one side of the building as a beginning; through a seemingly conventional – if eccentrically lit – presentation of the history of the collection; into a central area of limbo (quoting the much-used packing-case motif) directly above the small rotunda; followed by artists' installations (including the supermarket trolley filled with 'bargains' [masterpieces]), the toy railway track, and down the spiral staircase on the other side of the building to some 'occupied' glass cases below. Duncan certainly anticipated the misreading visitor, but failed to consider the implications of various forms of agency for the museum as a ritual site. Curatorial and other forms of agency are central concerns of the next section.

Part III   Encounters, Performances and Unpredictables

This section focusses on issues of agency that arise through particular kinds of performances in four different ritual sites. If the birth of the Baby (Harvey, Chapter 1 in this volume) was a one-off ritual performance, dramatising the human struggle to reconstruct a machine as a classic life-cycle *rite de passage*, the guided tour of an established site tends to comprise a given repertoire of objects, stories and other highpoints, yet to leave room for embroidery and elaboration. Silva's chapter demonstrates how the volunteer guides at Artis Zoo mediate visitor appreciation of the specific form of animal sacrifice that this most popular of museum collections entails. She takes us on a guided tour of Artis Zoo in Amsterdam that deliberately conducts visitors 'backstage', telling stories about the animals but also showing the complex social relations that develop between zoo keepers, their charges, volunteer guides and the public. While going 'backstage' at a zoo may have developed into a somewhat predictable routine, the underlying moral ambivalence of keeping animals in captivity combined with ongoing tensions arising from the differences in professional status between keepers and guides is likely to provide visitors with food for thought.

Going behind the scenes at Artis Zoo

Zoo animals are not simply 'there' in their cages or enclosures but are actively made 'present' by zoo guides. These are the people to convey the personalities, accompanying stories and the sense of order for visitors to this highly idiosyncratic collection and environment.

Guided tours of Artis Zoo include not only the celebrated feeding of animals, but also go behind the scenes – into the kitchen where the meals are composed, or among the pipes and filter system behind the aquarium. This privileged access to what Goffman (1959) has referred to as the backstage area of social performances admits visitors to a zone normally out of bounds for the public, inviting them to experience the position of a zoo employee – in a way similar to Bennett's (1995: 67) argument about nineteenth-century public museums enabling the people to experience what it was to be on the side of power. Visitors to the zoo are invited to stand in the shoes of their guide, learning to see and to know the animals through their eyes and experience. The fact that guides are not 'real' zoo personnel does, however, also introduce a measure of ambiguity and sometimes even verbal conflict (between guides and keepers) into the tour. Going behind the scenes is also perhaps about 'seeing' certain civic responsibilities regarding these often large and exotic creatures, in what is explicitly a 'fun' visit to areas not normally accessible to the public. There is an invitation implicit in the knowledge gained through privileged access to assume greater responsibility toward these specimens of endangered wildlife.

Visitors on a guided tour of the zoo are being initiated in several different ways: these may include gossiping about animals (in the way that anthropologists might gossip about people), thereby personalising and often anthropomorphising them (Silva gives the example of penguins in 'tuxedos'); or it may involve seeing beneath the surface of the easily perceptible ('feeding time'), through a visit to the kitchens; or having your attention drawn to reclusive or lesser-known animals whose existence might otherwise be overlooked. The enormous popularity of the zoo with all sections of the population means that giving the zoo visit a serious slant is a tempting option, certainly in the Netherlands. The guided visit through the zoo seems to involve a trade off between the pleasure derived from maximum insight and the responsibility that goes with this sort of inside information. Getting to know the animals leads to an appreciation of the sacrifice that they are required to make by being in captivity. Going to the zoo is a collective ritual that almost every child undergoes either *en famille* or with the school, which suggests that parents and teachers see it as an opportunity to teach something as well as being a super-popular destination. The ephemerality of animals' lives strikes a chord of recognition with humans: the animal condition is also the human one. Although the zoo might, arguably, just as easily be seen as

the ultimate expression of rational man, playing God, managing and control-
ling the natural world this does not seem to be the tone of the guided tour,
in Artis Zoo, at least. Set in the heart of Amsterdam, the appeal to moral
conscience and responsibility that can be discerned in the midst of all the fun
is a reminder of the moral fibre still at the core of this local setting (cf. Schama
1987).

The way an external discourse on the environment articulates with local
appreciation of the landscape is the subject of Tracey Heatherington's chapter
on Monte San Giovanni in Sardinia. The designation of certain landscape
features as being of outstanding natural beauty, requiring protection, also
involves forms of structured contact (such as nature excursions) that enable
visitors to get closer to Sardinian nature. As with the guided tour at the zoo,
these excursions enact environmental identities: learning takes place by visit-
ing, seeing and appreciating Nature. Alternative local narratives about Monte
San Giovanni emphasise, by contrast, local community values and 'tradition'
in making the landscape what it is.

Performing locality vs. performing ecology

Monte San Giovanni was already a local landmark or 'anthropological place',
in Marc Augé's (1995) sense of being filled with history, identities and social
relations, before its sudden redefinition according to external 'ecological' crite-
ria as the centre of a natural park. Monte San Giovanni was already defined
by local people as a 'cathedral' – a key symbolic place of pilgrimage to which
people felt attached both on religious and family grounds. Local feeling about
Monte San Giovanni is connected to its survival as common land in the face
of nineteenth-century enclosure. The continuation of pastoral and commu-
nitarian traditions helped to save the commons from deforestation and is one
of the reasons for strong local feelings about this place as being theirs and
pride in showing it to visitors.

The redefinition of Monte San Giovanni as a uniquely valuable symbol of
global environmental heritage places a different frame around the landscape.
The formalisation of the Gennargentu National Park enshrines features of the
natural landscape as a potent source of both knowledge and aesthetics, as
Heatherington puts it. This frame also, however, implies techniques of park
management imagined as custodial techniques. This management effectively
renders invisible the local population and *its* constitution of the landscape by
framing the park as a space set aside from human use, in its turn a kind of
sacred space – idealised and ritualised as well as regulated and controlled.
Park-organised excursions to Monte San Giovanni effectively sanctify ecolog-
ical identities, emulating scientific observation and sharing in the project of
scientific conservation that should enable the visitor to get closer to nature.

At the same time, it fosters a sense of responsibility for preserving the purity of nature in terms of what might be called 'environmental citizenship'. Locals, by contrast, think of the purity of nature as evincing cultural authenticity: reenacting the experience of shepherds, retracing the steps of the Catholic processions that used to go to the site of an old mediaeval church on the summit of the mountain until World War Two, imbibing the salubrious spring waters and going for summer picnics.

The range of discourses generated by Monte San Giovanni over the past thirty years (local, cultural and external, scientific/ecological), demonstrate how the meaning of landscape becomes diversified (a 'heterotopia') through the process of musealisation (cf. Hetherington 1996). Local mediators (residents, tourist guides, forest rangers) are responsible for constituting and negotiating both external and internal visions of the landscape. This adjustment, producing a plurality of meanings among tourists, environmentalists, nature lovers and residents, inevitably alters local perception of their own key symbolic space.

A comparable effect is found in the performance of heritage at a museum in northern Namibia (Fairweather). It is important to point out that the museum model colonised not only Europe and the West but has also travelled significantly farther afield – right up to the present day (see Prösler 1996). Fairweather's analysis of the ex-Finnish Mission Museum in post-independence Namibia demonstrates how colonisation itself can be musealised from the other direction.

Nakambale double act: performing heritage

Staff and visitors to the Nakambale Museum in Namibia are involved in a complex process of (re)constructing their culture. Claiming to preserve local 'traditions' and 'culture' is modern, Fairweather argues, and has ideological dimensions associated with Namibian nation building. These 'traditions' were shaped by the encounter with Europeans, and the Nakambale Museum celebrates both the arrival of Christianity and missionaries and local customs and traditions. Staff and community in fact reclaim the colonial past objectified in the mission house turned museum as their own since this was the way they came in contact with the wider world. The paradox inherent in the museum is resolved, according to Fairweather, through the performances that take place there: foreign tourists who come to visit Olukonda in search of the traditional are given a guided tour, a meal and the opportunity to purchase local products from the museum shop. The performers, on the other hand, both identify with but also distance themselves from the traditional by pointing out how different things were in the past. They demonstrate to themselves, as well as to non-Oshiwambo speakers, their modernity in being able to perform

tradition so well that they can attract visitors from the wider world, thereby transcending the local.

Enchantment in the Nakambale case consists in the double act of being able to conjure up tourists in this remote part of North-Central Namibia, and being able to put on folklore performances and a meal for them. At the same time, the performance is also for a national audience and clearly claims a stronger position for Oshiwambo speakers at that level. The syncretism between Christianity and local narratives (as in the passage from 'savagery to civilisation' that forms part of the display at the museum), demonstrates that this is not a straightforward case of exporting the museum model. Instead, the museum as an institution is ingested, digested and remoulded into new forms: the competitive claims made by local people through their museum demonstrate a greater degree of open-endedness than Duncan's original definition of the museum as a ritual site anticipated. There is room for differing interpretations not only between official museum messages and the reception of those messages, but also in the highly ambiguous performances that are staged in and around museums. The Nakambale case provides a good starting point for considering how the dynamic character of meaning invested in museums articulates with strategic management of representation on behalf of certain groups vis-à-vis current social issues. Bringing contemporary postcolonial culture into a former colonial mission is one form this process can take.

The past may, however, come to haunt the present in quite unintended (as far as curatorial intention goes) ways, as Wolbert's contribution shows.

Curating German pasts

The internationalisation of locality associated with the Manchester (Harvey), Monte San Giovanni (Heatherington), and Nakambale (Fairweather), resurfaces in the way Weimar chose to give expression to its nomination as European cultural capital in 1999. Barbara Wolbert's analysis of the art exhibition, 'Rise and Fall of the Modern', is situated in a city which, like postindustrial Manchester, became a candidate for recuperation – although, of course, the case of Weimar is qualified by German reunification after the fall of the Wall.

The sites connected by the exhibition trajectory (the Castle and Gauforum) were not associated with the Nazi past, which had always been locked away in Buchenwald. However, in the event, an unanticipated problem arose through the superimposition of several 'pasts' on the same highly charged space. This was not initially seen as a problem with which the exhibition had to deal. The attempt to diffuse this effect, transforming it through artistic intervention into something tangible for debate, produced instead a kind of redundancy as an art exhibition. The failure of the curators responsible to

create the required technology of enchantment (Wolbert refers to the 'amateurish', botched hanging in the Castle, and the propped-up art from the GDR period), led to unified public outcry. Journalists from both former East and the West, politicians and those writing in the visitors' book felt insulted by the treatment of the art at the hands of arrogant curators. Wolbert argues that the story repeated in the newspapers about the fateful combination of site, art and curation perfectly reflecting the collective malaise of the reluctantly reunited Germany, was in fact a myth. The terms of the outcry were in fact unanimous (about art and professionalism) yet came to express anxieties and frustrations connected with East/West divisions.

The outcome was that the great occasion for joining the European club, on one of its most prestigious circuits, was spoiled by press insistence on unresolved conflicts still simmering beneath the surface. The idea of invoking a European audience to contemplate the rise and fall of modernism subsided into a witches' brew of supposed internal divisions, issuing forth from several pasts. As Wolbert points out, Duncan's model disregards the actual relationship between curator and visitor, confounding as it does the curator(s) with the institution. Her analysis of the Weimar exhibit shows that the institution, the site and the curator(s) are unpredictable components of the museum; and that the volatile mixture produced in their interaction with visitors may feed directly back into the local social context.

*   *   *

These ethnographic approaches to exhibitions, whether in conventional museums or elsewhere, invite discussion of Duncan's model of the museum as a ritual site at two related levels. The first of these is theoretical and relates to Turner's model, from which she departs. The second concerns the broad notion of museum operating in various ways in the different settings described, which suggests that public involvement with museum culture as a way of making coherent statements about social identity is far more complex than she anticipated. Turner himself proposed that liminoid phenomena occur in very different situations, as he perceived in shifting his analysis from African rites of passage to Latin American and European Catholic pilgrimage. Duncan seems to have underestimated the specificities of liminoid phenomena in modern contexts when restricting Turner's formulation to European and American art museums.

For Turner, this shift implied considering individual experience rather than general social structure. The liminoid would, in these cases, not be located in the domain of 'the whole' social group, but among clusters of individuals who, although identified with one another, might be situated in transnational spaces, and think of themselves as westerners (cf. Turner 1973). These people might also think of themselves as belonging to a community defined by shared common practice such as, critically in Turner's formulation, attending theatre

performances (Turner 1986). Duncan's reading of Turner, and her seminal approach to museums from this perspective, fails to incorporate the diversity of ritual experience that these ritual settings permit. This critique had already been levelled at Turner himself by, for example, Gerholm (1988) who argued that ritual (in what he claims to be a postmodern view) is structured by non-ritual procedures. These account for the fact that it is the subject's point of view that determines whether or not a concrete situation is experienced as a ritual situation. Attending a theatre performance may, from this perspective, be sheer entertainment. The same applies to visiting museums, zoos or natural parks: it depends how visitors define the situation, which may in turn depend on many other factors. The main issue concerning ritual experience associated with museum visiting is that it involves not only the visitor but also (as with theatre) ritual officials and volunteers: curators, designers, exhibition makers and the like, as the cases under discussion demonstrate.

A second issue connects with this theoretical position, although it might also be seen as a product of recent history. This concerns increasing public awareness of the museological process, and its corresponding impact upon both exhibitions and museum politics (see Wastiau, Heatherington, and Fairweather). As Karp (1992) reminds us, museums and museum-like sites may be included in what he calls (following Gramsci) the regulatory devices of civil society. For Karp, 'civil society' includes not only – or even mainly – institutions, but covers ongoing processes of negotiation about social identities. Museums are actively engaged in this discussion and hence in the negotiation of social identities. In this respect, contesting a museum exhibition may range from ignoring the museum's existence to appropriating it as a cultural frame to value places and people otherwise invisible. Duncan's focus on European and American art museums narrows the scope of this process to one category of museums among many. If, as the cases included in this volume seem to demonstrate, the ritual spectrum is much broader, then its analysis must include not only other sorts of museum, but especially museum personnel as well as visitors, celebrity scientists, and arguably personalised machines, mortal animals and immortal mummies. In pursuing how and why museum culture participates in the enchantment of the world, the various chapters of this book substantially adjust Duncan's framework by adding agency to the actors involved. The orchestration of liminality is a complex collective endeavour in the museum-visiting process, and we now need to return to the issue of reception.

Part IV   Dilemmas of Enchantment

If the musealisation of culture is an inevitable accompaniment to the process of modernisation, as Vaessen (1986) has argued, whereby objects that have

fallen into disuse as well as newly created objects are used to fill the gap left by too rapid change, the capacity to reengage with this material either as a member of the public or as a cultural (= ritual) specialist, becomes one of the defining criteria of the modern citizen (Bourdieu and Darbel 1991; Solberg 1994). We return to this issue in connection with the fall of the Arapesh tambaran cult and ensuing production of heritage in the final section of this introduction.

Macdonald addresses the new religiosity in the concluding part of the book, where she reviews the preceding chapters in terms of contemporary dilemmas for the museum as a ritual site. She examines the shift of attention and experience from the church to other sites which may, in turn, be transformed into ritual places. Their recognition as significant destinations containing meaningful objects depends on various kinds of knowledge that makes them significant for different segments of the population.

Macdonald takes Weber's notion of the disenchantment of the world as her point of departure for discussing the new forms of religiosity sought by the modern self, relating this to the project of museums and comparable sites. The dilemmas associated with the process of musealising the former Nazi rallying ground in Nuremberg underline the deeply political agency of museums. The past haunts the Nuremberg project in a way that resembles the Weimar case (Wolbert). The difference lies perhaps in the explicit use of art in Weimar in a temporary exhibition, which raises the question of whether Macdonald's concept of enchantment is equivalent to Gell's formulation of art as a technology of enchantment (1992). Gell conceived of art as a technology that is magical in the sense that the resulting artefact seems to exceed productive labour. However, the agency of curators and other museum staff as well as visitors in producing this enchantment, as repeatedly demonstrated in the contributions to this volume, suggests that the museum effectively channels the agency of modern subjects in several directions.

Museum Magic

Carol Duncan's theorisation of the art museum as a ritual site demonstrated how a modern, post-Enlightenment, elite institution is scripted as a rite of citizenship. The neglected issue of agency, both of museum staff and of visitors, is of central importance to understanding the museum as a ritual site, as the contributors to this volume elucidate in their explorations of various exhibitionary configurations both in Europe and beyond. Enchantment, whether in a Namibian village, an Amsterdam zoo, a Sardinian natural park, or a Mancunian science museum, emerges as something that not only involves locals in a global discourse (and simultaneously localises global issues), but is

actively constituted by both producers and consumers through the repertoire of objects, images and places they have at their disposal.

The museum as a ritual site involves not only the physical constitution of collection, buildings and choreography in space, but also the active mediation by ritual specialists, who by no means operate according to precepts concerning the ideal citizen even in the contemporary market-oriented incarnation of 'target group' or consumer. This is fortunate since visitors themselves may be interested in appropriating the museum for their own purposes – actively and not always predictably. However political the agency of the museum may be, there are likely to be curators who manage to subvert or alter the course of official messages just as there are visitors who domesticate the museum for their own purposes. In this sense, citizenship (if that is what the museum is 'about') is subject to continuous overhaul through the museological process including (but not centrally dependent on) museum visiting.

Malinowski inspires one possible explanation for why this might be so nowadays. If we connect contemporary social processes of identity formulation in a disenchanted world with the role that museums and museum-like sites play in it, it may be that such institutions are inherently magical. What museums and processes of contemporary identity formation have in common is that they can be grounded on practically anything which may, in turn, be subjected to musealisation. This observation implies that museums are less about things in themselves than about the social networks that bring these marked things to the core of some signifying process. These are long-term processes that converge in different ways upon museums and similar sites where they serve to reenchant the world.

The specificity of such sites is that they wrap things in a mythological universe, indeterminate enough to accommodate multiple layers of identification, and thereby providing open-ended comments on everyday life. This quality is partially derived from their seemingly extraterrestrial origin – the museum setting is out of this world, in liminoid time and space. In this respect they seem to be very much like Trobriand gardens. Gardens, to borrow from Malinowski's account of yam planting (and its insightful reading by Gell (1988: 9)), are not simply about growing yams, but about their planting to the accompaniment of the proper spells and procedures. Gell refers to a kind of 'ideal garden', which strongly resembles the exhibition concept and special effects, which are developed on paper in a long-term process leading up to the opening. Applied to the case of museums, the magic involved is as diverse as contemporary identities are fragmented, and may include exorcisms in Weimar, ecological empowering at the Amsterdam zoo, rewriting national history at Tervuren, or domesticating technology at Manchester by walking around inside a computer.

Museum magic is, in other words, a way of reflecting upon the world – things, ourselves, others, the past or the future – by creating a framework that

is both orderly yet more than that: it uses special effects, such as lighting, which resemble the Trobrianders' magical prisms. It is magic in that it subjects only part – a small but significant part – of that world to such reflection in some ideal historically and socially situated manner. For this reason, museum magic works by trial and error and is always provisional. It is not magical to everybody all the time, nor is it completely predictable (as with yam magic). It is difficult to understand, just as coexisting forms of magic – notably cinema, theatre, advertising and other practices implying liminoid suspension of disbelief – are difficult to understand in purely rational terms. Museum magic does, however, surpass certain other technologies of enchantment since it provides a spatial venue for wider ritual processes that endure beyond the time frame normally available to film, theatre or advertising. If the liminal space of the museum enables visitors to grasp some part of the world in another light, museum specialists – such as curators, architects, and designers – may be seen as its magical technicians, using the complex means of museum spells against a disenchanted world.

Postscriptum: The Past, its Presence and the Future

When Tuzin revisited Ilahita in the mid-1980s, the tambaran cult had been dramatically unmasked at a Sunday morning Revivalist (Christian) service; in the course of his fieldwork, he was to observe the cultural process of memorialising the tambaran (Tuzin 1997: 142). For if the revelation that the secret men's club was a 'hoax' led in the first instance to the destruction of cult paraphernalia and associated practices (1997: 9–11), later on the *memory* of the Tambaran came to stand for 'Ilahita's past greatness … tainted … but nonetheless glorious' (1997: 142). The instigators of the tambaran iconoclasm 'wanted to remember, but also redefine the value and relevance of, those traditions, putting them safely at bay from the self' (*ibid*). Life and practice were, according to Tuzin, transformed by emotional distancing into heritage and reminiscence. The ambivalence of this redefined tambaran, a source of both attraction and revulsion, is reminiscent of human attitudes toward caged wildlife at the zoo (Silva), or the transgressive allure of unwrapping mummies (Wieczorkiewicz) or even, although in a different way, the Nazi rallying grounds at Nuremburg (Macdonald). As Tuzin observes, 'a moral and cognitive dissonance was cast in the form of an "incriminating charter", in this case the promulgation of a "heritage", a cultural enshrinement that ironically indicts today's modernist ideology and deprives it of unquestioned legitimacy' (1997: 142). Fairweather's interpretation of modernism at the colonial mission turned museum suggests, however, that the making of heritage may constitute a significant act of modernism – as indeed the tambaran episode tends to confirm.

When Revivalists went as far as staging performances of tambaran music for a visiting ethnomusicologist (1997: 221–222, n.15), they were first criticised by anti-Revivalist traditionalists for (as they saw it) trivialising custom. However, once the performances got underway, everyone was soon caught up in a 'festive, nostalgic atmosphere'. Tuzin affirms, 'the experience demonstrated, however – rather subversively, from the standpoint of the traditionalists – … that Tambaran art can be secularized, and that doing so might be preferable to totally abandoning it' (*ibid*).

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The detailed cases in this volume illuminate how the ritual processes of museum magic are an integral component of contemporary culture. We make into heritage the 'stuff' (Charles Hunt's term) that comes down to us through intense social and political negotiation, frequently involving performances that engage visitors with ritual specialists, either directly or indirectly. The concentration of meaning in specific spaces uses diverse exhibitionary technologies that appeal – sometimes on an alternating basis – to the rational *and* the emotional, bordering on the religious. As Eco reminds us, '[t]o enter the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers in Paris, you first cross an eighteenth-century courtyard and step into an old abbey church, now part of a later complex, but originally part of a priory. You enter and are stunned by a conspiracy in which the sublime universe of heavenly ogives and the chthonian world of gas guzzlers are juxtaposed' (Eco [1989] 2001: 7). Günther Domenig's diagonal slice design for the documentation centre in the – unrestored – Nuremberg Colosseum provides a stunning example of the magical as well as the political sensitivity of making heritage (see Macdonald, this volume). Despite the rhetorical emphasis placed on the pastness or alterity of the material involved, attending to its cultural uses in the present will provide anthropologists, together with contemporary scholars from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds, with interpretative challenges for the foreseeable future.

NOTES

1. Palau de la Musica in Barcelona was the venue for the 1996 EASA opening.
2. The present volume developed out of the workshop, 'Science, Magic and Religion, the Museum as a Ritual Site', which we convened at the Krakow conference – in one of the old lecture rooms at the Jagiellonian University.

3. Although it should be noted that *museum* as defined by ICOM and certain national museum organisations would include zoos. The wider term *heritage* as defined by UNESCO includes both material and immaterial sites, which certainly border on if not overlap with the term *museum*.

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