



Museum of Our Own

In Search of Local Museology in Asia

Synopsis Of International Museum Conference

November 18th - 20th 2014

University Club Hotel

Universitas Gadjah Mada,

Yogyakarta, Indonesia



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Synopsis of International Museum Conference

Museum of our Own: In search of a Local Museology for Asia

Background

Over the last three decades there has been a rise in museum criticism. What were common practices in museology are now being challenged; especially the ways museums curate their collections, or work with their different stakeholders. Under the pressure of such critique, museum practices have changed significantly worldwide. Museums in the so-called West, for example, have been attempting to ‘decolonize’ their practices, if only partial and incomplete, confronting their colonial roots, while trying to develop new methodologies deemed more suitable for collections and display in the post colonial present. Similarly methodological shifts have been happening in areas of museum conservation and education.

Co-terminus with this rethinking of museums in the West has been similar developments in museology in so-called non-traditional museum spaces, including, and perhaps, especially in Asia, with significant rise in the number of museums as well as an increase in museum training programmes. Despite these sea changes, and the long history of established museum tradition in many non-western societies – in many instances since the 19th century – these local museums remain marginal institutions. In fact, the word ‘museum’ still remains uncommon within the cultural vocabulary of many such societies. Recently academics have tried to identify non-western museological models, where, for example, preservation practices that parallel those in conventional museums can be found. Still these models have not developed sufficiently. Nor are they sufficiently valorized and embedded within museum practice to have the desired effect of improving the status of museums in and the value of museums to these societies.

In response to the need to strengthen museum practice in several of these countries, numerous museum professionals travel to Europe and North America to study museology. This is complemented by a growing number of locally based museology training programmes in Asia. In Indonesia, for example, formal training programs in the field of museology were recently developed in a number of Universities. The archaeology departments of the Universitas Gadjah Mada and Universitas Indonesia have museology training programs at both the Bachelors and the Masters levels. These programmes were developed with the assistance of institutions in the West. But have



these local based programs worked? Or, do those who return with 'western' museology training really impact the local situation enough?

Five years into the museology education programs Universitas Gadjah Mada, it is now timely to reflect on the state of museums and museum education in Indonesia and Asia in general. More than a critical assessment of the programs themselves, we want to ask questions about how to rethink museological practices that have been already defined in the West for our own museums. We now have museology training programs but do they sufficiently serve our needs? Is the limited valorization of local museums based solely in the fact that they are 'innately' western institutions or are there other, more practical reasons for their shortcomings? How do we further develop a training program that responds to local needs? What histories of museums should be mobilized to inform a local museum practice? What, we want to ask, is a museum of our own? The conference will be divided in a number of interrelated sessions addressing different topics in in museology, both at concept and practical levels.

Topics and Convenors

While the topics will be developed based the expressions of interest of the potential participants, we already set out five themes that we deem productive for a discussion of these questions, namely:

Writing Museum in Southeast Asia

Convenour: Bambang Purwanto (Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia)

Museums in Southeast Asia emerged at the end of the nineteenth century, through initiatives by both local authorities and colonial governments. Especially in the latter case these museums functioned within a colonial context, as part of a technology of colonial rule. After independence museums in Asia adopted new functions, and were mobilized as part the new national government's attempt to fashion national narratives. As new museums emerge and old museums try to redefine their missions and visions for contemporary society, what critical histories can we write of these institutions and the ways they have functioned in different Asian societies over the years? In what ways do these histories impact on the current role that these museum play, or can play today? Can any regional tendencies in museum histories and practices be detected in the ways that these museums developed? The conveners of this session want to explore these histories from different perspective looking at the relationship between national and regional histories and the development of museums.



The West and the Rest, the development of the theory of museology.

Convenour: Wayne Modest (National Museum of Worldcultures, The Netherlands)

Since Macdonald and Fyfe's 1998 call for 'theorizing the museum' a large and robust body of literature has developed that could be regarded as museological theory. Drawing on different disciplinary frames from anthropology to art history, from history to archeology, much of this theorization has occurred in the so-called 'West' with limited attention paid to non-western museum practices. Where calls for a non-western museology have occurred, for example Kreps (date), these have often not taken hold, resulting in little real attempts to think through what such a model for museology could look like? But is there really a need for a non-western museology or are the models that are developed in the west applicable to other places across the world? Should models for museological theory and practices be locally based? If yes what could this look like?

Museum and Heritage

Convenour: Tular Sudarmadi (Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia)

The long existence of museums in countries such as Indonesia as well as the different points of view on collections is inseparable from the dynamics of heritage discourse locally and globally. How do we take these histories as well as past and present heritage discourse into account as we train museums professionals or formulate strategies for more successful museum practices?

Conservation

Convenour: Mahirta (Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia)

Traditional museological practices have maintained rigid rules and standards for preservation/conservation. These rules have for decades been applied universally and are taught through museum training programmes or global heritage governance organizations such as ICOM or ICCROM. More recently, these standards have been questioned, demanding more flexible applications mindful of local situations. But are there ethno-conservation standards or other more locally sensitive procedures acceptable to take care of the museum collections? If yes, how should local standards for preservation be developed and embedded in practices? How do these take ground mindful of collaborative practices across Global North/South divide and discourses of International Development.



Museology Education in Indonesia

Convenour: Pim Westerkamp (National Museum of Worldcultures, The Netherlands)

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Event

Date : **18th-20th November 2014**

Venue : **University Club Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM), Yogyakarta, Indonesia**

Excursion

All participants are eligible of excursion during the conference. Excursion will be held on November 19th 2014 and is as below:

	A	B
1 st Destination	Karst Museum	Sangiran Museum
2 nd Destination	Imogiri Batik Village	Triwindu Market
3 rd Destination	Kotagede Living Museum	Laweyan Batik Village

Kindly noted that the destination written above is still tentative and subject to changes. The committee will contact the participant in later date for further information.



Registration & Submission

Registration

Registration for participant starts on May 14th 2014 and ends on October 27th 2014. To register, kindly submit a filled registration form (attached) in block letter complete with your signature. The scanned documents can be sent via email to seminar.museologi@ugm.ac.id or by fax to +62 274 550451.

Submission

To ensure your participation, kindly submit an abstract of no more than 200 words, specifying which panel you would like to be part of; no later than **November 1st 2014** via email to seminar.museologi@ugm.ac.id.

Kindly write **[M03 Abstract/Paper Submission] Your Name** on the email subject.

Paper should be submitted no later than **November 10th 2014**.

Abstract and Paper specification is as below:

	Starts	Ends
Registration	May 14 th 2014	October 27 th 2014
Abstract	May 14 th 2014	November 1 st 2014
Paper	May 14 th 2014	November 10 th 2014

In addition to the different panels set out about we welcome additional panels. Suggestions for additional panel should include a short description of the panels as well as the individual papers that will be included in the different panels.

Payment

Kindly understand that the registration fee listed below is **excluding accommodation, any kind of transportation fees, breakfast and dinner**.

Participant will be eligible for seminar kit, programme and abstract book and excursion fee. Opening and closing ceremony is included.



Committee will provide lunch and coffee breaks during the conference and the excursion. All food and beverages provided will comply to Indonesia Halal requirements. For further inquiries, please contact seminar.museologi@ugm.ac.id.

Participation fee is as below:

	Early Bird	Normal
National	Rp. 400.000	Rp. 500.000
National Student	-	Rp. 250.000

Payment can be made via bank transfer to:

Name	Bank	Account Number
Sara Kusumawardhani	CIMB Niaga Branch Niaga Kaliurang	017-01-31939139
Dian Rahayu Ekowati	BNI Branch UGM Yogyakarta	0134155904

Kindly submit your transfer proof of authentication (scanned or otherwise) via email to seminar.museologi@ugm.ac.id or by fax to +62 274 550451. For further inquiries, kindly contact us via above email.

Kindly note that your participation is not ensured without verified payment or abstract submission.