

Colloque
international

Quelle universalité pour les musées universels ?

Organisé par Hervé Inglebert et Sandra Kemp

15 et 16 juin 2018

10h - 18h

Musée des Arts et Métiers
60 rue Réaumur, 75003 Paris



Université
Paris Nanterre

Lancaster University



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Vendredi 15 juin 2018

Les universalités muséales occidentales

MUSÉE DES ARTS ET MÉTIERS
SALLE DE CONFÉRENCES

MATINÉE (PRÉSIDENCE : SANDRA KEMP, LANCASTER UNIVERSITY)

10H DISCOURS D'ACCUEIL :
YVES WINKIN, DIRECTEUR DU MUSÉE DES ARTS ET MÉTIERS

INTRODUCTION

- 10h15 | **Hervé Inglebert** (Université Paris Nanterre) : *Histoire globale et musées universels contemporains*
- 10h45 | **Kate Hill** (University of Lincoln) : *Ourselves and others : universalities and museum hierarchies*

QUESTIONNEMENTS

- 11h15 | **François Mairesse** (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris 3) : *Les origines du musée universel*
- 11h45 | **Mark O'Neill** (Director of Policy, Research and Development at Glasgow Life) : *The Primitivism of the Universal Museum*
- 12h15 | **Mirjam Shatanawi** (Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam) : *The place of islamic objects in Western collections (Metropolitan, Louvre, Tropenmuseum)*
- 12h45| Discussion

13h : DÉJEUNER

APRÈS-MIDI (PRÉSIDENCE : FRANÇOIS MAIRESSE, UNIVERSITÉ SORBONNE NOUVELLE PARIS 3)

LES UNIVERSALITÉS MUSÉALES CLASSIQUES

- 14h | **Marie-Sophie Coryc** (Concervatoire National des Arts et Métiers) : *Les galeries du Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers : de l'universalité de la technique au musée global*
- 14h30 | **Françoise Mardrus** (Musée du Louvre) : *Les universalités du Louvre des Lumières : entre fiction et réalité*
- 15h | **Pascal Griener** (Université de Neuchâtel) : *The Universal Museum in the XIXth century - and its shadow*
- 15H30 | Discussion

16h : PAUSE CAFÉ

L'UNIVERSALITÉ DE L'ANTHROPOLOGIE

- 16h15 | **Nélia Dias** (Instituto Universitário de Lisboa) : *A Science in the Making? 'The Museum of Monuments of non-Western Peoples' and the Methods of Comparison in early Nineteenth-Century France*
- 16h45 | **Sophie Hopmeier** (University of St Andrews, Edinbourg) : *The disjunction between evolutionary and universal temporalities in the films of the Musée de l'Homme*
- 17h15 : Discussion

Samedi 16 juin 2018

Les nouvelles universalités muséales

MUSÉE DES ARTS ET MÉTIERS
SALLE DE CONFÉRENCES

MATINÉE (PRÉSIDENCE : ANDRÉ DELPUECH, MUSÉE DE L'HOMME)

LA QUESTION DE L'ART GLOBAL

- 10h | **Michael Falser** (Heidelberg Universität) : *From colonialism to universalism, from world art to global art history. The Plaster Casts of Angkor in a transcultural perspective on museum collections*
- 10h30 | **Eva-Maria Troelenberg** (Utrecht University) : *Permission to Represent? Contemporary Artistic Practice in Palestine and the Paradigm of "Global Art"*
- 11h | **Thierry Dufrène** (Université Paris Nanterre) : *L'art contemporain, seul art universel ?*
- 11h30 | Discussion

12h : DÉJEUNER

APRÈS-MIDI (PRÉSIDENCE : MARK O'NEILL, GLASGOW)

LES NOUVEAUX PROJETS D'UNIVERSALITÉS MUSÉALES OCCIDENTALES

- 13h30 | **Christian Schicklgruber** (Weltmuseum, Wien) : *The Weltmuseum Wien is not an universal museum – or is it?*
- 14h | **André Delpuech** (Musée de l'Homme) : *La nouvelle universalité du Musée de l'Homme*
- 15h | **Annette Loeseke** (New York University in Berlin) : *The Humboldt Forum in Berlin*
- 15h | Discussion

15h30 : PAUSE CAFÉ

LA QUESTION DE L'UNIVERSALITÉ DANS LES MUSÉES DU MONDE

- 15h45 | **Jean-François Charnier** (Louvre Abu Dhabi) : *Figures de l'universel au Louvre Abu Dhabi*
- 16h15 | **Elizabeth Lawrence** (Ball State University) : *Toward a History of Vernacular Museums in China for an Age of Multiple Universalisms*
- 16h45 | Discussion

CONCLUSIONS

- 17h15 | **Sandra Kemp** (Lancaster University, Victoria & Albert Museum)

Les interventions auront lieu en anglais ou en français et seront simultanément traduites dans l'autre langue.

RÉSUMÉS

Kate Hill (University of Lincoln) :
Ourselfes and others: universalities and museum hierarchies

If the Enlightenment was about understanding the whole world by gathering it in the universal museum, then in UK museums by the end of the nineteenth century there was a growing movement to understand 'ourselves', to commemorate and memorialise roots, and to create historically-based identities. Such an impulse may be traced through the twentieth century with the growth of 'folk' museums and the rise of social history in museums, which has recently been argued to be an important part of the expansion of History education to a mass audience. This paper will examine this growth and ask how far such a trend ever eclipsed the large national universal museums produced by the Enlightenment and how far merely supplemented them at a local, small-scale level; and it will also ask what the forces acting on museums of communal identity are in a new global environment where the 'universal' continues to represent the pinnacle of a hierarchy, but where tourism often values the unique and particular.

François Mairesse (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris 3) :
Les origines du musée universel

Si la logique du musée universel est partiellement consubstantielle à son origine (on songe entre autres au Mouseion d'Alexandrie), l'utilisation du mot est nettement plus récente. Son emploi, dans le cadre de la Déclaration sur l'importance et la valeur des musées universels, en 2002, a remis le terme à l'ordre du jour. Mais à partir de quel moment celui-ci émerge-t-il réellement ? Que signifie-t-il et quel est alors son rayonnement ? L'objet de cette intervention vise, à partir d'une brève enquête sur l'origine de ces deux mots et à leur utilisation durant les XIXe et XXe siècle, à résituer les enjeux sous-jacents du musée universel, dans le sillage du développement des grandes institutions, qui vont permettre de le voir resurgir à nouveau, au début du XXIe siècle, dans un contexte marqué par les post-colonial studies et les demandes de restitutions.

Mark O'Neill (Director of Policy, Research and Development at Glasgow Life) :
The Primitivism of the Universal Museum

The 2002 declaration by some of the world's major museums that they were 'universal' revived and redefined the concept of the universal museum. The signatories and later supporters argue that the presentation of collections which are encyclopaedic in scope enables them, in the words of Neil MacGregor, formerly Director of the British Museum and now Artistic Director of the Humboldt Forum to 'show the world as one'. Far from being the ideological instruments of oppression represented by post-modern relativism and Critical Theory, the universal museum is the embodiment of Enlightenment, liberal ideals of objective scientific truth, cultural internationalism and individual freedom. The displays of universal museums thus promote critical reflection and tolerance. I will argue that these arguments are compromised because their chief purpose is to protect museums against repatriation claims. This is not because the repatriation claims are inherently justifiable, but because the defence against them leads museums to devise contorted genealogies of their institutions, to misrepresent the histories of their collections, to make illegal collecting decisions and to make claims for the impact of their displays which are not empirically justified. The new 'universal museums' have thus developed an identity which, in its lack of awareness of its mythopoetic distortions, is profoundly primitive. I will conclude with examples of museums which, despite not being encyclopaedic, can make a more justifiable claim to being universal.

Mirjam Shatanawi (Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam) :
The place of islamic objects in Western collections
(Metropolitan, Louvre, Tropenmuseum)

The point of departure of this paper is the idea of different types of museums, including the so-called universal museum, as a discursive chain. In other words: what goes in the glass case in one museum, goes out in another. In the 19th century, when museums in Europe transformed from multidisciplinary cabinets of curiosity into institutions that became more and more specialized, processes of inclusion and exclusion started to unfold. In the course of this development, western and non-western objects that once were exhibited together now became separated. Museums for western culture, among them museums of European art or antiquities, and museums for non-western cultures, like Asian art museums and museums of ethnology, started to function as communicating vessels.

This paper will examine this development and what it means for museums today. The main emphasis will be on Middle Eastern and Islamic collections. Made up of objects from 'in-between' regions, the destiny of these collections have illuminating stories to tell on how identity and culture are defined and

negotiated. I will argue that undoing the dichotomous exhibitionary frameworks that underpin the presentation of these collections is necessary to make museums more relevant, given the complex representational challenges they face today.

Marie-Sophie Corcy (Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers, Paris) :

***Les galeries du Conservatoire des arts et métiers :
de l'universalité de la technique au musée global***

Les galeries du Conservatoire des arts et métiers constituent-elles un « musée universel » ? Le Conservatoire n'est pas un musée, mais une institution créée pour soutenir l'industrie nationale. Ses galeries ne se sont constituées en musée que très récemment à l'échelle de la fondation de l'institution en 1794 : ce n'est en effet qu'en 1963 qu'elles prennent l'appellation « Musée national des Techniques ».

Le bicentenaire du Conservatoire des arts et métiers a suscité des travaux historiques majeurs pour la connaissance de cette institution. S'inscrivant dans cette dynamique, la rénovation du musée, dans les années 1990, a permis de redécouvrir les collections et de renouveler ce champ historiographique. L'histoire des collections et des pratiques de gestion constituent le fil conducteur de recherches nouvelles et interrogent son identité.

Ces travaux nous permettent aujourd'hui d'appréhender la question de l'universalité à propos du Musée des arts et métiers. Nous nous proposons d'étudier le changement de paradigme que cette institution connaît au cours de son histoire : lieu d'universalité de la technique ; lieu où se construit une histoire universelle des techniques ; musée global.

Françoise Mardrus (Musée du Louvre) :

Les universalités du Louvre des Lumières : entre fiction et réalité

Cette communication a pour thème la question de l'identité du modèle universel incarné par le musée du Louvre depuis sa création au 18e siècle. Il s'agira d'envisager les différentes approches qui, au fil du temps, ont conduit à (ré) écrire son histoire. La manière d'écrire cette histoire répond –elle à des enjeux d'ordre politique et étatique qui concourent à son caractère unique ? Ainsi Simon Knell (National Galleries, Routledge, London, 2016) s'est interrogé sur le poids des états –nations dans l'accomplissement du récit muséal. L'épistémologie contemporaine irait –elle dans le sens d'une déconstruction de ce récit ? L'histoire du Louvre pourrait –elle se renouveler dans une perspective « transnationale » à travers notamment le rôle dévolu à la muséographie et la place des collections dans l'institution muséale ? La question du statut de l'objet de musée dans nos sociétés occidentales post-coloniales (Nicholas Thomas,

The return of curiosity, London, 2016] interroge d'autant plus le paradigme de l'universel dans le cas du Louvre.

Pascal Griener (Université de Neuchâtel) :
The Universal Museum in the XIXth century - and its shadow.

During the nineteenth century, the universal museum became a key feature in all the great empires which were fighting for supremacy in Europe. These institutions were founded upon historiographical principles which are loaded with ideology. Since the publication of Chakrabarty's Provincializing Europe, it has now become much more easy to analyze these ideological remains of the past. I shall try to show how even today, our duty is to deconstruct this form of museum in the greatest detail.

Nélia Dias (Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, ISCTE-IUL, CRIA) :
A Science in the Making? 'The Museum of Monuments of non-Western Peoples' and the Methods of Comparison in early Nineteenth-Century France

The presentation seeks to underline the role of museums in early nineteenth-century France as spaces where ethnography, art, and antiquarian studies shared epistemic values and practices based on the study and interpretation of material objects. How the study of non-European objects enabled art historians and antiquaries to ask questions that were crucial and how the methods and techniques they developed provided an epistemological framework for analysing significant connections between ancient and living civilizations? To what extent did the study of material objects contribute to reveal the deep commonalities between ethnography, art, and antiquarianism? What was the exact role of museums as providers of ample material for comparisons among different cultures and periods?

Focused on baron de Féüssac's proposal of a Museum of Monuments of non-Western Peoples (1826) at the Louvre Museum, the presentation analyzes on the one hand the epistemological implications of transposing the notion of monuments to non-Western artefacts. Why was this Museum envisioned as a complement, in geographical as well as in chronological terms, to the Louvre Museum? On the other hand, the presentation explores the specificities of the comparative method underlying the study of monuments belonging to distant times and different geographical locations. It seeks also to point out, in the wake of Arnaldo Momigliano's precious insights, the ways in which antiquarian studies shaped the development of nineteenth-century ethnography, its methods as well as its objects of inquiry.

Sophie Hopmeier (University of St Andrews, Edinburgh) :
*The disjunction between evolutionary and universal temporalities
in the films of the Musée de l'Homme.*

Following Paul Rivet's merging of osteological and material culture collections with the intent of analysing and proselytising the notion of the 'indivisibility of humanity across space and time', this paper will consider how film, as a temporal medium, has been used to navigate this universalist approach. I will look at the function of the visual trope of Asmat skulls in Pierre-Dominique Gaisseau's film *Le ciel et la boue* (1961) to reflect the ways in which hierarchies of technology have been used to organise narratives about humanity, specifically in ethnographic museums, and the way in which a particular class of artefacts have been used, as subjects of film, to identify and/or bridge the cultural and temporal gaps between people.

This presentation is part of a larger thesis about technologies of mediation in the collections and cinematic research methods of the Musée de l'Homme. What I am calling 'technologies of mediation' (Masks and other tools for spiritual, and cultural communication such as Asmat skulls) form an overdetermined and ambivalent topic in the films made for the Museum. These objects, often used for purposes of communication in their autochthonous context, were ambivalent because they evoked both 'otherness' and 'familiarity' for a western observer. For filmmakers, these objects became efficient symbols, or externalisations of cultural difference. However, there was also a degree of recognition for these filmmakers, who were still trying to come to grips with the properties of cinema, as a new technology of mediation, and its potential to communicate across cultural boundaries and promote understanding of peoples - as well as a more mysterious notion that these technologies could, perhaps, transcend bigger boundaries, such as that between life and death.

Michael Falser (Heidelberg Universität, Centre André Chastel/Centre de Recherche sur l'Extrême-Orient, Sorbonne Université Paris) :
*From colonialism to universalism, from world art to global art history :
The Plaster Casts of Angkor in a transcultural perspective
on museum collections*

Besides the commodification of original artefacts from the Orient as museum objects of Occidental curiosity, the transfer and display of Asian monumental architecture was a powerful means to appropriate the built cultural heritage of the colonies for the European métropole. Addressing a scientific desideratum in architectural museum research until today from the viewpoint of "Global Art History", this paper investigates the medium of plaster casts as an early colonial strategy of the transfer and substitution of Oriental architecture for

newly invented museum spaces in Europe. With the focus on the architectural plaster casts of the Cambodian temple of Angkor Wat in the recently rediscovered musée Indo-chinois in the Paris (c. 1880-1930) and the collections in the Berlin Völkerkundemuseum, this contribution develops a transcultural perspective on (pre-)colonial architectural museum spaces of the 19th century and asks how those displays helped to develop a “universal” notion of art and architecture. Finally, it investigates the recent museological tendencies to reconceptualise the value of those casts from originally secondary sources of art and architecture to primary sources of a “global” history of museum collections.

Eva-Maria Troelenberg (Utrecht University) :
***Permission to Represent? Contemporary Artistic Practice
in Palestine and the Paradigm of “Global Art”***

This paper seeks to challenge the notion of the museum as an affirmatively ‘global’ institution, a paradigmatic space for the production and representation of exchange processes and mobilities: If we understand the museum as a reference frame which in itself generates meaning, both in historical and contemporary perspective, we are inevitably confronted with a very fundamental question: What if the universalist claim of the museum is actually the result of a long-standing circular argument? Over the last decade, artists and art institutions in Palestine have developed activities and interventions which delve into such questions. This paper will focus exemplarily on Khaled Hourani’s initiative „Picasso in Palestine“ and Khalil Rabah’s „Palestinian Museum of Natural History and Humankind“. Both examples interrelate specific geopolitical factors with the epistemic effects of the museum. While operating within the matrix of a ‘global’ art and exhibition network, they reveal possible ‘traps’ of universalist thinking.

Thierry Dufrène (Université Paris Nanterre) :
L'art contemporain, seul art universel ?

L’art contemporain permet aujourd’hui de créer ce que j’appelle des « tiers musées » qui font dialoguer des traditions muséographiques diverses (musées d’art, d’histoire, d’anthropologie etc.), et forment les communautés de publics à des approches multi-perspectivistes. Le concept d’« intermuséalité », fondé sur celui d’intertextualité (pour les textes littéraires), découle de ses pratiques.

Cette notion me paraît très utile pour décrire la mutation, appuyée sur l’art contemporain et la révolution digitale, qu’opèrent les musées aujourd’hui pour refonder (en mieux) la notion de musée universel dont l’universalité reste encore trop de surplomb et de tradition.

Christian Schicklgruber (World Museum Vienna, Austria) :
The Weltmuseum Wien is not an universal museum – or is it?

After years of a closedown because of the recreation of its permanent exhibition the Weltmuseum Wien reopened last fall. Fourteen galleries tell about cultural diversity and about relations between cultures – and perhaps causing its visitors to question their view of themselves. The Weltmuseum Wien strives to have its visitors leave the Museum with the experience of human universality.

The Weltmuseum has said goodbye to initial positions of its demand. The entire world cannot be simulated with encyclopaedic aspirations in a museum, as one perhaps believed earlier. For this reason, the old systems of categorisation in ethnological museums, such as «Africa», «China», or «Islam» do not work anymore. Rather, short stories are narrated and scenes created with objects, and in these stories the «Other» emerges. We cannot do more than open such windows, only a limited number of topics framed by such a window can appear. A sequence of such stories leads to a picture of the diversity of cultural expressions.

Other theoretical insights unmasked the position of the museum as an authoritative institution with a single and unique perspective as a construct when it comes to talk about the “Other”. The museum as an enunciator of consistent statements does not speak. The museum has split up into a plurality of individual narrators. This is much more honest than any simulated objectivity and any claim to truth. This honesty brings with it the risk that the visitor is disappointed not to be presented with a simple – and authoritative – explanation of the world, which they may understand, unquestioned, as «true».

Following these underlying considerations the presentation will introduce the new permanent exhibition of the Weltmuseum Wien.

André Delpuech (Musée de l'Homme) :
La nouvelle universalité du Musée de l'Homme

Avec les années 2000 et le départ de ses collections africaines, océaniennes, asiatiques et américaines au musée du quai Branly, le nouveau musée de l'Homme, après une transformation complète, s'affiche depuis fin 2015 comme délibérément ancré dans la modernité et l'actualité de la saga humaine : de nos lointaines origines aux scénarios de demain. Il déclame ainsi la prodigieuse histoire de notre espèce homo sapiens sur la planète Terre, en trois questions clés qui scandent son parcours : qui sommes-nous ? D'où venons-nous ? Où allons-nous ? Dépassant les temporalités et les frontières disciplinaires, dans une nouvelle forme d'universalité, le musée de l'Homme de ce début du XXI^e siècle éclaire la complexité des sociétés humaines pour aborder les

problématiques actuelles de notre monde contemporain.

Annette Loeske (New York University in Berlin) :
The Humboldt Forum in Berlin

Due to open in 2019, the Humboldt Forum in Berlin's reconstructed palace building will house the collections of the former Ethnological Museum and Asian Art Museum of the National Museums in Berlin, alongside selected objects from the collections of Humboldt University in Berlin and the city museum. Together with the collections of the National Museums on Berlin's Museum Island, such as the Altes Museum, the Neues Museum or the Pergamon Museum, the Humboldt Forum is set to become, as the forum's website has it, a «centre of world culture». By tracing the shifting concepts of the Humboldt Forum through brochures, website material, newspaper articles and other published articles, I shall examine how the forum's idea of a «universal museum for the 21st century» builds on concepts such as the historical cabinet of curiosities (Wunderkammer), Alexander von Humboldt's «kosmos», and the museum as a «participatory laboratory» to produce and share knowledge and «grasp the world». Discussing the historical and urban contexts of the Humboldt Forum and its collections, and drawing on recent controversies about provenance and acquisition practice, restitution and repatriation, and eurocentric vs post-colonial or post-imperialist perspectives, I shall also explore questions about universality that have so far been under-addressed in the Berlin debate. I will argue that, apart from provenance research, museums need to address how (historical) notions of universality have shaped collections, narratives and displays. How has the Humboldt Forum built on (historical) notions of universality to consider its collections as «shared» (rather than contested) heritage? What is the connection between notions of universality, research and knowledge that museums and academia have established? How could museums challenge their own narratives about discovering cultures and preserving artefacts, and instead address their role in producing cultural heritage?

Jean-François Charnier (Louvre Abu Dhabi) :
Figures de l'universel au Louvre Abu Dhabi

Le Louvre Abou Dabi a dès l'origine pour ambition d'être un musée universel. Cette injonction initiale, dont on appellera la généalogie significative lors de notre communication était un véritable défi. Il faut dire que l'on ne savait pas ce que ce terme impliquait réellement, vu qu'aucun musée « encyclopédique » ne l'était vraiment. Il nous fallait admettre également combien le terme universel est mal compris et lourdement entaché d'ethnocentrisme aujourd'hui. Il a longtemps été utilisé dans une volonté de convergence des sociétés du monde

aux valeurs diffusées par l'Europe dite « moderne ». Le terme est encore en France lié à une certaine culpabilité néocoloniale. La preuve en est la difficulté, voire la gêne, à penser que l'on puisse chercher à se référer à une vision globale après soixante ans de décolonisation et autant de décennies de remise en cause des grands récits.

Au Louvre Abu Dhabi le terme ne pouvait être abordé que dans le sens qu'il prend dans le contexte muséal, où se sont exprimées deux figures de l'universalisme des Lumières : « l'universalisme du musée » avec son ambition encyclopédique, et la notion de « musée universel », qui se rapporte plus à des valeurs humanistes. Le Louvre Abou Dabi est ouvert à l'ensemble des civilisations mais, au regard d'un espace et d'un nombre d'œuvres limité, et surtout de son ambition philosophique, ce sont foncièrement les valeurs de l'humanisme qui l'animent. Le musée universel ne peut plus prétendre à l'universalité et se devait de proposer une mise en intelligence, en récit pourrait-on dire, des savoirs accumulés.

Forte de ces prémisses méthodologiques l'équipe a ainsi engagé une réflexion pour élaborer une narration pour que cette notion de musée universel et de dialogue des cultures ne soit pas qu'une rhétorique, le parcours imaginé au Louvre Abou Dabi vise ainsi à retracer l'histoire mondiale depuis la Préhistoire à l'époque contemporaine en associant tous les continents. Dans cet itinéraire, le dialogue interculturel s'est matérialisé par un décloisonnement des départements muséaux historiques et une ouverture de leurs collections au dialogue. Les vis-à-vis et les face à face ainsi provoqués sont une invitation au déverrouillage conceptuel de l'histoire des civilisations dans une vision globale que le regard monographique et segmenté en départements a tendance à esquerir. Dans ce contexte, les enjeux de décentrement du regard et de réévaluation des terminologies étaient importants.

Enfin, pour les Emirats Arabes Unis, cette proposition devrait avoir des effets probables sur les enjeux liés à la construction identitaire d'un pays jeune et en pleine effervescence. La question de l'identité est souvent vue dans le prisme des crispations auxquelles elle donne lieu. Au Louvre Abou Dabi, la muséographie décloisonnée vise à proposer, avec les mises en regard d'œuvres issues de cultures différentes, une construction identitaire pensée non pas dans la distinction ou dans le renforcement de la différence mais, perspective plus féconde et plus sage, dans sa conjugaison à celle des autres. Le musée universel est une invitation à penser la construction des identités dans la pluralité. Là s'exprime sans doute une des nouveautés profondes de ce premier musée universel hors d'Occident : une invitation à s'ouvrir aux valeurs humanistes de l'identité universelle pour un pays riche du caractère fortement transnational de sa population.

Elizabeth Lawrence (Ball State University) :
Toward a History of Vernacular Museums in China for an Age of Multiple universalisms

As China has increased in economic power and international influence in recent decades, Chinese and international scholars have initiated a lively debate over indigenous Chinese worldviews and universalisms and how they might contribute to a new global vision. Could a purportedly Chinese ideal of an all-encompassing moral universe glossed as tianxia, or all under heaven, provide an alternative to an unsustainable nation-state system? That we can even ask such a question suggests that the hegemony of a Western-derived world order is in abeyance.

Even if an ideal of “all under heaven,” or any other Chinese universalism, is hardly poised to remake the world order in the short term, China’s growing international power nevertheless raises questions about how China’s alternative universalisms might impact cultural venues, including the museum, in the long term. It would be easy to conclude that China has no alternative museum model to offer the world and that it remains, instead, eager to adopt Western museum models in a quest to signify national strength and global influence. This continued imitative drive is evident in the recent establishment of the Beijing World Art Museum on an encyclopedic world art model. But in addition to such derivative museums, China has a long history of vernacular museological practices and institutions that have garnered scant scholarly attention but merit further study, particularly in the context of a shifting global balance of power. This paper examines one such institution, the Xiling Seal Society (founded 1904) and argues that it anticipated characteristics of twenty-first century museums, including an emphasis on intangible heritage and a blending of preservationism and commodification.

Informations pratiques

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En raison du plan vigipirate, merci de prévenir de votre venue.

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Colloque international :
«Quelle universalité pour les musées universels ?»