CHAPTER 13

BEYOND THE SCREEN - FROM VIRTUAL REALITY TO MOVING MUSEUMS: TURKEY'S POTENTIAL IN A POSTMIGRANT ERA

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ABSTRACT

Postcolonial debates that discuss the genesis, character and development of the museum institution in Canada, the USA, Oceania and Western Europe have revealed the necessity to newly conceptualize museum studies (museology) in a dialogical and transcultural manner. While there is the need to decolonize imperial museums and to restitute stolen artefacts, objects, works of art and monuments, a notable trend is replacing museum objects by replicas. The development of digital, 3-D and other binary technologies makes it more and more difficult for the wider public to distinguish replicas from originals. In the context of continuing restitution debates, the question about which museum hosts the original object and which hosts the replica might become of importance. Furthermore, it is obvious that historicity of material cultures and objects bear an aura that communicates with the "viewer," which is an emotional relationship that cannot be replaced by digitization and virtual reality. The pervasive two-dimensionality in daily life, often from early childhood, longs for alternatives. Museums have the potential to recover creative spaces for emotional and dialogical ways of perception and learning beyond the screen. Turkey shows a specific history of its museums which were influenced by 19th centuries European developments but were differing from British, German or French colonial ethnographic epistemologies. The latter were driven by strategies of collecting material cultures and arts in Asia, Africa, America and Oceania. Turkey is currently hosting around four million refugees in a relatively young post-migrant society, a new museology on the move might pave the way for a more harmonious understanding of history.

Keywords: Postcolonial museology, digital museums, auratic objects, museums in Turkey, museums on the move

1. Introduction

As a result of the annual meeting of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in Tokyo in 2019, the definition of "museum" is the subject of an ongoing controversial debate. What is a museum these days? Can museums be a driving and inspiring public voice when it comes to urgent societal questions, among which include war, peace, racism, justice, climate change, migration, and others? Given this backdrop, this paper will discuss critically what role digitization can play in museums. There can be no doubt that museums benefit from digital humanities, especially when it comes to digital cataloguing and archives that make open access to a wider public possible. In the context of current debates on restitution and postcolonial justice, digital storage might help to bring universal cultural heritage, often slumbering in storage and archives, to the global public. And, when it comes to the question of fair restitutions of stolen artefacts that were mostly looted during colonialist robberies in the Global South, 3-D reproductions might replace the illegitimate appropriation of the "objects," while the originals are restituted.

In the context of educational and learning pathways, digitization and virtualization are to be avoided, so the paper will argue (I am aware that during the current Covid-19 pandemic the advantages of digital access to museums by far outweigh its disadvantages. I argue with regard to hopefully post Covid-19 times). As colonial collecting for public museums seems to have come to an end (for private collections it is different), museums have primarily educational tasks; they have the potential to pave the way for learning paths beyond the screen. As in daily life, virtualization takes the place of real life experiences more and more, and museums also have the potential to counteract the one- or two-dimensional sensations that harbour the risk of an increasing alienation from integrative perceptions of the real. While museums communicate mainly three-dimensional material cultures, the institution is challenged to develop new didactical learning pathways that will have to adopt appropriate methods in their specific historical–cultural background accordingly. In this respect, the genesis of the museum institution in Turkey looks back to a specific history, being currently challenged with particular difficulties as a young post-migrant society.

2. Museumization, Digitization and Cultural Heritage in Postcolonial Times

The code of ethics of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) still defines the principle guidelines for museums as to "preserve, interpret and promote the natural and cultural inheritance of humanity" (ICOM, 2017). A more antiquated but at the same time more

extensive understanding of the museum institution's core mission underlines that collecting, researching, exhibiting and mediating also rank among the key responsibilities of museums (Deutscher Museumsbund, 2017). Current museum practices show that communicating cultural inheritance includes the digitization of the museal objects, which consist of three-dimensional artefacts or objects, paintings, photographs, maps, models, reproductions, audio and film recordings and other archival documents (letters, inventories etc.).

In light of postcolonial criticism, at the end of the 1980s in Vancouver, Canada, First Nations people ensured their right to (re-)use museal objects for ceremonies of their communities. The musealized objects were thus reanimated and brought back to their original purpose. The museum task "collecting" seems to have been removed from the current guidelines of public museums due to widespread critique by decolonial voices. This holds true especially for ethnological museums that operate under names like Museum of Cultures in Bale or Frankfurt, the Museum of Five continents in Munich or – still under the antiquated name – "Tropenmuseum" (Tropical Museum) in Amsterdam.

Despite the omnipresent debates on postcolonialism, more attention should be paid to the increasing risk that original historical "objects" enter a criminal international market where objects of cultural heritage are traded illegally. The systematic looting of cultural heritage in Iraq, Syria, Libya and elsewhere point in this direction: demodernization goes hand in hand with eliminating historical consciousness and memory (Quintern, 2018). An internationally operating dark net has been trading stolen heritage up to the present day. Where have all these looted artefacts gone? Here, digital archives can help to identify and search for such lost objects. Furthermore, rumors circulate from time to time that due to the lack of budgetary resources, museums look for ways to sell parts of their collections. In a world where everything seems to be for sale and more and more public property and institutions are sold out to private investors, nothing seems to be unthinkable. So far, the market for antiquities focuses on regions of the world where, through staged chaos, it seems to be easy to snatch valuable objects. It appears as if there are shadowy storage and private museums hiding their robberies, a fact that should be highlighted in debates on postcolonial museums.

In a contribution to the discussion of postcolonial museology, Soares and Leshenko referred recently to the Brazilian anthropologist Darcy Ribeiro who got to the heart of the key issue already in the 1970s. Ribeiro denounced imperialist geopolitics of knowledge that separated the cultures that investigate from those that were investigated (Soares & Leshenko, 2016). While white anthropologists were the researchers, people of colour were forced to be their object. Photography revolutionized anthropological research, being now winged by the

concept of visual objectivization. Nothing illustrates this better than the large collections of photographs in European museums. The looks of Herero women into the lens of European anthropologists speak volumes. These women in the former German colony "South-West Africa" (postcolonial Namibia) show resistance, pride and scorn towards white arrogance and its machinery. Not many of the Herero and Nama survived the concentration camps and massacres that introduced a more systematized form of imperialist genocide into history in the first decade of the 20th century. Jewellery of Herero women were still displayed, without any mention of the colonialist background, in the visible storage of Bremen's Overseas Museum at the beginning of the 21st century. Very recently a critical museal reflection started to revise carefully the silencing of selected African "objects." Luckily the debates on the necessity to decolonize museums have changed this long-lasting museal attitude that so far was phasing out imperialist crimes against humanity from the histories of museums' collections during the colonial long 19th century. The museumization of peoples from the Global South had come to an end. A post-imperial museology in a hopefully multi-harmonious world requires new theories, methods and approaches in which digital media will have an important but subordinate role.

At this point, the need for the decolonization of museums shall not be discussed in further detail. I wanted to touch on the historical genesis of European ethnological museums, in particular as the interventions of First Nations and other people from the Global South into the day-to-day routine of museums in Canada, the US, Australia, New Zealand and finally Europe, pioneered the current widely discussed participative museology. In 1992, a delegation from Mexico called for the restitution of a formerly and most probably stolen ruling insignia of Montezuma, or as known to the Aztecs Moctezuma II, the last independent Aztec ruler before the Spanish occupation. Hernán Cortes sent the gold-feather head ornament of the holy quetzal bird in 1519 together with around 160 other objects to the Spanish royal house. From there the jewellery of high historical and spiritual value for the indigenous Mexican people entered the collection of the Habsburg Dynasty in Austria. The National Museum of Anthropology (Muséo National de Antropología) in Mexico City exhibits a copy of the original. Because of increasing calls in Austria for a restitution of the head ornament, which has significant value for Mexico, a former minister for educational and cultural affairs of Austria expressed the fear that in case of a restitution, the case would set a precedent and pave the way to emptying the museum collections in Vienna. What would remain are Austrian cowbells being then exposed in museums. So why not combine an Austrian cowbell with a copy of the feather adornment of Moctezuma II? The original then could be presented in Mexico City while the

copy could be exhibited in Vienna. The example of the important Aztec ornament should be sufficient. However, in many similar cases, discussions of conservation conditions have often served as a pretext for declaring the admittedly sensitive issue of transportation. As a last resort transportation inability is argued. An Egyptian loan request of the famous Nefertiti in Berlin was refused with the argument that the object was too fragile to be transported to Egypt. Currently there is a debate about whether to display or reinstitute the Benin Bronzes, currently in various German museums. Why should the Egyptian public not have the chance to see Nefertiti, at least on loan? More often than not, museal objects are not even inventoried; if they are, then neither their provenance nor their contexts are mentioned and the collection history is incompletely documented.

It is therefore less a question of urgent restitution but more of being capable to confess inflicted injustice. Digital storage of European museums might be a first step to disclosing historical "treasures" of world heritage and material cultures often out of sight in storage. In this context, digital museums and libraries can be of great benefit for cross-border research projects.

Today it is hard to imagine that a protest, such as the one in front of the ethnographic museum in Vienna in 1992 for the 500-year anniversary of the so-called discovery of America, would be harshly dealt with by police. Instead, an indigenous delegation would hopefully be invited into the museum. Museums, when conceptualized as an open space for public debates, overcoming cultural, religious, gender, age and other imagined borders in general, bear the potential to become an alternative to object-centred museal monologues and the loneliness of screened "realities."

This short critical outline of the self-conception of museums and its guidelines as well as the debates on their future should offer a brief insight into the background of the current crisis of the European museum institution, especially when based on so-called ethnological "collections". Lynn Maranda writes in Museum Ethics in the 21st Century: Museum ethics transforming into another dimension that in the forthcoming decades, one of the most important ethical precepts will be the interface between museums and aboriginal, indigenous, native and other people of colour 'along with the particularly thorny but related question of the increasing requests for the repatriation of cultural property' (Maranda, 2015). In addition to the question of cross- and transcultural dialogue and restitution of looted heritage, in post-migrant times, museums should also be opened up to the victims of the imperialist era. Living carriers of cultural heritage from the Global South are neither objects nor to be digitized or purely virtualized. In this context, the many world cultural heritage sites and museums in Turkey can act as a role model.

3. On the Genesis of Museums in Turkey – a Subtle Difference

The genesis of Turkey's museums differs from the founding history of mainly ethnological-oriented museums in cities like Berlin, Paris, Brussels or Amsterdam. In the last quarter of the 19th century, following the Africa or Congo Conference in Berlin in 1884/85, which introduced the disastrous scramble of Africa by European imperialist powers that led to another continent of open veins, the museum institution became more of a home for colonial representation and nationalist glory. The colonization of vast African territories by Germany, England, France, Belgium and other European powers went hand in hand not only with the robbery of mineral and natural products, which were expropriated by forced and enslaved labour, but also with the looting of art, material culture and knowledge.

Of course, archaeology also played an important role in this context. Unlike the removal of ethnographic and objects of art, archaeological artefacts and even monuments often required the digging up of entire areas. Breaking up the earth went alongside the imperialist monopoly of the interpretation of old civilizations, world history, and its periodization. Today archaeologists are more aware of the long-lasting relationship between imperial power and archaeology (Lydon & Rizvi, 2010).

The archaeologist and artist Osman Hamdi Bey (1842–1910), who founded the first museum of the late Ottoman Empire in 1881, participated in several excavations, for example in the South of Lebanon, which was already subjected to French colonial penetration at this time (Makdisi, 2000). The history of late Ottoman archaeology needs to be discussed in the frame of the dependence on European colonial powers, which were leading the excavation campaigns at that time, for example in Lebanon. Who gave the excavation permission in 1887 in Sidon and who controlled the campaign? Was there an autonomous and self-responsible Ottoman archaeology? In the mid of the 19th century many of the Ottoman provinces, among them Egypt, were more and more under the control of European powers. This holds true not only for financial but also for cultural affairs, first and foremost archaeological excavations. The famous marbled Alexander Sarcophagus, found in one of the royal tombs of Sidon, had been formerly decorated with polychrome painted relief scenes, which probably portrayed Alexander the Great during the battle of Issos / Essos in 333 BC. The sarcophagus of the excavation campaign in 1887 ranks among the gems of Istanbul's archaeological museum. Interestingly, the Alexander Sarcophagus remained in the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul. Many other archaeological findings found their way from Ottoman territories into the British Museum in London, the Louvre in Paris or to Museums in Berlin. But this is another kettle

of fish and cannot be discussed in further details at this point. The experiences that Osman Hamdi Bey had with illegal excavations, trafficking of real and fake cultural heritage and other incorrect handlings led to the Antiquities Protection Act (Asar-ı Atika Nizamnamesi), which he introduced (Vogel 2013). The Müze-i Hümayun or Imperial Museum (Osman Hamdi played an important role in the establishment of the museum) has become today's archaeological museum.

It is also interesting why, during his early stay in Paris, Osman Hamdi as an artist focused on the painting techniques of his teachers, the famous orientalist painters Gérôme, Boulanger and Zonaro, but never adopted the sexist motives—often the typical orientalist keyhole perspective into the female bath of the harem. Wendy Shaw discussed Osman Hamdi and the rise of the Ottoman Imperial museum in detail (Shaw, 2003).

In this context, I want to leave the question of the differing museological backgrounds of the late Ottoman time and Western European, noting that the main distinction might be traced back to the absence of a pseudo-scientific craving for objects of material cultures, arts and even natures. We need only think about the myriad of stuffed animals, often killed and then transported from Asia, Africa, America and Oceania into zoological collections. Collecting things and life became a kind of scientifically deduced obsession and soon an ideological pillar for European museums as a scientific and popular institution at the same time. We are aware that the establishment of more public ethnological museums in Europe was linked with early European enlightenment before at the turn to the 19th century "collecting" material cultures and art became synonymous with an unprecedented transfer of historical testimonies of the Americas, Africa, Asia and Oceania into European museums.

From the 16th century on, cabinets of rarities and arts, which emerged with the upcoming era that often is called in a Eurocentric manner "Renaissance," merely represented global aspirations of feudal lords adorning themselves with various exotica. Hernán Cortéz, whom we mentioned already, took with him things that were curious to him, e.g. gummi balls from Mexico. Missionaries often burned objects which were satanic in their eyes (the term fetish has its origin here). But towards the end of the 18th century the European Enlightenment introduced "modern" collecting of cultural and scientific artefacts, which has now become more and more systematized scientifically. An era which had its starting point in the so-called French expedition into Egypt in 1798–1801, a colonial war against the land of the Nile resulting in an Egyptomania that also went together with the removal of obelisks to Paris. Edward Said had substantial reasons to set the starting point of Orientalism with the French occupation of Egypt, going along with a pseudo-scientific exploration of the long

history of the ancient civilization (Said, 2003). This was in contrast to previous religiously justified plundering and pillaging (e.g. the Spaniards in Mexico or the missionaries in Africa); from now on scientific Orientalism and its companion in Africa deduced the usurpation of material cultures was seemingly scientific. Scientific books and other knowledge carriers (e.g. African masks or canoes) were now looted with scientific legitimation. As it was assumed that "barbarian", "uncivilized" and "backward" cultures would disappear in the evolutionary course of history from lower to higher stages, it was seen as necessary to prevent the material cultures from disappearing. They were worse off, however, by being "rescued" for future generations. Racism became science. From then on, the core of the collections of European museums, libraries and art collections, whether public or private, were made up of plundered cultures.

Also, European public history became triumphant when erecting Egyptian obelisks on representative squares. The transportation of cultural heritage to Paris or Rome should be understood as a continuation of imperialism, having its starting point with the Roman occupation of the land on the Nile in 33 BC, and then de-memorizing[1] and confiscating the long history of Egypt. Paris, London, Rome, Berlin and other European metropolises face the challenge of decolonizing not only their museums but also their public historical places. But of course, this cannot be done digitally nor virtually. We will have to discuss whether and to which extent digital technologies—bearing in mind that digitization is no more than a technical tool—can be of help.

While pseudo-scientific anthropology and other young disciplines, like ethnography, imagined that the history of Africa was at a long-lasting standstill (it was also assumed that people and cultures beyond Europe would vanish into nothingness) European ethnological "collections" grew to the same extent, coming along with imperialist expansion and settler colonialism. For Adolf Bastian, often seen as the founding father of ethnology in Germany, the psychic carried more weight than the physical extinction of the African people which, as he understood it, depends on the almighty course of history and is not avoidable (Quintern, 2017).

This is not the place for a discussion of the character of the Ottoman Empire in comparison with imperial European powers, which systematically plundered the Global South. For the history of museums in Turkey, it is important that the transition period from the late Ottoman

1 By de-memorizing I mean the appropriation of cultural memory by transferring material cultures and carriers of knowledge from its original locations in Africa, Asia, America and Oceania into far away museums mainly in Europe and the USA. The material basis of cultural memory in the Global South, often looted, is stolen and interpreted by Eurocentrism.

Empire to the Turkish Republic in the long 1920s was not, in contrast to neighbouring Iraq or Syria, characterized by European colonization and occupation. From the early Turkish Republic times onwards, museums have often interpreted and visualized the long history of Turkish lands in a national, and not rarely nationalistic, frame. Museums policies, far from representing other than Turkish cultures, followed a clearly given education policy which, like the Sağlık Müzesi (Health Museum) founded in Istanbul already in 1917, having, for example, public health and sanitation as the focus of its mission. At that time digitization, 3-D technologies and virtual museums were still a long way off.

4. The 3-D Museum – an Alternative?

Digital and 3-D technologies nowadays enable us to reconstruct and reproduce scenes like the relief of the Alexander Sarcophagus in the Archaeological Museum. This is proven by the reconstruction of a section of the Persian battle frieze, a colour reconstruction, on the basis of an electronic measurement and a form created with the aid of the prototyping method (plaster, natural pigment etc.) (Brinkmann, 2018). The research project, which focused on color in Ancient Greece and Rome as its key theme, showed that digital-based reconstructions have the potential to tour successfully. The exhibition "Colored Deities – The Colorfulness of the Antique Sculpture" had great success when shown in Munich, the Vatican City and Copenhagen in 2003 and 2004. Thus, as a consequence of improved digital-based reproduction technologies, the borders between the original museal object and its imitation seem to become more and more blurred. At the time of Osman Hamdi Bey—and he had drawn the requisite conclusions—it was much more challenging to reproduce fake archaeological artefacts, before selling them on to the growing international market for antiquities. That, however, is a different matter.

Possible potentials and dangers of 3-D reproduction technologies can also be understood from the exhibition "The Terracotta Army—the Legacy of the Eternal Emperor" (Die Terrakotta Armee—Das Vermächtnis des Ewigen Kaisers), which has toured since 2002 through different German and Austrian cities and was shown recently in the Northern German city of Bremen in 2018. In Hamburg, the exhibition caused a scandal in 2007 when the visitors were presented—after rumours had questioned the authenticity of the "Chinese Army" presented at the "Völkerkunde Museum"—with the following note at the beginning of the exhibition: "Indications by third parties point to the question that some or all of the displayed objects might be copies. […] For reasons of credibility we will keep tracking the suspicion." (Spiegel Online, 2007). The wider and historically interested public was seemingly misled

and, while assuming they were seeing and studying the original terracotta sculptures, they were obviously being deceived. This is an alarming example showing the tendency not only to commercialize public history, but also to lead the public to believe in its authenticity, even though the organizers of the exhibition should have known about their deception. In the best-case scenario, this can be interpreted as a marketing strategy, which transcends the border between real and fake.

The aura of historical objects and artefacts is not reproducible. Besides seeing, touching, hearing, smelling and tasting, historicity opens the way to a more latent way of perceiving multifarious dimensions of a museal object. In the quest to the essence of cognition, learning psychologies and theories are challenged to grasp the communicative interplay between "object" and "observer". Objects are not just material things but bear and evoke emotions at the same time. An African mask not only is a carving that narrates its story, spiritual function, beauties etc., but also materializes and expresses the intentions and emotions of its origination process, the communicative and creative interaction between human and nature. Newer neurological research points out that emotional access to an object of learning directs, in cases where the findings are associated with positive emotions, to different parts of the brain than negatively connoted information, stress and fear, for example. In the former case, the information is absorbed by the hippocampus, before being transmitted to the cerebral cortex where the knowledge is stored and digested creatively, whereas in the latter case, the information enters the amygdala, initiating a fast reaction that is counterproductive for any learning process (Giessen & Schweibenz, 2007). Two-dimensional information, even if not giving rise to fear or anxiety, evokes a certain stress of which the "information receiver" is mostly not aware. The cold and passing information are volatile, not having an emotional vis-à-vis that enables intercreativity. Digitised information on a screen counteracts lasting and deep learning processes. Perception remains on the surface and risks evaporating into nothingness.

However, screened and permanently floating images and information initiate a permanent appetite for more. This is particularly dangerous for infants and toddlers. Gertraut Teuchert-Noodt compared the childish desire for seemingly interactive, initiated, non-stop running images and impressions, with a digital seduction that can easily lead to various forms of addiction which can cause physiological malfunctions similar to those resulting from drug abuse (Teuchert-Nodt, 2016). Sadly, parents are often proud when their baby or toddler masters how to use a touchscreen. It seems that today, digital "Maya the Bene," based on a popular TV series originally developed for children, produces joy and excitement while a real butterfly causes fear.

I have often observed school classes visiting Istanbul's Museum for the History of Science and Technology in Islam in large groups. The teachers seemed not to be prepared for the visit, mostly. The children, mobile phones in hand, rushed through the exhibition halls without pausing for a moment, avoiding to look at the exhibited instruments. The eyes were replaced with the mobile phones' lenses, and for them to read an explanation in the panels was unthinkable. We will later have to think about alternatives of museological approaches in order to overcome the epidemic of hasty flippancy. Egloff summarized Ludwig Fleck, a science theorist who was working as a medical practitioner in the 1920s, who had emphasized that students only see the new if the teacher draws their attention to it. This holds true for adults when being confronted with something new: a futuristic painting, an unknown landscape or looking through a microscope for the first time (Eglof, 2011).

Let us return to the well-rooted and heavy Alexander Sarcophagus of Osman Hamdi Bey, which is also a good example of a deep and material-based relief storytelling. To take a small stool, to sit in front of the amazing sarcophagus, trying to understand what the sculptor wanted to tell us about war and peace back in 325 BC, is clearly different not only from digitized but also from moving pictures. Obviously, this was not a drone attack which, when shown today on TV, never seems to involve any human beings, either as attackers or as victims. On the sarcophagus, the opponents have almost the same equipment and weapons; in a way, it depicts a battle at eye level. But should the relief scenery be animated, maybe downloadable as an app or sold as a computer war game? I plead in favour of a new, more contemplative museology that avoids as far as possible digital media. "Viewer" and "object" have to re-enter a dialogical communication that should not be disturbed by any transient and ephemeral distractions. The two-dimensional screen flattens realities, a flattening that makes it necessary to go beyond the screen.

5. In Place of a Conclusion: Beyond the Screen – Museums on the Move

On the occasion of the World Refugee Day on 20 June 2019, the museologist Marlen Mouliou pointed the way to a museology on the move that explores urban spaces as a pool of impressions and memories. Together with a group of refugees from mainly Syria and Iraq, photographs and texts, produced during the curatorial excursion, were finally exhibited in a refugee camp near Athens (Mouliou, 2018). The young curators sent photographs to their relatives and friends in their home towns and to camps in other countries.

Digital mediation can be a tool to involve a wider and distant audience in the creative process, particularly for the communication of the museological results and the process towards the final exhibition. For example, if a friend of one of the curating refugees somewhere in the world interacts with the excursion of the urban space by expressing and sending via a commonly used instant messenger service their wish to have a photograph of the Lykeion, the famous philosophical school established by Aristotle in ca. 335 BC in Athens. For refugees, as their families and friends are commonly widely dispersed, messaging is often their only, and therefore intensively, used way of communication. It seems that refugees not only are mastering digital communication, or more precisely messaging, but also can be seen as pioneering the "messenger" as a communicative tool. Even for the poorest, the capability to communicate has—and this is more than understandable especially for unaccompanied minors—the highest priority. Could the museological approach of Mouliou serve as a model for Turkey?

Of countries hosting refugees, Turkey leads the world with ca. 4 million refugees (Germany hosts around 1.1 million refugees) (UNO, 2018). Most of the refugees are from Syria and Iraq. Many are sheltered in camps near the cities Gaziantep and Şanlıurfa, which is around 20 km away from the world cultural heritage site Göbekli Tepe, the oldest ceremonial complex excavated to date, and dating back to the 10th Millennia BC. With its up to around five-meter high T-shaped stelae, designed mostly with quite realistic zoomorphic reliefs, the world heritage site invites visitors on a journey through time into earliest beginnings of human settlements of the Epipalaeolithic era.

Excursions with pupils and students from the nearby refugee camps might motivate the young people to reflect on the commonly shared long history of human beings and their creative accomplishments. This also might help to overcome the trauma of war, which nourishes a destructive conception of the world. It seems that the war of aggression and the scorched earth policy since 2003 (e.g. in Iraq) targets also the memorial capacities of the population in the wider region. The looted artefacts pass across the many borders into private antiquity auctions and collections with much more ease than any refugee or bilker. Shortly after the break-in at the National Museum in Baghdad in April 2003, the websites of four United Kingdom–based companies, all members of the Antiquities Dealers Association (ADA), had the stolen items on offer for sale. Among them were 29 cuneiform tablets. In autumn of the same year, the websites disappeared (Brodie, 2016). For generations growing up since then, it seems that war, violence and the sound of explosions are more ordinary than birdsong. A museology on the move, empowering young refugees who have often been

traumatized, to curate an exhibition with their memories of Göbekli Tepe or other world heritage sites and museums, might stimulate a more optimistic worldview, with one in which the possibility of living together peacefully and harmoniously is on the horizon.

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