

# How Ecomuseums Changed our Job

Role of Ecomuseums in  
Development of Local  
Communities

Kulturni Centar Bistra  
26. Sept. 2018  
T. Sola



Curator, director, editor, professor,  
consultant, conference founder...

Disciple of Georges Henri Rivière

...one ecomuseum experience...



[www.mnemosophy.com](http://www.mnemosophy.com)





- Studied music until 1925; École du Louvre; D. David-Weill collection
- **1928, curated his first show of ancient American art at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs and joined Paul Rivet as his vice-director to begin the renovation of the dusty Musée du Trocadéro, which was reintroduced to the public as a fully modernized Musée de l'Homme in 1938.**
- In 1929 and 1930, wrote on ethnography, popular culture and profiles on jazz musicians
- During the thirties, Rivière financed ambitious research projects in Africa, 70 ethnographic exhibitions (1928 – 1937)
- 1937 Musée National des Arts et Traditions Populaires, Centre d'Ethnologie Française (1947)
- **Between 1948 and 1965 director of ICOM, Permanent Advisor in 1968.**
- Widely credited for introducing the concept of the ecomuseum, *Museum* dedicated an entire issue to ecomuseums (No. 148, 1985)



Georges-Henri Rivière  
(1897 - 1985)





Rheinische Landesmuseum/Haus of the Rhenischen Heimat



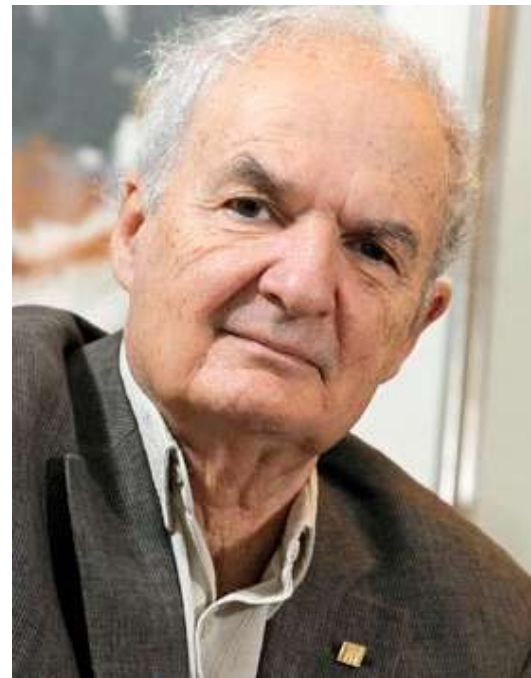
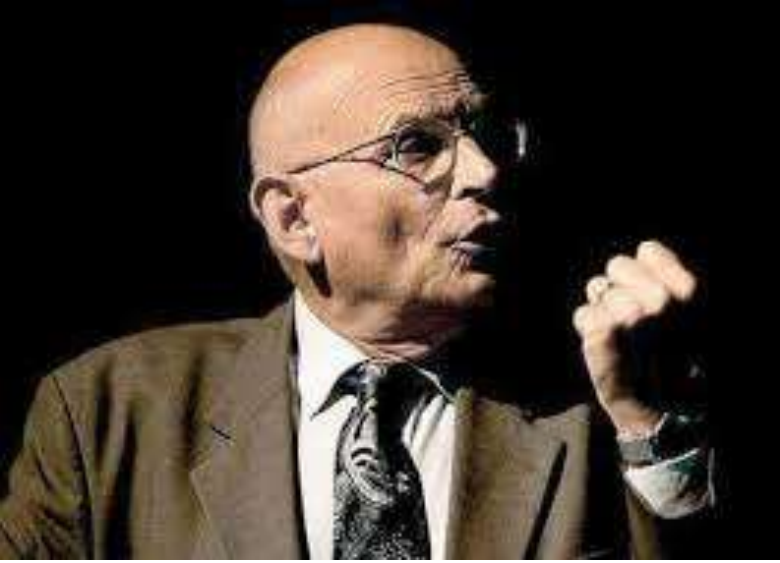
Skansen

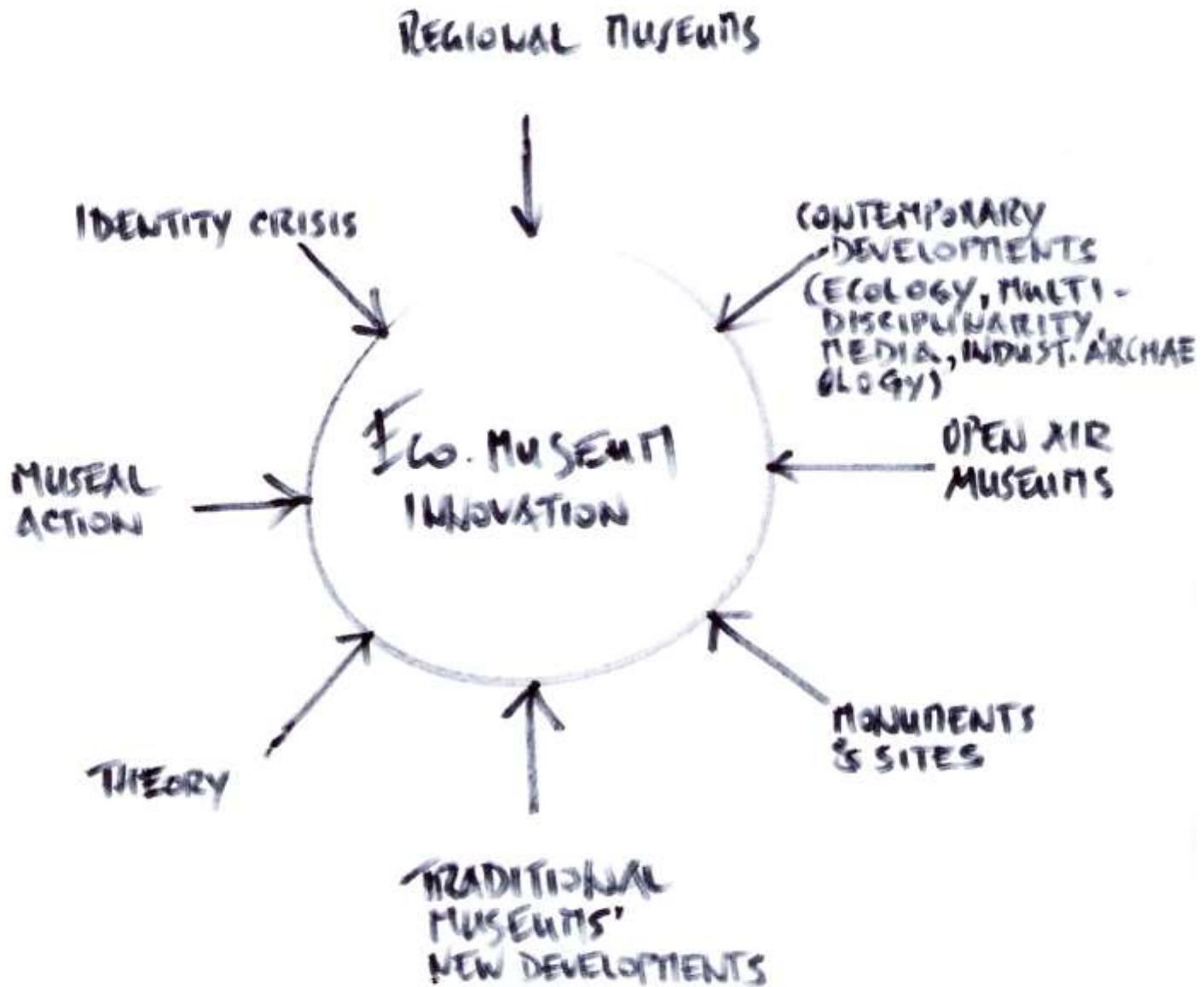
des objets exposés. Rivière commenta positivement ces modes d'exposition: «Un des principes directeurs a été de mêler les originaux aux reproductions, le but du musée n'étant point d'exposer des œuvres d'art, mais d'évoquer puissamment tous les aspects de la civilisation rhénane. Un autre principe, dérivant du précédent, a été de faire une large place aux moyens graphiques; c'est ainsi que de vastes tableaux imagés expliquent l'évolution de la milice de Cologne, de ses écoles, de son administration municipale, ou encore le rayonnement et l'action des monastères, alors que des modèles réduits des principales villes rhénanes démontrent les différents types de croissance urbaine.» (Rivière, 1936, p. 62.)

- Mixture of originals and reproductions
- The aim is not to expose the works of art but... powerfully evoke all the aspects of Rhine civilisation
- Important place to graphic means
- Large pictures of different themes
- Reduced models of cities etc.

(TS: collection becomes interpretive inventory)







DEFINITION Georges Henri RIVIÈRE, 1976

An ecomuseum is not like any other museum. It is a joint creation **between public authorities and the local population** where public experts and resources are associated with the ambition, knowledge and ideas of the local population.

An ecomuseum acts as **a mirror** and reflects the local population and its history ; it is a mirror that reflects the continuity and discontinuity of roots. It is also a mirror that helps visitors understand and respect local achievements, habits and intimacy.

An ecomuseum portrays man's **natural environment**, whether it is pure or as its shaped by industry and tradition.

An ecomuseum is about time ; it interprets prehistoric, ancient, historic and modern times, but it also views the future with objectivity. An ecomuseum is about the **preservation and promotion of cultural and natural heritage spaces**, with stopovers and large stretches to stroll.

An ecomuseum is a **laboratory where theoretical and practical research is conducted** in connection with the population and its milieu.

An ecomuseum helps train specialists in the study of the population and its milieu, and **encourages the population to better face future issues**.

As a museum, laboratory and training institution, the **Ecomuseum is based on the assertion of the global aspect of culture, its artistic dignity, regardless of the social origin of cultural actors**.

As such, the Ecomuseum has to overcome many obstacles. Because it aims at becoming a polyphonic institution at the crossroads of space and time, the Ecomuseum has to fight a zoo-like attitude in the study of the local population. It also has to avoid a manipulation of its public image, while **finding a satisfactory compromise between self-management and public control**.

"... a polyphonic institution, a crossroads of space and time"



DEFINITION Georges Henri RIVIÈRE, 1976

**between public authorities and the local population  
a mirror**

**natural environment,**

**preservation and promotion of cultural and natural heritage spaces**

**laboratory where theoretical and practical research is conducted**

**encourages the population to better face future issues**

**based on the assertion of the global aspect of culture, its artistic dignity, regardless of the social  
origin of cultural actors**

**finding a satisfactory compromise between self-management and public control**

**"... a polyphonic institution, a crossroads of space and time"**

# Ecomuseum

.....is a dynamic way in which communities preserve, interpret, and manage their heritage for a sustainable development. An Ecomuseum is based on a community agreement.



# Fédération des Ecomusées et Musées de Société

1989.

123 members, of types:

ecomuseum, museum of society, museum of synthesis, workshop-museum, center of interpretation

Strongly inspired by the works  
by Georges-Henri Rivière  
and by Hugues de Varine,  
initiator of community museology



the members of the Federation all have the man,  
the territory and the patrimonies for object



écomusée  
du creusot - montceau  
château de la verrerie, b.p. 53  
71202 le creusot cedex  
tél : 03 85 73 92 00  
fax : 03 85 73 92 09

## **metalurgic complex**

chronologie Le Creusot

chronologie Schneider

## **mine**

chronologie Montceau

les grèves de 1900

## **channel**

historique canal

## **ceramics**

historic "La Briqueterie"

site

## **la cristallerie**

Factory in the castle

Schneider résidence

## **industrial architecture**

workers' housing

Production sites





50-odd heritage sites

## EKOMUSEUM BERGSLAGEN



A visit to the Ecomuseum is like a journey back in time, where you can see how early industrialization evolved into the modern industrial society in which we live today. At the various sites you will find charcoal-burning stacks, open-cast and underground mines, smelteries (also called smelting works and smelting houses) pit and blast furnaces, hammer mills and forges, workers' cottages, manor houses and estates, homesteader villages, power stations, railways, canals and locks... and more.

# ÉCOMUSÉE DU FIER MONDE

History and community museum

SEARCH

About one-third  
of the population:  
25-34 years old



36 555 residents



GASTON-MIRON BUILDING



ONTARIO STREET



GROVER



MATHIEU BATH



ÉCOMUSÉE DU FIER MONDE



SAINT-JACQUES MARKET



PARC DES FAUBOURGS



MAISON DE LA CULTURE FRONTENAC



USINE C



20 100  
lodgings



GAZ MÉTROPOLITAIN



GRANDE BIBLIOTHÈQUE



TVA



TÉLÉ-QUÉBEC



UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À MONTRÉAL



57,3%  
men



THE VILLAGE



RADIO-CANADA



JACQUES-CARTIER BRIDGE

3 495 families



CENTRE HOSPITALIER UNIVERSITAIRE DE MONTRÉAL



MONTRÉAL ARCHIVES CENTER



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*Observe fabrication techniques inspired by tradition or try your own hand at creating*



Learn more...

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*Enhance my business competitiveness. ...Find out what they have to say*



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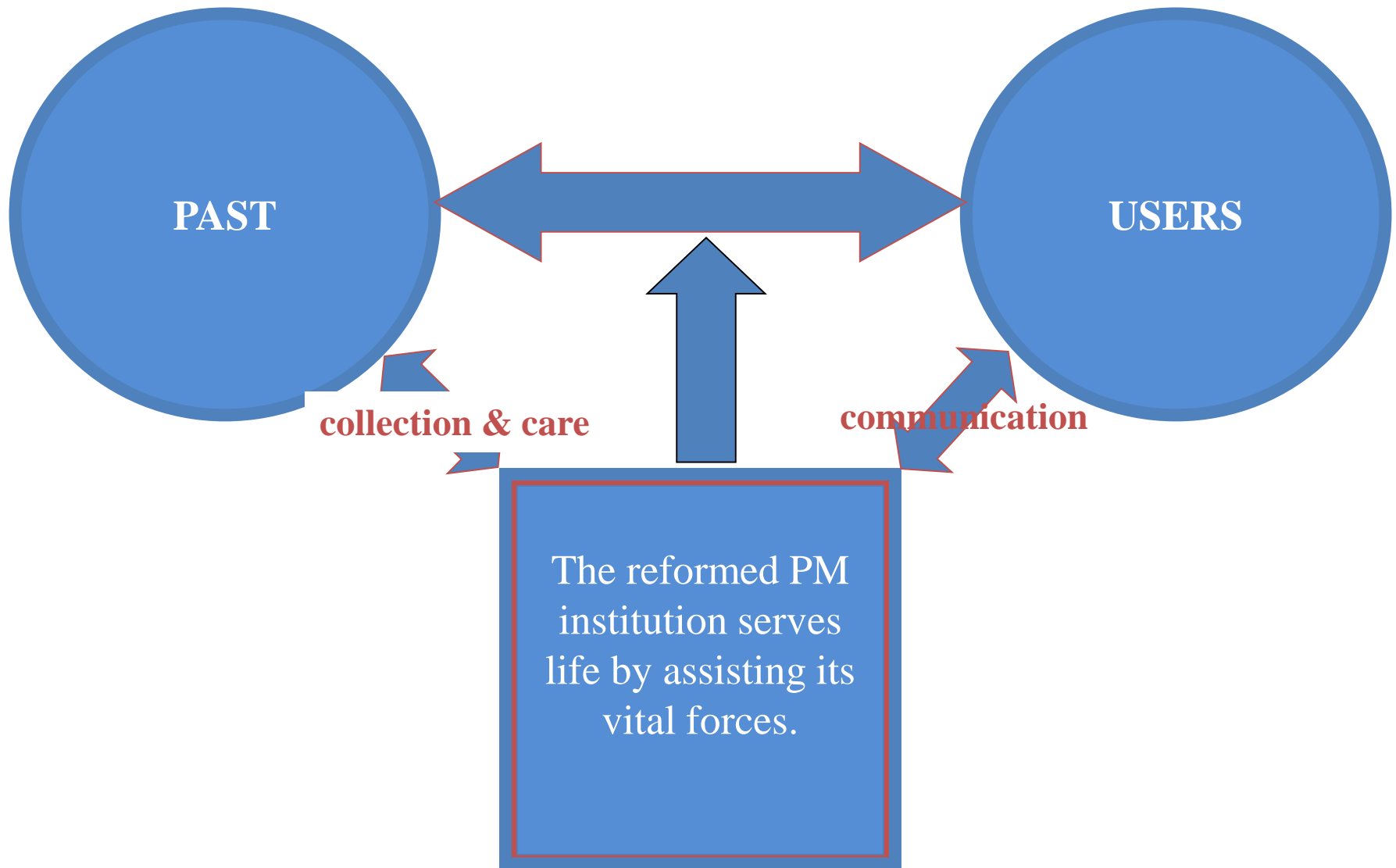
Learn more...

## How ecomuseums changed our job

1. They placed community in the centre; visitors are bonus
2. They recalled the unity of public, civil and private sector for the quality of social contract
3. They inspired a synoptic, theory for the entire field of public memory
4. They induced request for a real profession of heritage curatorship
5. Indicated that museums and heritage are about development (cyb. Impulses for societal project)



# THE POSITION OF PM INSTITUTIONS



# CONVENTIONAL MUSEUM



Conventional museums are a jigsaw puzzle box, with irregular pieces, - tilting, overlapping, done in different proportions and from different materials, representing unattainable master picture, a reality contradictory in interpretations, biased and distorted by the divergent interests, interpretations...

Ecomuseums are the agreeable puzzle of identity in which parts constantly correspond with the dynamic master picture





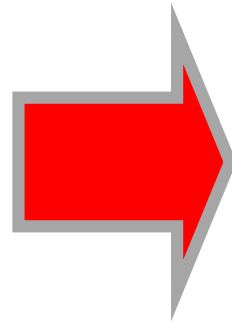
## Usual misunderstandings:

- Ecomuseums is a model
- Ecomuseum is about natural heritage
- Ecomuseum on a specific subject
- Ecomuseums are outmoded

## Lake Toya Area EcoMuseum



# Ecomuseums changed our job



MUSEUMS SHOULD  
BE CREATED  
WHENEVER THERE IS  
A DYING HEART  
OF AN IDENTITY,  
A VALUE TO BE SAVED  
AND CONTINUED



The time of  
of your action  
is **NOW!**

Museums  
are about  
present

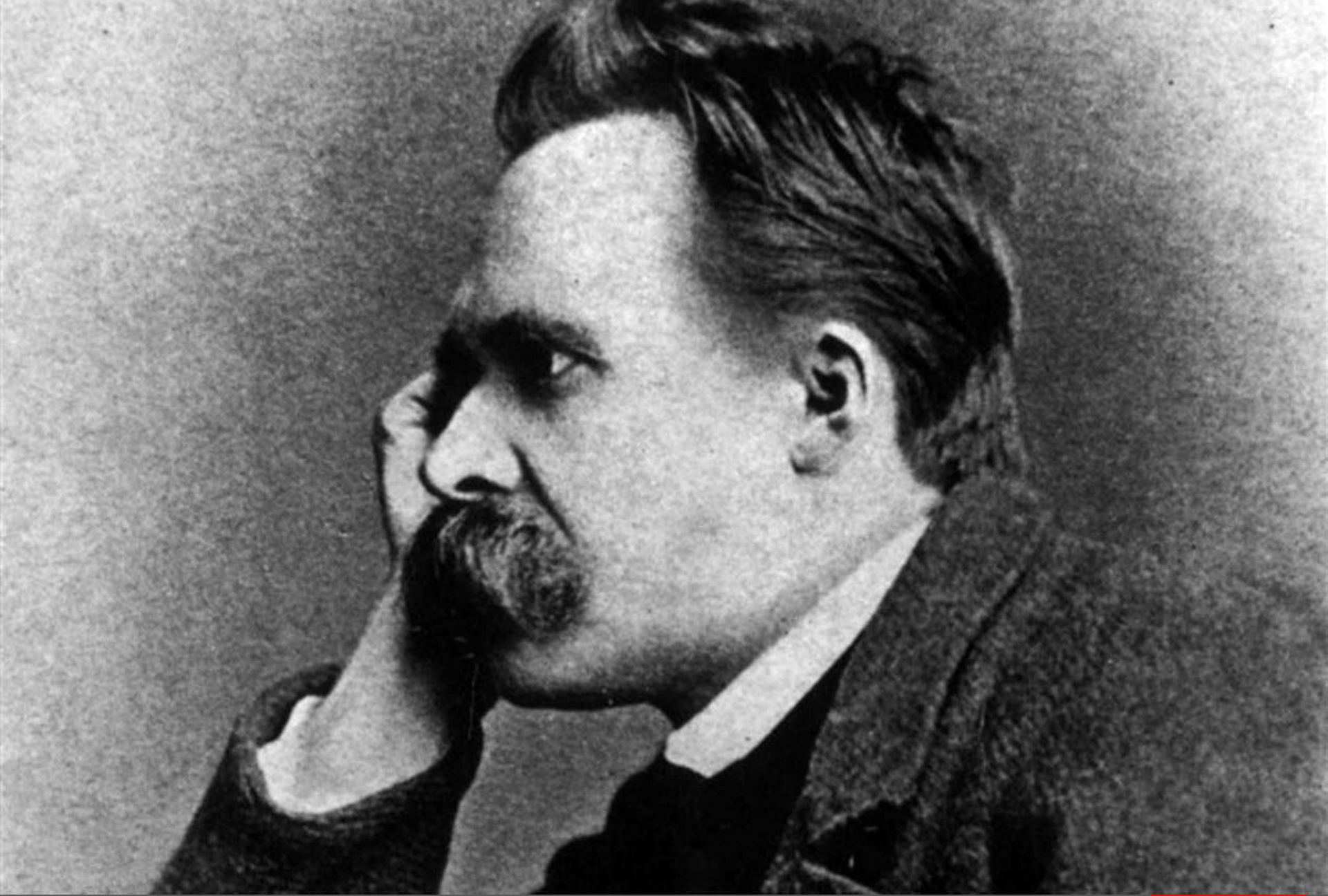
They need past  
to understand  
the present,  
to use it,  
to love it.

**MUSEUMS ARE  
ABOUT CHANGE,**

how to oppose it,  
how to serve it,  
and how to  
thrive upon it.


© Tomislav Šola, 2009





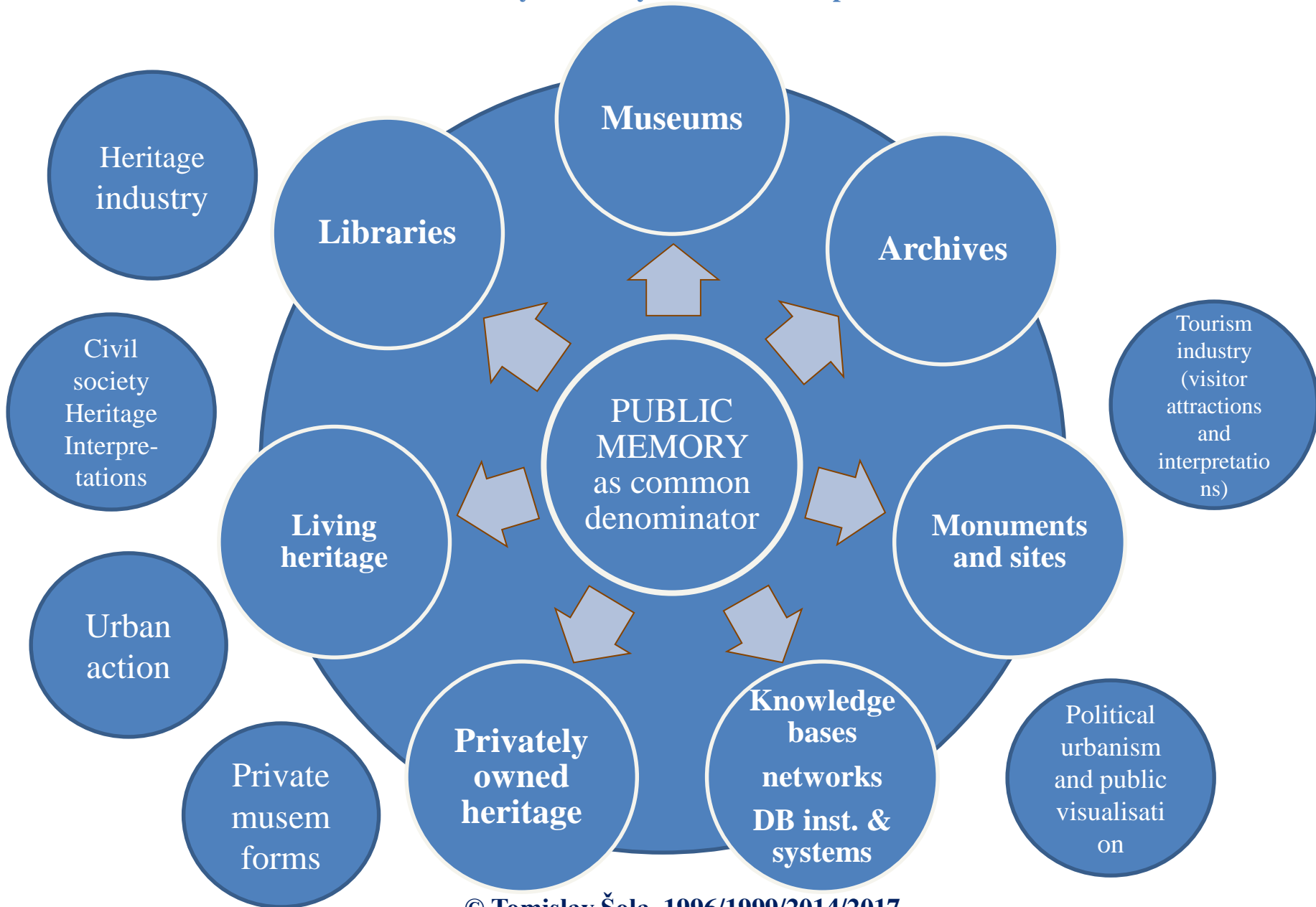
All sciences are now under the obligation to prepare the ground for the future task of the **curator** which is to solve the problem of value, to determine the true hierarchy of values.

**Any museum is/should be about values and quality**



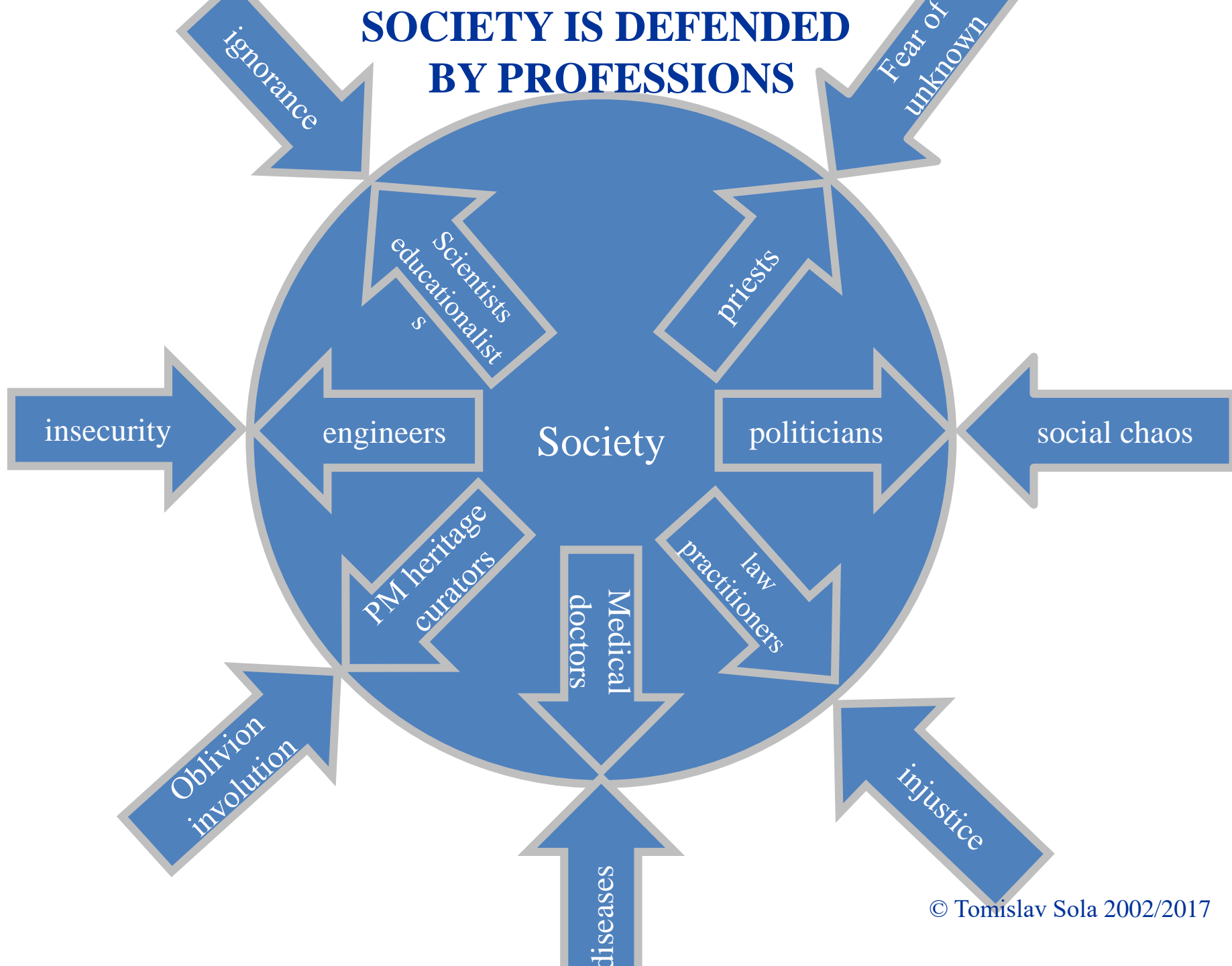
value system  
management/maintenance  
business

**WHY the invention of „GLAM” (galleries, libraries, archives, museums)  
again underplays both, - the facts and the potentials,  
and why we finally need the entire picture ?**





# SOCIETY IS DEFENDED BY PROFESSIONS



**Museology or Science of Public Memory**  
**change of world-view**  
**change of mindset**  
*metanoia*

- Theory
- Institution
- Tactics
- Occupation
- Information
- Scribes to society
- Knowledge

- Science
- System
- Strategy
- Profession
- Rightful claims
- Partners to society
- Wisdom

# So what do we need the curators for?

**We are here  
to do good.  
What others  
are doing here,  
- I would not know.**



**Wystan Hugh Auden,  
English and American poet**





**Heritage is about  
transfer of collective  
experience**

**Basic social project:**

**WISDOM**

**as**

**responsible, ethically  
founded knowledge**

**creating**

**corrective and adaptive**

**impulses**

**for the**

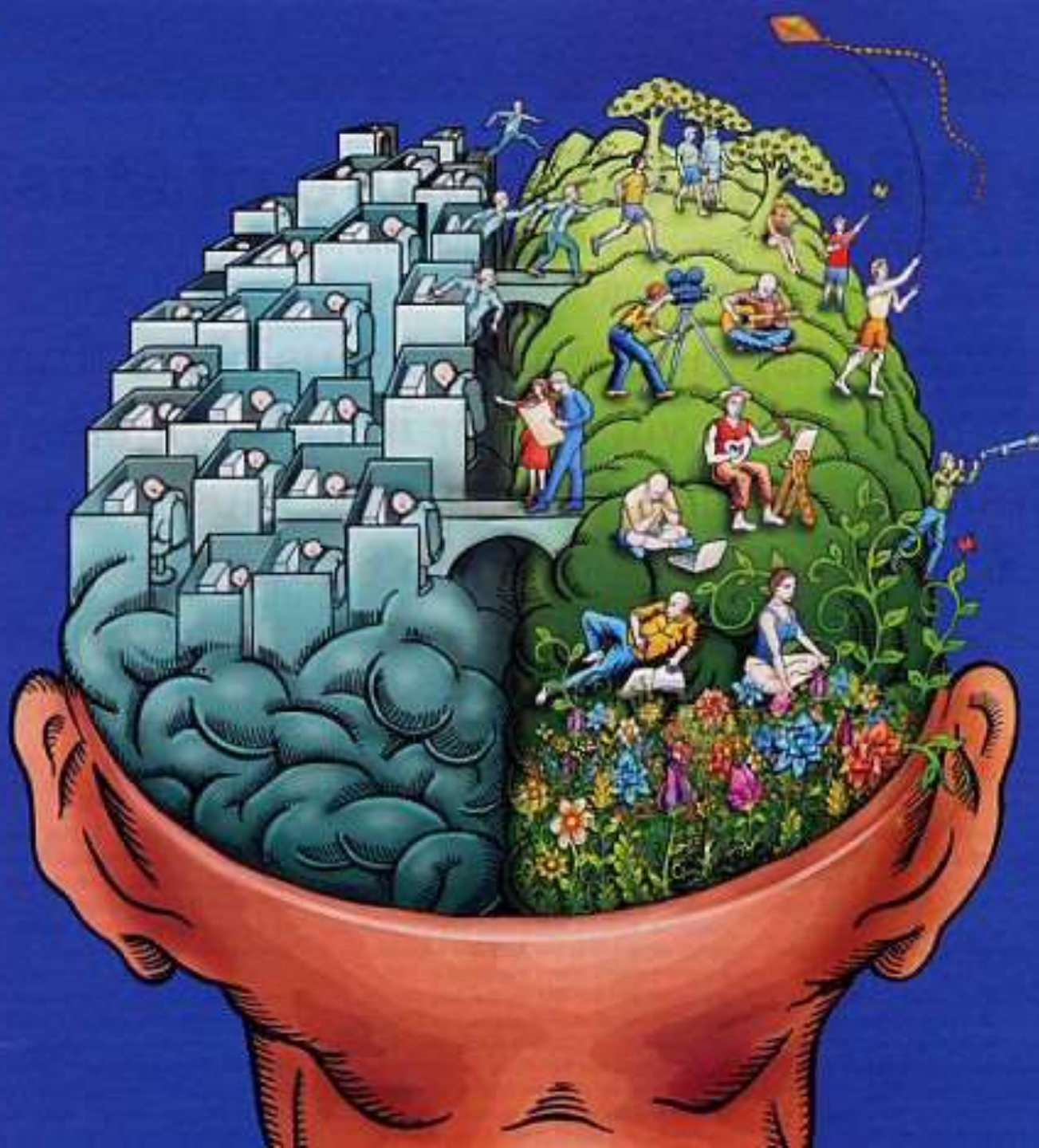
**harmonious development**



By knowledge, one can manage a corporation.  
To manage society, one needs wisdom.

©Unknown Croat, 2018





**A good museum is  
like a good brain:**

**reliable,  
amazing  
and  
useful**





[www.thebestinheritage.com](http://www.thebestinheritage.com) Next September!



Thank you !

# Can heritage/PM help?

**Depends upon answer:**

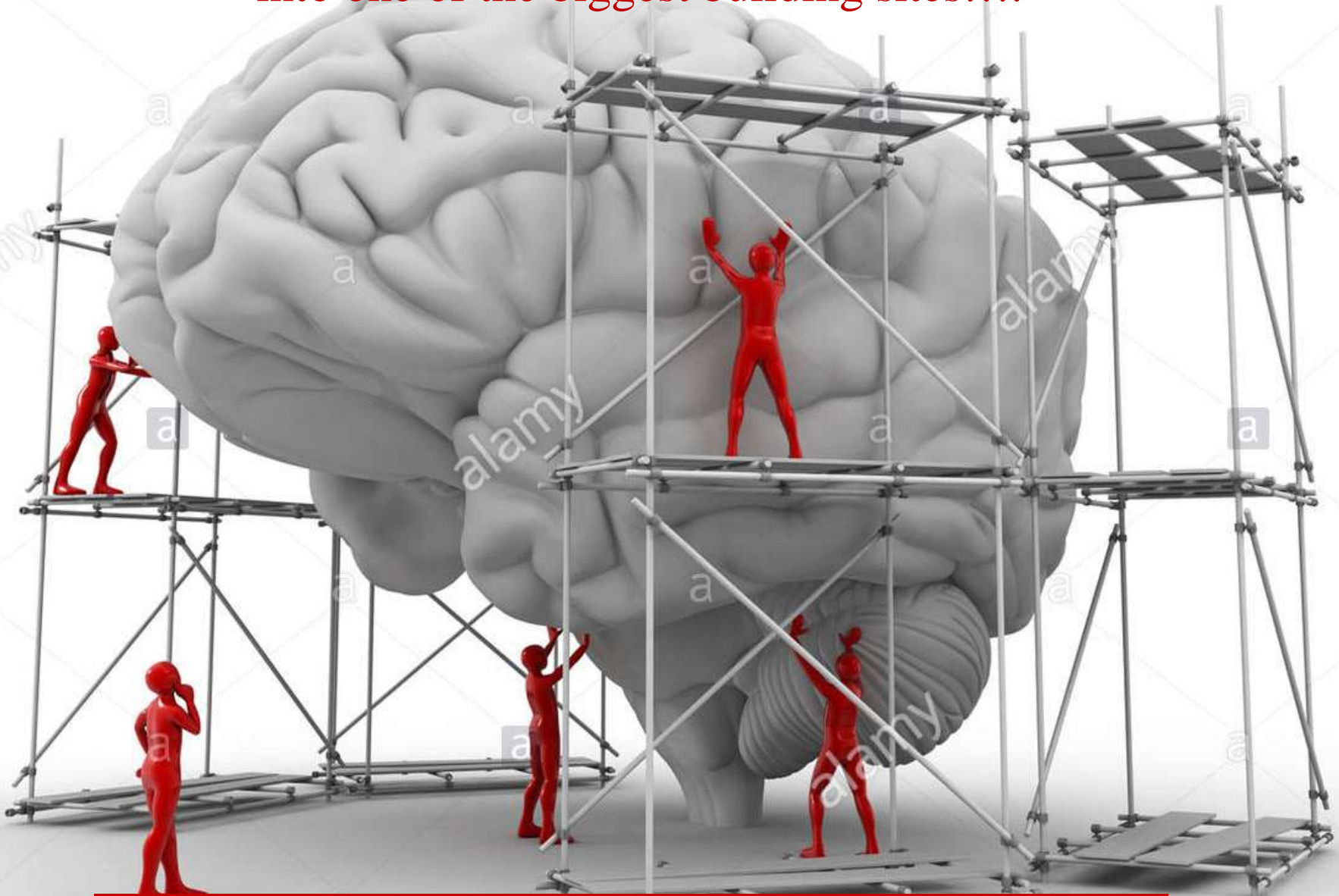
**Do we want better past?**  
(using museums to create more of it)

**or**

**Do we want better present?**  
(using the past for quality development)



**WORLDWIDE, the past also is turned  
into one of the biggest building sites....**



**COULD YOU IMAGINE  
A BETTER CHANCE FOR MUSEUMS?**

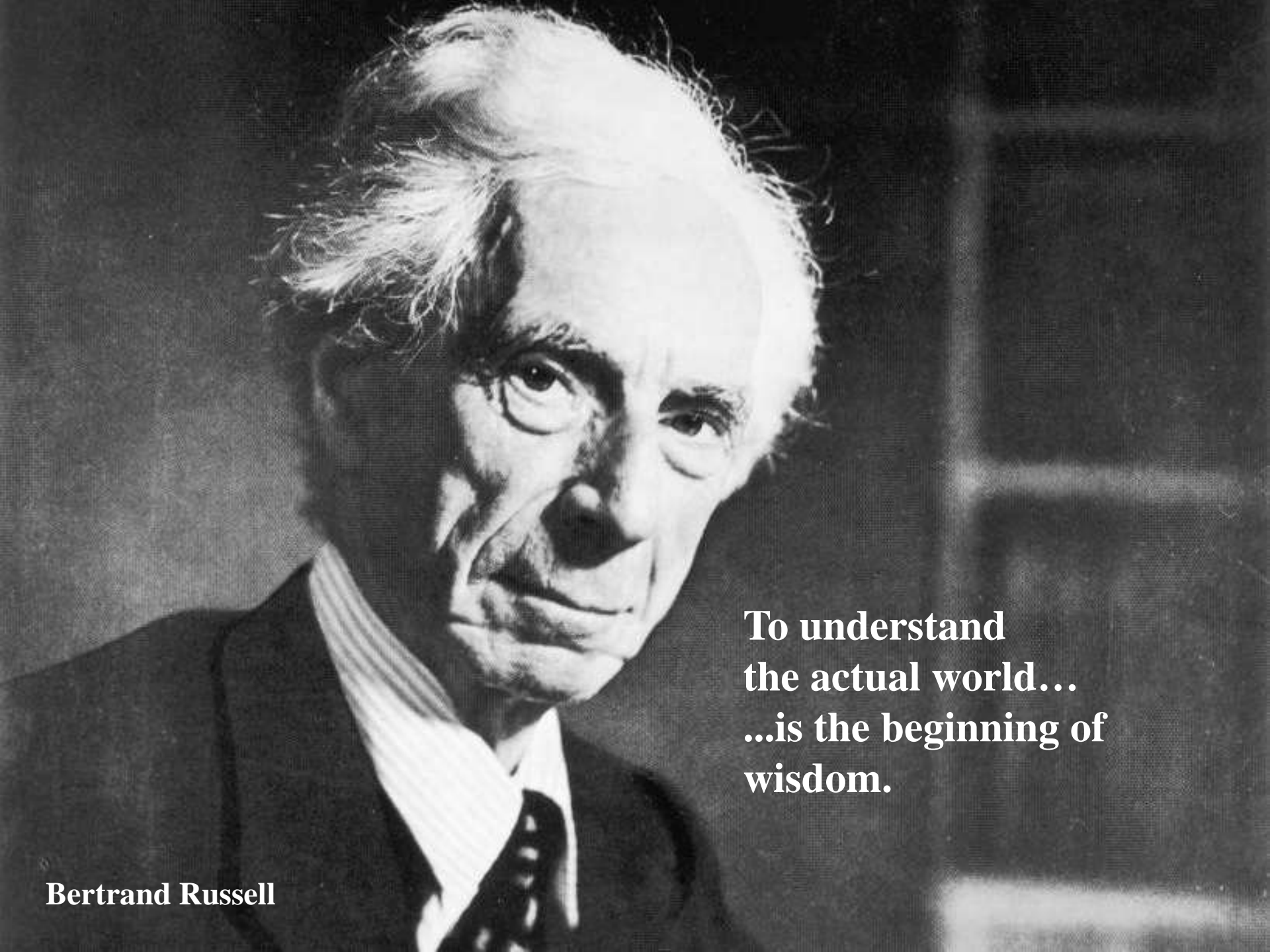
# Five main reasons for convergence of PM institutions and forming a profession



# Recognising problems – Finding solutions

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Illiteracies                          | 1. Education of users, citizens, voters.. |
| 2. Terror of industries (pharma...etc.)  | 2. Cultivation of consumers               |
| 3. Biochemical degradation of food       | 3. Promoting healthy diet and living      |
| 4. Uncritical, indifferent consumption   | 4. Educate hedonists for healthy life     |
| 5. Lack of trans-generational experience | 5. Revival of ancient wisdom              |
| 6. Poor quality of childhood             | 6. Educating family members               |
| 7. Rudeness, imbalance, violence         | 7. Healing qualities of solidarity        |
| 8. Ugliness                              | 8. Environmental consciousness            |
| 9. ....                                  | 9. ....                                   |

**Any threat has its opposing potential,  
A need for it. We are about that.**



**To understand  
the actual world...  
...is the beginning of  
wisdom.**

**Bertrand Russell**





**In brief:**

**„Everything goes” turned into  
”Nothing matters”**

**Happily enough, in the de-valuated world**

**MUSEUMS ARE ABOUT VALUES !!!**

**.....**

**Museum is created where there is a dying heart of an identity, a  
value, a quality that deserves continuation**

FIRST SHELL AND THEN BP: MAKING THEIR WAY TO THE TYMPANUM

New Orleans

Boscastle

Manila

Maldives

Hebden Bridge

Sinking  
cities

IS CULTURE REALLY ...





...THAT EXPENSIVE ?







or  
MILITARY  
INDUSTRIAL  
COMPLEX  
HAS BETTER  
ARGUMENTS ?





... calm, and ...  
... heard what Big Brother was saying  
... encouragement, the so  
... words of encouragement, the so  
... a few words of encouragement, the so  
... uttered in the din of battle, not distin  
... but restoring confidence by the f  
... Then the face of Big Brother faded  
... and instead the three slogans of the Party st  
... capitals:

**WAR IS PEACE**

**FREEDOM IS SLAVERY**

**IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH.**

... of Big Brother seemed to persi  
... screen, as though the impa

# The ideal of the age of heritage

- Influencing/correcting the governing value system
- Contributing to quality decision making
- Public perception of PMIs: actuality, truth and unbiased profession, responsibility and wisdom serving public good



## Some consequences of ecomuseums

- Visitors are bonus.
- Tourists are guests.
- Museum is the democratic tool.
- Museum belongs to the population.
- Museum is there to discover, document, research, preserve and communicate the values, disregarding particular interests except those serving the public welfare (be it spiritual, cultural, civilizational or material).
- Museums serve quality.
- Museum marketing is the way to discover the needs and care for the ways to fulfil them.
- Museums are not about past but about present and future.