

SESSION III ASSEMBLING CULTURE

THE RE-DEFINING OF ETHNO-ANTHROPOLOGICAL MUSEUM'S CONCEPT IN ITALY AND FRANCE: THE THEORETICAL DEBATE AND THE POLITICAL STRATEGY

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In these last years, in all Europe, a transformation of Anthropology and Ethnography Museums is in progress.

Considering a theoretical perspective, this changing process is influenced by the institution's past history and by the specific scientific field they referred to.

On the other hand considering a practical perspective the process has been influenced by political and economic interests.

Using a comparative approach I have analyzed the ongoing ethno-anthropological transformation of the museums both in Italy (Rome) and in France (Paris and Marseille).

In Rome the study focused specifically on the "Museo Nazionale di Arti e Tradizioni Popolari" and on the "Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico Luigi Pigorini"; in Paris on the "Musée National des Arts et Traditions Populaire" and in Marseille on the "Musée des Civilisations de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée".

These museums well reflect the history of the anthropological studies from the mid 1800 to nowadays.

Their activities have been important for the political frame in which they were born and for the particular way they represent the history of anthropological thought.

Today the museums of Anthropology and Ethnography (or so called museums of Civilizations), are living a role and definition crisis.

The goal is to understand which is today the meaning and the idea of "Museum" in Anthropology.

Since the 80's this crisis of status has caused the designing of renewal projects aimed at erasing the colonial roots of their heritage through a process of evolution of the anthropological debate on Museums; this implies a change of the museographic patterns, an evolution of their political and economical strategy and a redefining of the roles of museums themselves.

Studying in parallel the history of anthropological museums in France and in Italy is possible to understand the different ways to manage and resolve this crisis and the future of the demo-etno-anthropological disciplines.

Keywords: Museum; Anthropology; Ethnography; Italy; France