Bernard Mueller

The postcolonial museum has less objects and more people in it

Voices from the conference 'Museum Collections in Motion‘

Bernard Müller: Anthropologist and curator, Cologne

Bernard Müller is an anthropologist and curator based in Cologne. He studies research devices inspired by the ethnographic field, as they develop today in and outside scientific institutions. He is particularly interested in staging processes, be they scenic devices (theater, rituals, performance, etc.), museum scenographies or any situation that is explicitly a form of «spectacle» as research formats. He is a specialist in the cultural history of West Africa (Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana), his comparative research is also developing in other fields (Europe and Brazil) and focuses more specifically on the relations between the art and ethnology today. Since 2003, he directs a seminar at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris) and is a researcher member of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Social Issues (IRIS = UMR 8156 –CNRS-Inserm-EHESS-University Paris 13). In association with the Institute of Ethnology and the Grassi Museum für Völkerkunde Leipzig, since 2015 he has been running the teaching and research program «Museum on the couch: creative and reflexive explorations of the ethnographic collections». In his current work, he envisions a

“MuseumUniversity” that fosters new forms of co-operation and exchange on the theory and practice of anthropological collections between the Global North and the Global South.

Relevant publications :

– « Museum on the couch » in *Créons ensemble au Musée*, Éditions Geuthner, Paris, 2019, pp. 129-146

– « Le primitif au centre », « Das Primitive im Zentrum », Eurotopics (8/10/2008), article dans revue en ligne http://archiv.eurotopics.net/de/home/presseschau/archiv/magazin/geschichte-verteilerseite-neu/kolonialismus-2008-10/muller-museen/

– « Faut-il restituer les butins des expéditions colonials ? », Le Monde Diplomatique, juillet, 2007 ; Deutsche Version : «Koloniale Beutekunst – Wohin gehört Montezumas Federkrone?» *Le Monde Diplomatique – Deutsche Ausgabe*, N°7, 2007