Wim Hupperetz

MUSEUMS, HERITAGE, AND DIGITAL CURATION

Theory and practice at the Allard Pierson

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This book is dedicated to all who have
contributed to the new Allard Pierson.

In memory of Sebastiano Tusa (1952–2019).

ALLARDPIERSON

THE COLLECTIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

Contents

0.1 The 'Gallée-Zwaardemaker apparatus', 1890. This device, attached to a male mannequin here, was used to study the physical properties of speech. AP 100.001.

Preface and acknowledgements

This publication has many sources of inspiration and is in fact the sum of projects, project applications, policy plans and the efforts of individuals and teams, in an institution and within a heritage practice that both are constantly in motion. Reflection on theory and practice is complicated, because it simultaneously demands involvement and distance. You get into knots from time to time, and I hope that I will be forgiven for this blending of perspectives.

The thread running through this overview is 'opening up the museum', and that is not something that you as the director can do on your own. This report on twelve years of heritage theory and practice is thus a heartfelt tribute to all those who have made their contribution. It is also the outcome of a true quest into the memory of the Allard Pierson. Projects, collaborations and exhibitions go past, and what is left behind are publications, recollections, documentations and sometimes more thorough final reports. And looking back, I can see many colleagues from within and outside our institution who came and went. This is a story about many people, and I also owe a debt of gratitude to many of them. Chapter by chapter I will try to show what I based myself on and who was especially helpful and important.

In developing the many plans and projects at the Allard Pierson, creating space for creativity and 'entrepreneurship' was important. I am grateful that my superiors and immediate colleagues always provided me with as much space as possible. In this regard, I would like to express my special thanks to Nol Verhagen, Maria Heijne and Steph Scholten, because I could always go to them for advice and support. I would like to thank Nick Boxem, Erika Happe, Michel Hommel, Sandra Marsfelder, Peter Klaver, Marike van Roon, Stijn van Rossem and Marian Schilder for their more-than-collegial support along the route to the new Allard Pierson. The chairs of the Friends of the Allard Pierson Museum and the Special Collections, Eelco Dijk and Hans van Velzen, were important sparring partners.

I could well imagine that some of my colleagues became unsettled at the constant stream of plans and projects that I tried to launch. After all, apart from the renewal of the museum galleries, the complex refurbishment of our monumental building was carried out in steps large and small at the same time, which, among other things, has resulted in a spectacular new exhibition wing. It was a long, at many times uncertain and winding

road, on which Jan Piet Bloem, Johan Cuypers and the architects Dorte Kristensen and Wessel Reinders provided essential support. Luckily I had gained experience during my time at the Limburg Museum, where I owed a lot to productive collaboration with Jos Schatorjé, Wolf Alberts, Frank Holthuizen, Kitty Jansen-Rompen, Barbara Kruijsen, Stan Linssen, Leentje Mosterd, Ad van Pinxteren and Agnes Vugts.

Chapter 1 is to a significant extent a reworking of my inaugural lecture on my appointment of professor to the Vrije Universiteit (Free University Amsterdam) in 2016, which I have adapted and updated at key points. My chair of Dutch Cultural History, and in particular the study of the objects, which was established by the Koninklijk Oudheidkundig Genootschap (Royal Antiquities Society – KOG) provided me with an added incentive between 2015 and 2021 to engage in academic reflection. The interaction with students and university staff was hugely important in this regard. I would like to thank Charlotte van Rappard and Susan Legêne in particular for their support and confidence. My consultancy work over the years for the Raad voor Cultuur (Dutch National Council for Culture) and the Rotterdam Council for Art and Culture has taught me a lot. I recall lively discussions on museum policy with Lennart Booij, Marieke van Bommel, Pieter Bots, Teus Eenkoorn, Marc Fonville, Lene ter Haar, Anne de Hay, Davida de Hond, Phillipine Jenster, Hester Jenkins, Marlous van Gastel, Michael Huijser, Lotte Ravenhorst, Hedwig Saam, Steven Ten Tije, Harry Tupan, Gunay Uslu, and Steven Thielemans. This publication is an obvious bridge between my directorship at the Allard Pierson and the chair that I hold at the University of Amsterdam since 1 September 2021. I hope that I can live up to the confidence placed in me, and I hope to be able to inspire a new generation of students with my teachings.

Chapter 2 is based on a number of research projects for which Ben van den Bercken, Martijn Eijckhof, Laurien de Gelder, Willem van Haarlem, Mirjam Hoijtink, Jorrit Kelder,

0.2 The new Allard Pierson exhibition wing, designed by Atelier PRO, The Hague. The design won the silver medal in the Small Spaces category of the 2021 World Architecture News (WAN) Awards.

Branko van Oppen, Winfred van de Put, Filiz Songu, Stijn Vennik, and Vladimir Stissi deserve special mention. It provides a revealing glimpse into the biographical background to collection practice that is so important if you want to gain a handhold on the multivocality of the collections.

Chapter 3 is about collaboration and setting up projects in concrete terms. It is by definition based on the outcome of the work and insights of many people in the various collaborative projects. Internal and external collaboration was stimulated to a significant extent by a series of staff members who worked on projects temporarily: Jan Bolten (coordinator of the *Heritage Lab*), Caroline Verweij (*Digital Museum Lab* coordinator), Marieke van den Doel and Wietske Donkersloot (*CEMEC* coordinators), Marloes van der Sommen, Marjolein Woltering, Marie France van Oorsouw and Marlyn Everink (*ArcheoHotspots* national coordinators). The many international travelling exhibitions and the *DWDD Pop-Up Museum* generated plenty of insights and dynamics, with the project managers Marian Schilder, Ellen Borger, Caroline Verweij and Martine Kilburn all playing an important and often crucial role. Pieter Eckhardt, Joanne Oldenbeuving and Dieuwke Wynia were 'partners in crime' in the two unforgettable Pop-Up Museum adventures.

Chapter 4 is about rejuvenating the presentation of the Allard Pierson's semi-permanent collection. We have created an entirely new museum and research institute, with the whole organisation involved. I would like to thank the project teams and all the Allard Pierson staff members who put their ideas and work into realising the new Allard Pierson and who experienced the refurbishment and rebuilding at first hand, and helped to make it possible – they were essential to devising and implementing all the plans. It was a long and bumpy road, but the result is impressive.

I want to thank all the individuals, curators, and guest curators who designed the new galleries – their names will be mentioned in the respective sections in each chapter. The many external staff contracted often remain in the background, as well as the registrars and conservators in the management and conservation department, so I would like to mention them here: Anne Doebele, Tony Jonges, Rachelle Keller, Ron Leenheer, Jose Lunsingh-Scheurleer, Birgit Maas and department head Sandra Marsfelder. The same applies to the communications staff and those in the development department: Katja Vermeulen, Eva Biesiot (†), Marleen Smit, Kelly Boender, Inge Scheijde, Pètra

0.3 The new 'Greeks and Great Powers' department at the Allard Pierson.

Huygen, Sandra Buijs, Erika Happe, Tanja Roodenburg and Moïra Müller. Wout Borst, Mario Westmaas, Jesse Balentina, Mahmoed Hammouch en Frank Moolhuizen were the Technical Department's staff.

Chapter 5 is based on a series of projects large and small in the field of digital heritage at the Allard Pierson. Taken together, they represent the opportunities that we were able to grasp as we were trying to anticipate developments both nationally and internationally. Personal contacts and collaboration played a major role here. Jaap Kamps (Media Studies, University of Amsterdam) was my partner in crime throughout the entire period. His sparkling mind, ideas and contributions on content were always an inspiration; without him, many of the projects would never have got off the ground. I also thank Marjolein Beumer, project leader of *Creative User Empowerment* (*CUE*), the most recent collaborative project that we launched, for providing input for this chapter. These projects came about in close collaboration with fellow institutions and other (international) partners. The many project meetings were special, because we were able expand from a collegial consortium into a circle of friends for life. I take pleasure in mentioning their names here. From *V-Must.net*: Daniel Pletinckx, Eva Pietroni, Sofia Pescarin, Claudio Ruffa, Augusto Palombini, Alfonsina Pagano, Enzo d'Annibale, Bruno Fanini, Niall O'hOisin, Breffni

0.4 A young visitor to the ArcheoHotspot in the Allard Pierson sorts residue from a cesspit.

0.5 Digitisation of early medieval objects at the Hungarian National Museum in Budapest. Scans like these were later used to produce 3D models for the digital applications in the *CEMEC* exhibitions and the Cross Culture Timeline.

Introduction

The way we handle collections reveals more about ourselves than about the collections or their users or producers. The very word 'heritage' has something to say about this treatment. The focus is usually on physical objects that were made, worked on, tossed aside, hidden, copied, buried, written over or reused at some point, and have then come down to us, most of the time through coincidence. This process of being handed down, including receiving the stamp 'heritage', is usually an active one that is based on intentions, ideas and on occasion even ideology. And following this handing-down process, at the point that the object has been preserved and we start to work on it and handle it, the process starts that for the sake of ease I describe as a 'memory game': we link information about the creator, the date and the location where it was once made, found or preserved to an object – or rather a series of objects that belong together (or that we believe or think belong together) – supplemented with information on a user, a translator, a painter, a potter, a merchant, an owner, a donor or a person depicted or named on the object.

The meaning that we impute to an object depends on the information about the object that has been transmitted and is known to us. People play a major role in this transmission, because the process of transmission is virtually always the result of human activity. The information that has been transmitted may have been written down or derives from an excavation or even from the object itself. It depends on technical information, often gathered on the basis of verifiable data, such as dating, the production centre or the creator. Then there is the expertise of the scientist who knows how to extract these data from the object, how to interpret them and how to draw inferences from them. And that once again is a human activity, or rather human activity dependant on the perspective being employed. Interpretation is not an objective science, but rather dependent on the interpreter's education, background and origins, and vision of society. The degree to which we are aware of this and act according to it determines how inclusive we are both as an institution and as an individual. It also determines how open we are to uncomfortable, or contested, heritage – this will be dealt with later in greater detail.

Institutions managing and providing access to collections for research, education and a wider audience are increasingly aware of the impact of selection when acquiring objects and collections, of the choices made on conservation management in their institution, and of the ideological judgements and prejudices and other societal perspectives linked to ostensibly neutral collections. I refer to this complex entanglement as the provenance history, or rather a collection's biography. By this I mean the enmeshed, layered, and

0.6 Young visitors at the Allard Pierson during the Museum Kids Week (2017).

dynamic historical context that is attached to museum collections. Without the biographical context, it is virtually impossible to illustrate the meaning attributed to collections, let alone communicate it to the public.

Thinking about heritage

Theoretical reflections on heritage have multiplied over recent decades. They arise from the nexus of problems sketched out above, supplemented by the realisation that historical sources have to be examined critically and that a multidisciplinary approach to research may generate considerable added value. The combination of archaeological, historical, and art historical information has recently been augmented by valuable insights resulting from technical examinations of materials, such as DNA analysis and the use of artificial intelligence as a research tool.

As a result of the diversity in sources and data, there is an increasing awareness at heritage institutions that the complexity and dynamic historical context of objects are no longer compatible with generalised or simplified narratives. We are all aware of examples of 17th-century paintings portraying people of colour depicted as servants. Until recently, they received little attention from an art history point of view, whereas they are now at the center of attention from a postcolonial perspective. Theoretical insights have increased and the public debate has intensified over recent decades, with heritage professionals looking for new practical ways and tools to better present multivocal and complex narratives. Yet it is a balancing act trying to avoid the two extremes. It would be wonderful if different ropes could be stretched, creating a web of narratives that intersect and overlap, while at the same time providing a perspective on a range of different meanings and related conversations. To continue the metaphor, that corpus should provide a safety net for the public who also need to feel at ease here. If we do not provide a comfortable or

acceptable view of multivocal and complex narratives, we run the risk that our public will seek out other platforms for their experiences of a cultural-historical nature.

Practical work in the professional heritage domain in museums, archives and libraries, archaeology and the cultural landscape, and on monuments is constantly being done to deadline, from (applications for finance for) exhibitions and publications to research and other reports. This means that, in the applied industry, there is little room for reflection both on theoretical developments and current practices within the heritage domain. In this publication it is my aim to give shape to such reflections. There is of course the risk that it turns into a glorification of all the wonderful and significant work I have been part of. While it is no doubt joyful to display relevant results, I believe it is just as important to identify the obstacles, the factors leading to failure, the internal and external resistance to change, and the many practical hurdles. The most difficult aspect is identifying one's own limitations and shortcomings. Here too, I try to be honest. This will hopefully lead to a fair and clear picture of the challenges that we face in heritage practice and how we can establish better ways of handling heritage.

The heritage practice mentioned above is a short-term and project-oriented field: exhibitions follow one after the other at high speed, with the main aim of attracting as many visitors as possible. Such failings are evidenced by the painful oversupply of educational programmes[1] and a lack of acting on lessons learned from the long series of museum renovation projects large and small.[2] In my view, however, it would be a lost opportunity to not share with the field and with other interested parties the many lessons learned from the large public investments in redesign projects that have been completed. Following on from the COVID-19 pandemic, and possibly boosted by the abovementioned trend, heritage institutions can now increasingly be seen to focus on local audiences and their own collections, and less on temporary exhibitions with external loans. Within the heritage domain, a contrast between policy and academic reflection is noticeable as well.

Cultural policy directs cultural funding organisations and their advisory committees, as evidenced in the frameworks and guidelines that are imposed by the government authorities and, in derived form, by the (cultural) funds. These provide many useful stimuli, but on occasion also lead to unintended perverse effects. Project subsidies are important for promoting (international) collaboration, digitisation, innovation, policy on target groups, and marketing and/or acquisitions, but there is also a need in the field for longer and more consistent policy and stimulus programmes. Securing additional (project) subsidies has become a major part of the day-to-day work of heritage professionals and institutions, as the standard budgets in education, acquisition, digitisation, internationalisation and exhibition development are frequently inadequate.

A significant pitfall in securing funding is that you can only apply for money for activities that are not in line with your core tasks, and that an unreasonable amount of time and budget has to be devoted to making the application in the first place and then again to executing project management during its execution once the subsidy is secured. The focus on carrying out projects makes it hard for institutions to secure knowledge and experience gained with them, while at the same time incurring the risk of reinventing the wheel each time. Another noticeable phenomenon is the constant and well-documented drive on the part of government authorities and policymakers to digitise collections across the whole of Europe – something that I naturally applaud. Since 2010 greater attention has justifiably been paid to durable storage, after much digitised content was

lost to poor or non-existent conservation strategies in the initial phase.[3] While current stimulus programmes support digitisation as such, they luckily increasingly focus on durable storage; but – more importantly – they should in my view much rather focus on the (creative) use of this digital content.[4] How heritage professionals handle digital content (digital curatorship) poses a serious challenge that is still not by any means being addressed adequately. The challenge of developing digital curatorship can only be faced, provided that better and more user-friendly curatorial tools are created, and dialogue outside the heritage field is sought as well. As an example of this, I refer to the MuseumCamp concept that I collaborated on myself.[5]

The divide between theory and practice goes both ways. The abovementioned short-term heritage practice means that there is no room for reflection on the one hand, and on the other in academic practice one is in general at too great a distance to be able to make reasonable judgements on that practice. It is noticeable that relatively few reflections originate with professionals who have been working for a long period in heritage practice. There is little tradition in the Netherlands of reflection by the instigators of large-scale cultural projects. Whereas in countries like France and Germany and in the English-speaking world, it is regarded as sound practice to mark an important phase in your career in the cultural sector with a publication aimed at a wider public. It is high time to change this.

Theory and practice at the Allard Pierson

At the Allard Pierson – the collections of the University of Amsterdam – we have embarked on a quest over the past twelve years for a more dynamic museum presentation based on the multivocality outlined above. This has been a difficult process along an unpredictable roadmap, which we have had to navigate on the basis of predetermined quantities, such as the organisational capacity, the available collections, the opportunities offered by the museum, limited budgets and options for securing additional funding. Our quest was focused on renewing the Allard Pierson Museum, later combined with the merger with the Special Collections of the University Library. Positioning the new Allard Pierson as *the* museum and research institute for the collections of the University of Amsterdam was the final element in that quest. During the course of this renewal, a series of projects was launched and carried out on a number of substantive themes which will be examined here.

Since 2009, the museum has focused on two fields of research: the biography of collections and digital heritage. We tried to find additional funding for our refurbishment plans, combining this with – or rather launching it – by focusing on research projects as well as exhibitions. In this way we secured financing for pilot projects, trials and (international) exhibitions that formed the basis for the new Allard Pierson. Based on this research agenda, around 20 to 30 project proposals were submitted annually to national funding organisations and EU programmes like Creative Europe. Renewed justification for why this proposal should be seen as relevant had to be presented in each case, with the positive consequence that we were able constantly to enrich our plans for the renewal of our museum galleries. We were subsequently able to carry out both the small and large-scale projects that were accepted (5-10 per year) and allow them to emerge in the new Allard Pierson through the fact that they all arose from the quest for substantive refurbishment and redesign.

The triangle of dynamic heritage

This publication is an attempt at academic reflection on the renewal and refurbishment of the Allard Pierson over the past twelve years, which I have structured on the basis of a scheme that I apply to the concept of dynamic heritage. This is done by combining and juxtaposing theory and practice at the Allard Pierson. The past, the present and the future are three positions that we should strive to balance as far as possible in our heritage practice. In this way we are ultimately able to stimulate a societal support and create an important basis for the durable management and development of heritage.

If we focus solely on storing, protecting and conserving the heritage reservoir, reflection, inspiration, innovation and development of heritage in the present do not take place. The reservoir was created in the *past* and consists of physical cultural historical residues connected with cultural historical events. We recognise this in the form of the built monuments, the cultural landscape, archaeological traces, archives and (museum) collections, along with the immaterial heritage traditions and stories linked to them. Meanwhile, a strong institutional sector has emerged for the preservation of this heritage.

Conversely, reflecting on heritage from the *present* without cherishing or being aware of the historical reservoir is also unproductive. We continuously reflect on the recollections of the past made tangible in landscape, monument or object on the basis of contemporary practice. This generates stories and narratives that we cherish, but that are also simultaneously subject to constant change as a result of changing perspectives, the passage of time and altering frames of reference. By now it is accepted that one particular event can be recalled and related in very different ways, that varying narratives can be
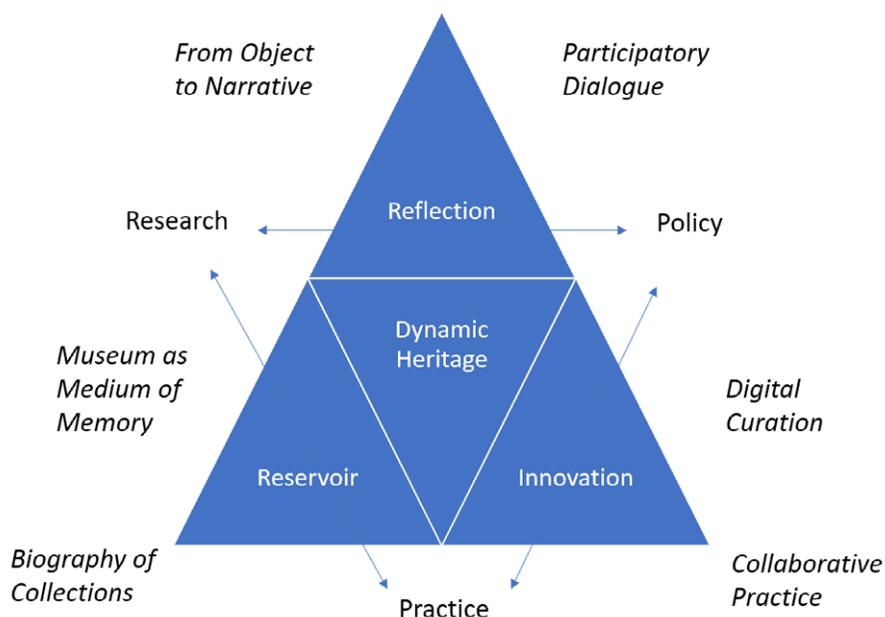
0.7 Heritage can be viewed in various ways – as reservoir, for reflection and as inspiration for innovation. This triangle is linked in the different chapters of this publication with the triangle of heritage practice, heritage research and heritage policy.

linked to a single object. The first chapter will expand and reflect on the museum as a medium of memory.

But without inspiration, innovation and development, the heritage reservoir is ultimately meaningless for the present and for *future* generations. It is also important to be familiar with the biography of a landscape, of collections and of traditions and to recognise the impact of collective memory and the formation of meaning linked to it. This is the subject of Chapter 2.

It is the abovementioned multivocality that makes it clear that we are no longer able to talk about unambiguous history or unambiguous heritage. It is also extremely important for us to try to approach heritage not exclusively but inclusively, because its multivocality is inextricably linked to different communities and cultures. This demands sensitivity and – increasingly – greater empathic capacity. Collaboration and acting together within and outside a heritage organisation is key to developing and addressing sensitivity. Chapter 3 goes in detail into collaboration and cooperation methods and addresses lessons learned.

The conceptual principles of the new museum galleries of the Allard Pierson collections is at the focus of Chapter 4. Their multivocality, the different layers of meaning and the ever-changing angles of approach reveal the dynamic that characterises heritage. This emphasises once more the ever-renewing valuation, such as inspiration or rejection, that we are able to attribute to heritage. In these galleries, the collections are used as a factor based on current reflections on heritage. We seek to convert the shifting meaning of museum objects into differing narratives and storylines that fascinate, stimulate and prompt reflection, and that can often exist alongside each other. This process of giving meaning is shifting rapidly and is linked to the dynamics of our (digital) culture of the image and the transfer of information. At the Allard Pierson, we have incorporated this in the new semipermanent presentation of the collection under the title 'From the Nile to the Amstel', a journey through time over 10,000 years of cultural history. The conceptual quest, the points of departure and the result are documented and explained in Chapter 4, along with alternative and 'hidden' narratives for a number of objects that feature in our new galleries.

Chapter 5 focuses on digital curation. The digitisation of collections offers unheard of possibilities for collections, although the technical applications that computer scientists, programmers and designers work on do not as yet connect well with curatorial practice at museums. Added to this is the social impact of the digital visual culture. This demands fresh expertise and new tools to apply this to heritage practice. Based on the experience gained from more than 10 years of digital heritage projects at the Allard Pierson, a vision of the future is sketched out and the lessons learned and the experience gained are evaluated. The title of my publication may suggest that digital curation is at the center, but I mainly describe the conditions for achieving digital curation in heritage practice. This chapter describes digital curation that should be better integrated into heritage practice. This cannot be separated from digital libraries, digital curation tools, and expertise in digital storytelling. But let us not forget that digitisation is a means and not an end in itself. The question of how we can use digital curation to achieve a more inclusive heritage practice will have to be addressed in a subsequent publication.

Heritage is frequently defined as what we as a society would like to pass on to the next generation. It often forms the basis of a shared or desired identity. But who makes the selection? What are the processes and procedures that the decision taken to preserve and

pass on heritage is based on? Pondering these questions at any rate generates material for reflection, and at its best prompts an active dialogue between individuals and groups. Showing how collections are handled and made accessible as well as arranging a participatory dialogue with visitors and users have become a major aim for many heritage institutions. It arises from the need for grassroot driven heritage and connection with the visitors and communities as stakeholders. In the last and sixth chapter, grassroot concepts and practical experience are presented towards a participatory dialogue.

I see heritage as a reservoir that has meaning only if a relevant part of it is used in contemporary reflection on our identities, while making use of its potential multivocality. On the basis of that reservoir and reflection, heritage provides inspiration for new ideas, innovative concepts and applications. Over the past 12 years, the Allard Pierson has experimented with them. My aim in this publication is to share with the readers the lessons we at the Allard Pierson have drawn from this. I hope that my position as reflective practitioner will offer fresh perspectives in moving towards a more sustainable, inclusive and multivocal heritage practice.

1.1 The clay seal impression from which we can recognise the likeness of Julius Caesar is an example of an object with various layers of meaning, which are linked to different perspectives that lead to multivocality. Clay, diam. 2 cm, *c.* 50 BC. APM 8177-134.

The museum as a medium of memory

In around 30 BC, the temple archive in Edfu in southern Egypt catches fire. Cleopatra has just committed suicide, the economy is not going well, and there is widespread political unrest. In much the way that is still common with us, it was customary to seal important documents with a some soft clay that could by authenticated through an impression with a signet ring. Of the hundreds of papyrus rolls kept in the Edfu archive (see fig. 2.2), only the seals were to survive the fire, as these small lumps of clay were baked in the heat of the fire, to be swept up afterwards and kept in a pot. In 1906, Friedrich Wilhelm Freiherr Von Bissing bought around 400 clay seals from the burned-out temple archive through a

1.2 The Egyptologist Friedrich Wilhelm Freiherr von Bissing (1873–1956) portrayed in his later years with a small part of his Egyptian antiquities collection.

local dealer. Von Bissing was professor of Egyptology in Munich and owner of the world's largest private collection of Egyptian art at the time. Between 1922 and 1926, he was professor at the University of Utrecht and met Constant Willem Scheurleer, the founder of the Allard Pierson Museum. Through this connection 320 of the Edfu seals ended up, in 1934, in the possession of the Allard Pierson Museum, where they are still kept.

Why am I telling this story? In the first two chapters of this book, I shall have a seal from this collection return from time to time to illustrate several theoretical observations. The clay seal contains the imprint of a portrait in which we are able to recognise Gaius Julius Caesar (see p. 22).[1] In 47 BC, Caesar was in the south of Egypt with his mistress Cleopatra, and it is very likely that they would have visited the Temple of Horus in Edfu. While there they are thought to have set their seals to documents they had given their approval to by means of an impression with their own personal signet ring with their likeness. Fifteen seal impressions of Cleopatra are also kept in this archive (see p. 97).

The museum in the 21st century

Since the Renaissance, individuals and communities have tried to create a place in the world for themselves, to gain a grip on their past and to impose order – all by creating collections. In encyclopaedic fashion, objects from art, nature, science and history were amassed. The private collections that came about in this way are the precursors of our museums. The clay seal of Caesar from Von Bissing's collection is such an object: the seal has been handed down by someone who saw collecting objects as the starting point for acquiring knowledge. Nationalism in the 19th century, and colonialism to a lesser degree, led a fresh wave of establishing museums at regional and national level. In the 20th century, museums in the West expanded to become influential cultural institutions that are firmly anchored in society.

In this regard, it is as well to realise that ninety per cent of all museums we now have, worldwide, have been set up after 1945.[2] In the decade following the end of World War 2, the Netherlands alone saw a doubling from 150 to 300 museums, a number that expanded to almost 1,000 since the 1970s.[3] The ten percent founded before 1945 continue to be the major, established institutions that now dominate the museum landscape in the western world when it comes to attendance, reach, budget, and blockbuster exhibitions. The impact of museums through social media and the internet has only increased over the past decade. Attendance figures, at least in the Netherlands, suggest museums are a medium through which large population groups are reached. While these may be largely constituted by day-trippers and tourists, museum attendance still exceeds the number of spectators professional football draws to its stadiums.

Demographic and touristic developments have to a large extent determined the rising number of visitors over the past quarter century. Over the decade the baby-boomer cohort will increase even further in Western Europe and the US, with the expectation of a positive influence on attendance figures. The COVID-19 pandemic has hit the entire museum sector, in particular those museums that are dependent on income from visitors from abroad. The demographic development may be a reassuring thought, but does not change the fact that museums will be faced with major challenges over the decades to come. The challenges are reflected in a series of new characterisations for museums that have been put forward over recent decades. Below I present a selection from the range of pamphlets and publications in which the urgency for museum innovation is addressed.

In 2000, Eilean Hooper-Greenhill launched the idea of a *post-museum*[4] which points to postmodern society. Central is the idea that visitors must be able to create their own narratives – an ambitious objective that many museums are wrestling with within their own museum practice. This challenge is increasingly linked to the *inclusive museum* by Anwar Tlili[5] which reflects on the development of a new social role and the associated identity of the museum organisation.

Nina Simon's *participative museum* is in line with the trend towards a more active and inclusive approach from the visitor, who is invited to actively participate.[6] Here the focus lies more on communities and the link to them, which is intended to lead to greater support. Simon has in the meantime turned this into a successful movement: OF/BY/FOR/ALL, with the mission: 'We envision a world in which all people are empowered to share their talents to strengthen their communities. Communities in which people feel safe, welcome, and connected to the strangers who cross their paths every day.' In addition to museums, we are now seeing other, more neighbourhood-oriented institutions, such as libraries, linking up with Simon's movement. The *disruptive museum* by Arnoud Odding[7] follows on seamlessly in reflecting on ways to involve the public more seriously in the museum. In 2011, the atmosphere in the Netherlands was not particularly optimistic on account of the severe financial cuts in the cultural sector implemented by the government the previous year in response to the financial crisis. On closer inspection, the term 'disruptive' applies rather to the environment in which museums operate than to the museums as institutions themselves. But it is interesting that of the list of 15 Dutch museum directors interviewed by Odding, after 10 years only three are still active in the *museum* sector, and only one has remained in their position.

The *emancipated museum* by Steven ten Thije[8] tries to provide fresh answers to societal change. Can the museum free itself from the patriarchal position that has evolved historically and secure a new, more relevant position in the social fabric? This links up directly to the need for a more inclusive museum. Inclusivity, diversity and multivocality are now high on the agenda of cultural institutions, at home and abroad. Museums with ethnographic, natural history, archaeological, or cultural historical collections from (former) colonial territories are expected worldwide to provide more and fresh answers to questions regarding provenance, acquisition, ownership, and significance, and on the narratives linked to these collections.

In the *metabolic museum* (2020)[9] curator Clémentine Deliss puts the quest for the post-ethnographic institution at the focus. The collections acquired in colonial contexts not only raise many curatorial questions but are seen increasingly critically as 'appropriation'. The challenges lie in how to forge crossovers with the work of contemporary artists, with Deliss foregrounding the many issues connected to transforming the ethnographic museum into an institution for world cultures.

Finally, the *transhistorical museum*[10] strives for liberating the museum from traditional art historical categories, where chronology, trend, style, ethnicity, and genre are often decisive. The aim is to allow visitors to discover surprising links and stories, and to allow them to attribute new meanings. This follows on from the aim formulated in the post-museum, where visitors are enabled to create their own narratives.

Theoretical reflections like the ones mentioned on the future of museum practice are few and far between, but nevertheless of key importance for attaining sustainable change in museums. The past twenty years have witnessed a rollercoaster ride in societal change,

in which museums have tried to follow in the slipstream. The quest for new museum concepts may suggest a dynamic industry but large parts of the museum sector have barely joined in. Major causes may be found in the fact that cultural heritage organisations, in particular museums, are by nature thoroughly inward looking. An inward focus will slow down change as an answer to urgent outside developments, while management depends on both political and internal support for the implementation of change.

Organising openness

When creating a more open museum, one faces an array of issues typical for organisations of this kind. My aim in discussing these in more detail below is to show that easy solutions or quick fixes are in fact impossible. Creating openness and change is a question of patience, and must primarily be organised on the basis of an overall approach at various levels within a museum.

Of all the professions in the Netherlands, those of curator and librarian are the domains with the highest average age, with more than half of this group older than 55 (in 2016). These professionals tend to be extremely loyal to their employers and often spend their entire working lives in the same position. A side effect is that promotion among the younger generation of museum professionals is slow. And that is precisely the generation that is now striving in a much more activist way for openness, inclusivity, and diversity. Museums are in general characterised by staff that do not reflect in a representative way the society that they are working for. The causes given can be deduced from the following quotes compiled from leading museum directors in the Netherlands in 2020: 'Art and museum training courses are almost entirely white (…) and the fact that candidates of colour are simply not there or not to be found. (…) And if I do find them, they do not have the appropriate training. And to train them I need more subsidy. I will not get more subsidy, so I can't train them, so I can't employ them.'[11] The argument may appear plausible, but more to the point it reveals impotence to implement rapid change. Yet change is now starting to occur more rapidly in the Netherlands, as a result of senior staff retiring, application of the 'cultural diversity code', and putting a 'platform for inclusion' into practice.[12]

I see organising openness in museums first and foremost as a start, and perhaps also as a precondition for arriving at changes, which in my view should lead to a more *empathic museum*, a concept that I use to refer to a mindset that evokes a general human empathy. This empathy is essential for stimulating interest in 'the other' and also taking it further – the basis for a successful relationship between a museum and its ecosystem.[13] It is important not to confuse empathy with sympathy. There are by now many case studies exemplifying the power of empathy in museums' speaking and acting.[14] Many collections are linked to other cultures, far away in time or space. They contain testimonies of human creativity, instinct for survival, the urge to transmit, the quest for attention and appreciation, or the need to express oneself. It are stories we empathise with.

To put it in a different way: on the basis of their collections, museums offer visitors the opportunity to share a visual experience and to reflect upon it. They try to set up a link between the here and now and an object or collection made or devised in the recent or distant past. If the visitor succeeds in bridging the gap and empathically responds, the museum has succeeded in this ambitious task. Empathy forms the basis for involvement in the other, and so is crucial to a museum's functioning. In the US, the empathic museum is defined as an activist model to arrive at a fresh institutional identity. At its core, it falls

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1.3 A visitor photographing an ancient Greek helmet in a display case at the Allard Pierson.

back on the desire to create links with their communities, with the aim of forming a better reflection of society, especially in terms of color. 'We can't know where we're going or how to get there if we don't know where we are. [...] An empathetic museum commits resources to regular assessment, not only of its revenues and attendance, but also of its public and social impact.'[15]

Museums and modernity

Museums are guardians of heritage, but the stories, images and visions of the past, the present and the future to which the museum objects are connected are formed not only in museums but in a much broader context. This observation is closely linked to our modern society and to modernity. Museums are not merely a product of our modern society but also a producer of modernity. By modernity we mean the society that is more or less natural for us, which is characterised by science, technology, culture, marketing, rise in prosperity and democracy. That's quite a mouthful. And this is also kept going by a combination of political institutions and a bureaucratic infrastructure interwoven with a socio-economic structure.

The museum is a medium deployed to gain a handhold on the reality surrounding us, but sometimes it functions as an instrument for legitimising existing power relations. Museums should be seen as a cultural player in modern society. From the modernist perspective this is about objective knowledge that is put forward from an authoritative, respected and confidence-building position on the grounds of museum collections.

For a long time, museums were cerebral showcases and platforms for our curiosity and urge to explain and interpret. Our Julius Caesar clay seal for example creates a wonderful link to exotic and mysterious Ancient Egypt. The museum was a traditional cultural authority, the guardian of collections that were visited, researched, and interpret-

ed by specialists like Von Bissing and Scheurleer. In their day the museum was primarily a collection for scholarly study. The public endured this state of affairs fairly passively and was happy with the result. Consider once more our clay seal of Caesar. It would have had a neat label: 'Clay seal impression, diam. 2 cm, *c.* 50 BC, found at Edfu'.

I am already using the past tense in describing the situation above, as though this were no longer the case. It is only partially true, however, since we find ourselves still in a transitional phase. Our Western society is changing at high speed. The authority of someone like Von Bissing is by no means taken as self-evident any longer, and the museum walls no longer exclude the outside world with all its changes. Even in academia, we have come to accept that concepts such as 'reality' and 'truth' are increasingly problematised, realising no-one has exclusive access to reality or truth. For the past couple of decades doubts have been raised in all kinds of areas about the assumptions of the by now well-entrenched modernism. Sometimes we speak of postmodernism, but we could also refer to it as a reflexive modernity, a critical view of our modern culture.[16] A different approach makes use of the term sustainism, as the new modernism that places developments, such as the transition to social sustainability, civic participation, and social media at the focus.[17] Another way to describe the two different museum approaches comes from Graham Black who talks about an 'Old Power' inward-looking museum versus the 'New Power' confident, outward-facing museum.[18]

For the museum as a respected authority, the reflexive modernism, postmodernism, sustainism and 'New Power' poses a major challenge. For our clay seal impression, it means that in 2022 we aim to inspect and describe an object from multiple perspectives – and moreover, we are convinced, as heritage professionals, we have to pursue this approach. We go in search of more – sometimes heterogeneous – layers of meaning, such as in this case: who was this Von Bissing, where precisely does this seal come from and how was it used, what is a temple archive, but also: what is the postcolonial aspect of this object and how is it affected by the principles of appropriation?

In my view, Andreas Huyssen expressed this new step extremely well in 1995.[19] I will paraphrase his words: 'At this point we have to try to gain control and to theorise about the way in which museums and the exhibition culture create an altogether new domain in the broadest sense and simultaneously make visible different lines of meaning. Because we must develop an alternative scenario for the point when the overarching narrative of modernity [by this he means the respected position of authority of people like Von Bissing] loses its powers of persuasion. People are increasingly hungry to hear and see other stories, the demand for multivocality is increasing, and there is a growing understanding that identities are formed in different layers. In a philosophical sense we refer then to an infinite negotiation between "the I and the other", and this makes clear that we are no longer satisfied with a fixed framework of family, church, marriage and nation.' In other words, Huyssen wants museums to prepare for the point when visitors are no longer satisfied with a label providing only a brief description, date, and place where the object was found. What is at issue here is rather the values that attach to heritage.

And it appears that this point has arrived now, in the 21st century. The fact that the familiar framework of family, church, marriage and nation is no longer conclusive is creating social insecurity and unrest, because of course there are groups that want to cleave to their traditional values to a greater or lesser degree. The fully integrated citizen of the past has now become an alienated and individualised consumer. We increasingly

A tale of two visions': alternative museum futures

The 'Old Power' inward-looking museum	The 'New Power' confident, outward-facing museum
Hierarchical, controlling	Collaborative, democratic, team-driven, dispersed decision making, sharing power within and beyond the museum
Enclosed, inward-looking	Porous, reaching out, global
'Neutral'	Activist
Limited, largely quantitative visitor research	Comprehensive, continuing research on users and non-users
Retain 'trust' of public	'Trust' is two-way – public trusts museum and museum trusts public
Stand-alone – strict boundary between institution and users	Working in partnership with users and communities
Professional	Partnered professional and amateur
Static, expensive, exhibition-dominant, slow to change, operationally rigid	Agile, fast-moving, cheap, frequent events programming, 'always something new'
Prioritising collections, with museum as gatekeeper	Prioritising use of collections with audience, including open access
Elitist – focus on curatorial 'excellence' and the single voice of authority	Inclusive – focus on ensuring relevance to whole of society and incorporating diverse voices, underpinned by continuing expertise
On-site	On-site, online, and mobile
Focused on the visit	Focused on engagement across mediums
Traditional museum offer – read, listen, contemplate, didactic	Expectation of active engagement, involvement of social media, multiple perspectives, etc.
Interactive, To/For	Participative, With/By
Content provider	Content provider + platform
Didactic content delivery	Focus on learning through social interaction
Museum in control of visit	Personalised experience
Dull environment	Immersive, welcoming environment

1.4 The characteristics of two alternative museum futures. Source: Black (2020).

see symptoms of a fact-free society where the distinction between truth, lie and fiction has been elided. Doubt is cast on scientific knowledge and facts. In the Netherlands, the Black Pete debate is a good example, in revealing the transition between, or perhaps the juxtaposition of, different value systems, of modernity on the one hand and of the post-modern on the other. The need for multivocality and awareness of the other perspective in any event provokes debate and at the same time engenders feelings of loss, leading in a certain sense to an identity crisis. Moreover, the debate exposes how traditions are constantly changing and that heritage always carries dynamism within it. Or, as Rob van der Laarse describes it: 'Heritage is [then also] just as much a bearer of collective recollection as of repressed trauma'.[20]

To be sure, museums, and in fact Western society as a whole, have for years been able to accommodate opposing forces, whether or not this involved opposites such as public vs private, spirituality vs reason, or serving the elite vs the broader public. The antithesis between modernism and postmodernism or sustainism may perhaps be added to this.[21] The new, postmodern museum concept, or the post-museum as referred to by Hooper-Greenhill,[22] offers a true challenge. Museums lag behind other cultural or heritage institutions when it comes to translating postmodern insights into their practice. They wrestle with this new approach, and are looking for ways of putting this concept into

practice. This matters little to the individual objects such as the clay seal that I am constantly using as an example; it is primarily the task of curators, educational staff, and museum executives to enable new approaches and interpretations. Nevertheless, I am confident seeing museums reacting to this postmodern debate, even if it is clear that they are not pioneers. The most important reaction is that visitors are increasingly being placed at the focus, with participation by the public and inclusion being used to set up an active dialogue between museum and visitor.[23] At the same time problematising is a complex operation, as it runs counter to the wishes and expectations of the many museum visitors with a traditional attitude, in the sense that they continue to expect to be informed, or challenged, in an unambiguous, compact and intelligible way. As Vázquez is stating, there is no modernity without coloniality. Modernity creates a world of consumption, in fact the consumption of the world of others. Decoloniality is about de-linking, going beyond reflexivity and should be about dialogue and listening: 'decoloniality works for global justice, for the possibility of ethical life, for a 'world in which many worlds can fit.'[24]

In the museum of the 21st century, we confront new developments, such as the democratising of knowledge, the relinquishing of the difference between high and low culture, and contested heritage. In addition, there are increasing opportunities for crossovers, such as powerful combinations with theatre, film and literature. Naturally we expect museums to adapt their presentations to the community that nourishes and 'frames' them in the current sociocultural era. Returning to our clay seal, we would make the link to Caesar in Shakespeare's plays, in films and television series and in the novels of Robert Harris. But we can also look into Von Bissing's work in Egypt and into how he acted as merchant, academic, and representative of a colonial power. All of this can be associated with our clay seal. The seal is a node in a network of connections and perspectives, informed by different knowledges and values.

Museums and the culture of remembrance

Now that I have mentioned two important challenges for the museums of the 21st century, I would like to go into the evident relationship between museums on the one hand and the operation of our memory and recollection on the other. Museums can be seen as a reservoir, but also as the worksites of our memory, where objects end up, whether or not via many detours, and can be discovered generation after generation, or can be set in another perspective. Consider our clay seal impression. It has been in the storerooms of the Allard Pierson Museum since 1934. It was certainly studied, but its impression was only identified as a portrait of Caesar a few years ago, as remarked above. This demonstrates once again the importance of our invisible collection, our depository, which is the reservoir. I would like here to investigate the memory function of that reservoir more thoroughly, because that is a rather complex affair.

Museums may be seen as a medium that controls, organises, translates, and on occasion enhances, or by contrast blocks, certain parts of that collective memory. Museums are also increasingly institutions where recollections are cultivated, sublimated, and more and more even created. Museums can be seen to take a next step when they actively call on visitors to identify themselves with cultures, communities or individuals. The In Flanders Fields Museum in Ypres (Belgium) may serve as a good example, where the visitor is linked through name, age, sex, and place of origin to a particular, individual life story among the many that played out there during the Great War in 1914–1918.

So museums and how memory works appear to be an obvious combination. Especially so since many museums are about objects collected in the past, illuminate the history of a place or a person, or are concerned with art from a more or less distant past. It is the more remarkable that there does not as yet appear to be a closer connection between the two domains of museum studies and that of memory studies, but luckily more work is being published on this.[25]

Memory studies as a discipline has developed alongside the 'memory boom' of recent decades. Here Pierre Nora saw a certain paradox that he expressed in characteristic fashion: 'We speak so much of memory because there is so little of it left.'[26] But this memory is not only limited, it is also corrupted and merged with new recollections. In other words, the fact that memorial places, the so-called 'lieux de mémoire', are needed points precisely to lost recollections and the need we feel to keep them alive. Because of course there would be no need for places of remembrance or museums if the recollection were to remain alive of its own accord.

Recollection and historical awareness

Recollections are generated by individuals, by groups, or by an even larger collective, such as a nation. They are stored in a memory, and there they form all sorts of links. Within the memory, new recollections are then created, which again differ for each individual, group, or collective. In studying collective memory, it is important to see how recollections are transferred and formed. In order to structure the various kinds of recollections, I make use of three time levels, or time layers, and linked to them I distinguish three layers of historical awareness, gratefully adopting the approach of famous French historian Fernand
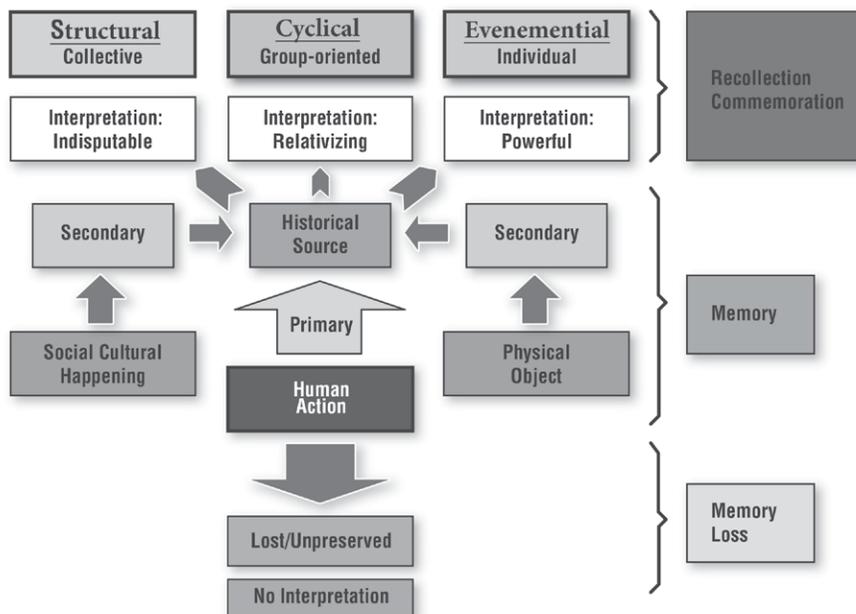
1.5 Braudel's three time levels linked to the different ways of interpreting historical events. After Hupperetz (2015).

Braudel, leader of the Annales School.[27] I have already written about historical awareness in the course of research for my doctorate, where I pointed out that historical awareness is not only linked to a given group but also to the three different time levels proposed by Braudel: the time of events, the conjunctural time level, and the structural time level.[28]

The time level of events is connected to an individual historical awareness that is sometimes extremely powerful. Consider events like the attack on the Twin Towers in New York in 2001, that crated for nearly everyone in so many societies their own precise, living recollection. For our clay seal impression, this is connected to the moment that Caesar made the impression in that little lump of clay with the signet ring on his very hand. We imagine how he sealed an important legal document that was then passed to the temple priests and subsequently stored in the temple archive. This is an example of the time level of events, of short duration.

As second time level, Braudel distinguishes the conjunctural time level, which is linked to communities where historical awareness is of a relatable and more reflective nature. Consider a gradual shift in fashion or taste, or the rise and loss of traditions over decades or even several centuries. People would like to place conjunctural changes in perspective, and the historical awareness connected to it has a strongly ordering and reflective effect. Other examples of conjunctural change are the impact of the economic crisis of 2008 or the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, which we may compare with earlier economic crises or other flu epidemics. Translating this time level to our clay seal, this object then symbolises the presence of Caesar in Egypt, and the attempt that Cleopatra made to fuse the Egyptian royal house with the ruling classes of the Roman Empire in the person of their son, Ptolemaeus Caesar, better known by his nickname Caesarion.

The structural aspects are distinguished as the third time level. Events here concern, e.g., those that have been included in the Canon of Dutch History as 'windows', and that – partially as a result – had a structural impact. In this regard, we may consider the historical fact that during the Roman era, the Netherlands became part of a global empire for the first time, but it may also refer to the Second World War or the 1953 North Sea floods. The structural time level is of a very long-term and collective nature when it comes to historical awareness – the objects, landscapes and buildings linked to this are pointed to as 'inalienable heritage'.

Several kinds of historical awareness may be attached to, and be conjured up by, any arbitrary object, all of which are loaded in different ways, depending on the point in time at which the object is inspected, the person inspecting it, and the circumstances, or even the political situation, in which these actions are taking place. That sounds complicated, and may sometimes be confusing, but we have primarily to see the layered nature of meanings and their complexity as an opportunity, as an ongoing source of inspiration for further research, but also, and perhaps mainly so, as a mirror of our existence and for that reason as a reflective memory.

In this way, our clay seal showing Caesar's likeness implies historical awareness because it takes us right up to the man who was personally responsible for incorporating the Low Countries into the Roman Empire. The conquest by Caesar is fairly well documented historically (see the copy of his *De bello gallico* on p. 101) and can be traced archaeologically increasingly well. More recently his doings in Northern Europe have also conjured up associations with genocide, which reveal that the stories surrounding this object and those around Caesar are themselves neither neutral nor static. Image building,

public perception and propaganda are constantly in motion. Caesar turns out to be not merely a brilliant strategist, but a mass murderer as well.[29]

I now would like to draw attention to how the manipulation of memory may influence our perceptions (in museums) based on four examples. The examples are extremely varied and may well reveal the range of the debate.

Case studies

The theoretical reflections in this chapter are now given some context below, using various cases from actual museum practice. The cases will reveal how theory can both be translated into and deduced from practice, along with the results and insights this research can deliver. The central themes are the collective functioning of memory, the paradox of nostalgia, and the geopolitical deployment of heritage.

An imaginary collection as act of retrospection?

Over large areas of the northern Netherlands and in northern Germany and Denmark, so-called 'bog bodies' have come to the surface in peatlands. This took place in particular during mining operations in the Northern European lowlands in the 19th century. In the Netherlands the 'Yde Girl' is the best known bog body, shown in the Drents Museum. The finds were mapped by researchers who scoured town and countryside for old reports by peat workers. Alfred Dieck (1906–1989), an ethnographer and archaeologist in Hanover, in his spare time from being a civil servant reported over 1,800 bog bodies that he had tracked down in northern Germany. He documented and published these finds, receiving considerable recognition for his work.

His publications on tattoo patterns on bog bodies were important reference works for fellow researchers. But it lasted until 2006 before it turned out that the find reports had
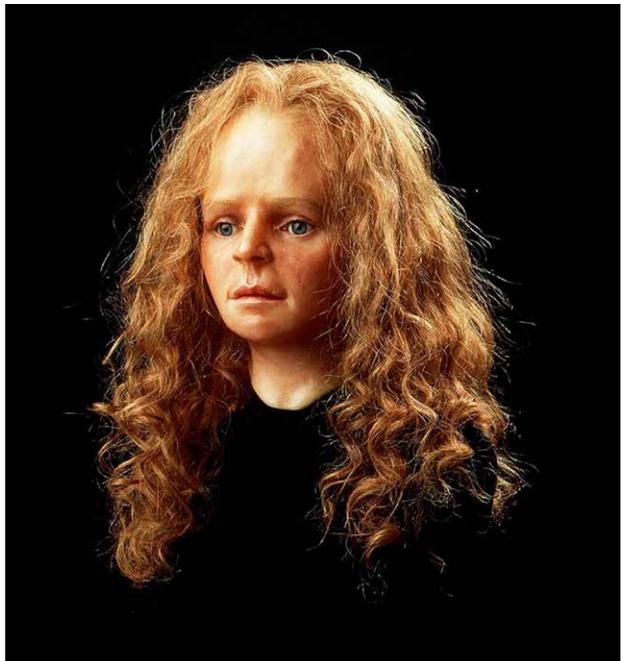
1.6 Facial reconstruction of the 'Yde Girl', c. 190 BC–AD 220. Reconstruction made by Richard Neave, 1992, based on the bog body kept in the Drents Museum (the Netherlands).

been invented by Dieck himself. He had created his own 'collection' of bog bodies that did not exist at all. His dataset turned out to be one great act of mystification the clichéd psychiatrist's kind. Dieck may well have believed in his own data and his colleagues were only too happy to go along with the image that he had created. This case may perhaps be linked to the retrospective evidence and events adopted by Dieck and included in the collective biography of the Saxony that was so dear to him. In this way he supplemented history and created a kind of additional and artificial memory.

But what takes place for the individual can also occur at collective level. What is more, the individual and the collective cannot easily be separated from one another, in particular now that recollections are also being transmitted and made public by digital means. For some time we have seen that photography, film, television and internet conjure up, recreate, and alter recollections. It is increasingly difficult to draw a distinction here between first-hand and second-hand recollections. The impact of audio-visual records is increasing.

Propaganda of innocence

In the Limburg Museum in Venlo, where I worked for 16 years, the so-called 'Rubble Film' has been shown for decades to commemorate the Second World War, including images from the documentary *Noord helpt Zuid* (North helps South). The documentary was made in the summer of 1945 and shown at the time in cinemas in Groningen and Friesland in the context of a public aid campaign for North Limburg, which had been badly affected by the war.[30] The images make a point in revealing Venlo in its most dramatic situation. Some of months after the liberation, the entire built-up strip along the Venlo Maaskade

1.7 Still from the film *Noord helpt Zuid* (North helps South) with devasted houses near the Old Market in Venlo (the Netherlands) in 1945.

had been demolished, so that it seemed that the entire inner city had been wiped out. Reconstruction in a post-war period is a complex process in which urban planning, built heritage, and economic pressure and opportunities all play a major role.[31] A comparison with photos taken immediately after the bombing could give the impression that perhaps more was destroyed after the war than during it.

That image of an historic city centre that had disappeared completely has stuck in the minds of the many Venlo residents who were shown this film during a school outing to the museum in the early 2000s. When I did my own research for a model of the 17th century fortified city of Venlo, I came into contact with an architectural historian who had been conducting research in Venlo for 25 years. His research revealed that three quarters of the Venlo inner city still had a mediaeval urban layout. Our report in the local newspaper gave rise to many letters from readers referring to the Rubble Film. They said our account could not be correct and suggested that we go back to the archives for a proper look. In brief, the museum had for years not realised how effectively the (propaganda) film would do its work, with the result that a distorted collective nostalgic image had been created along the lines that the entire inner city had been devastated by the 1944 and 1945 bombardments.

The power of objects and the sublimation of nostalgia

The Museum of Innocence in Istanbul is a lovely example of a constructed memory that is a comprehensive attempt to sublimate the nostalgia of a lost love. All the objects in this museum refer to two fictional characters in the 2008 novel *The Museum of Innocence* by Orhan Pamuk: the businessman Kemal and his lover Füsun. Pamuk bought all the objects himself, including the 4,213 cigarette butts, salt shakers, picture postcards and dolls, on

1.8 The 4213 cigarette butts of Füsun in the Museum of Innocence, Istanbul.

the flea-markets of the Çukurcuma part of Istanbul where the house stands. They are without exception things that Greek and Armenian Christians had to leave behind when they were forced to leave Istanbul in the 1950s. In this way, the everyday legacy from these expellees gains new meaning as a representation of Pamuk's novel in the museum that he set up in Füsun's fictional home. Pamuk has this to say: 'The power of objects relies upon the recollections that they store within themselves, and also on the whims of our imagination and our memory.'[32]

A transnational memory war

Over recent decades in Europe, we have seen a growing number of regional and ethnic conflicts, with the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia after 1992 as a dark chapter. Conflicts of this kind put collective memory to the test, while heritage, cultural borders, commemorations, and places of recollection play a significant role in the political debate. The artefacts loaned by four Crimean museums for the Allard Pierson exhibition *De Krim. Goud en geheimen van de Zwarte Zee* (*The Crimea. Gold and Secrets of the Black Sea*), which became stateless following Russia's annexation of the Crimea in the spring of 2014, form another example. Both Ukraine and the four Crimean museums have laid claim to the artefacts. The case has been running since 2014 and will probably take a few years to complete.[33]

The central question with these Crimean treasures is of course who determines the ownership and the (national) identity of this contested heritage. Rob van der Laarse contends that the legal proceedings embody the new geopolitical reality of the EU and

1.9 A visitor viewing objects in the exhibition *The Crimea. Gold and Secrets of the Black Sea* at the Allard Pierson Museum (2014).

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NATO. According to him, we need to view the conflict in terms of a transnational 'memory war' in which national traumas and victimhood play a central role. The question of ownership goes beyond the legal question in revealing the contested use of the past in post-communist nation-building, he says: 'What I want to make clear is that there is no heritage without conflict. If Europe's biography has been seen by romanticism as a layered palimpsest longing for an age-old, hidden and pure identity lost in modernisation, then a critical biography should address heritage as the outcome of the dynamics of using and abusing of the past for present purposes.'[34]

The paradox of nostalgia

The four cases above show that memory can not only be manipulated, but also that nostalgic image building has a strong impact on the creation and formation of collections, which are in turn used for presentation in museums. Nostalgia is in essence a form of awareness of the past that demands more accurate guidance and meaning.[35] Museums are inextricably linked to nostalgia, because museum collections are able to put the visitor ir-revocably in contact with that past. This frequently involves a nostalgic past that does not correspond with reality. This could equally be a glorious collective past, a recent personal one, or one that appeals to lost handicraft, traditions or customs.

Museum visitors are by definition seduced into going along with a particular story or narrative. This does not necessarily imply intent; it is possible that a curator is un-consciously using a canonised narrative. Nostalgia is currently seen from an increas-ingly reflective heritage perspective and is becoming a way of looking meticulously at how history is (re)created. Here we enter the domain of critical heritage studies, which has certainly received more solid theoretical underpinning, but still finds little application in museums.[36]

Nostalgia comes in different shapes and tastes. As objects in museums can sometimes take one back to experiences of one's youth, this may have a salutary feeling and effect. In Venlo, for example, I took groups of elderly women around to show them household items that often called up nostalgic recollections from the 1950s – when they were young. I had the strong impression that they had not activated these recollections in some cases even for decades and that they were probably no longer aware that they had them stored up in their memories. Sharing recollections in a group had a stimulating and of course also controlling effect. But heritage can of course cause traumas to be relived.

Nostalgia also has another side, when it is related to a predilection for the macabre and the bloody, distasteful aspects of the past. Various para-museum providers are active in this area, including the Torture Museum and the Amsterdam Dungeon, both in Amsterdam. They emphasise a darker side of history, showing phenomena like the plague and the persecution of witches, without however making use of original objects or spaces.

The subsequent step towards the more recent macabre and charged heritage, that of the First World War and the Nazi or East German regimes, is not that big and also links up to the nostalgic revival mentioned previously. The public evidently finds it attractive to be able to witness extreme experiences from war, persecution, and the tragic episodes of our history from a safe distance, while at the same time cherishing the idea of coming as close as possible to the 'authentic' experience.

In neo-Marxist critical theory, nostalgia is dismissed as disingenuous, conservative, sentimental idealisation and mystification of the past.[37] By way of analogy with postmod-

ernist historiography, we can also talk about post-nostalgia, in the form of a clear realisation that the past can never be authentically retrieved or relived. Can we now speak of a post-nostalgic museum, by analogy with Hooper-Greenhill's post-museum where visitors create their own stories and nostalgic frame? What precisely this implies and what it means for museum exhibition practice I shall discuss below.

New narratives

Museum exhibition practice is subject to constant internal pressure in response to external, societal change. Museums are transforming from traditional exhibition spaces to places of memory. Here we enter the complex world of storytelling or narrative. The term 'narrative' seems omnipresent in the museum field, but is of course used in many other media, and then often with a negative connotation, when it comes to creating a frame of reference or a 'spin'. In museums, narrative is to an important extent seen as a 'top-down', linear interpretative framework that presents a one-dimensional or generic version of 'the past'. The experiences and values of 'the other(s)' are frequently hardly acknowledged or even flatly disregarded here.[38]

I am deliberately exaggerating, but I want most of all to make clear that it is a major step from the relatively simple and traditional presentation of collections, where the curator offers an 'authoritarian' or dominant perspective, to an exhibition where the visitor is able to create their own personal narrative. Quite apart from the question whether visitors really want all of this, putting the question about differing narratives is already a major step towards (self) reflection on the authority ascribed to museums. For our clay seal, this means that the curator has to be explicit about the factors that contributed to the various images surrounding the person of Caesar.

'Heritage institutions find themselves in an ongoing struggle with the normativity of their selection, presentation and ordering principles,' in the view of Susan Legêne in her 2006 Ketelaar Lecture.[39] The constant wave of museum redesign, renewal and refurbishment over recent decades is a clear reaction to the changing needs of the public and of the stakeholders. But what does this reflection on modernism that I have sketched out above delivers from a museological viewpoint, or rather: Who gains and what do they gain? All kinds of damping and delaying mechanisms can be discerned in this renewal, and they are increasingly visible. For example architectonic and legal limitations are conceivable when it comes to setting up, lending out or presenting the collection. Founders, financiers and donors of collections or institutions often have an invisible, although far-reaching influence on the manner of presentation and sometimes keep an anachronistic framework in place.

Compare for instance the 'musealised' layouts of Teylers Museum in Haarlem (1784), Museum Meermanno in The Hague (1852) or the Missiemuseum (Missionary Museum) in Steyl (1931) and the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford (1884). They are often referred to as time capsules of the Enlightenment or of the glory days of the Catholic mission. There is the risk here too that these anachronistic layouts are nevertheless perceived by unsuspecting visitors as purely nostalgic. The decision not to intervene can of itself also be termed nostalgic. Moreover, these layouts are increasingly linked to the colonial perspective, and intervention here too will be necessary to show multivocality.[40]

In concluding this chapter, I take you back once more to the time of Caesar, to be seen on the clay seal. This was a time of colonialism, even if we may have for a long time not

always felt that way about it. Rather we sense incorporation into the Roman Empire as a link to the superior Mediterranean civilisation, and this is the way that period is retained in our collective memory. In a sense, we are still using the Winckelmann frame of reference in which Greco-Roman Antiquity is seen as the highlight of European cultural history. Roman rule led to the Revolt of the *Batavi*, a resistance by a local elite, and that provides us with our first national freedom fighter in the person of Julius Civilis. He is glorified in a famous Rembrandt painting, but at the same time we want to have the Roman imperial border or limes – the symbol of Roman colonial supremacy – placed on the World Heritage List. These are differing perspectives that will have a place alongside each other.

Another example of colonial history may be found in the so-called Canon of Dutch History. One of its 'windows' concerns the expansion overseas of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) and the Dutch West India Company (WIC). To mark the VOC's year of commemoration in 2002, Remco Raben wrote: 'It is disturbing that there are obviously only very few in the Netherlands who are curious about the experiences and visions of the other side or of the colonial immigrants. The Netherlands is clearly still able to permit itself to disregard their opinion, but it thereby ignores the rapid cultural changes currently taking place here.' The longing for this glorious past is packaged in our museum collections, landscape, architecture, and culture of commemoration, but over recent years, this nostalgia is increasingly being nuanced. After all, the high regard for that past and the multiplicity of publications, exhibitions and commemorations often irrevocably lead to selective forgetfulness, with the result that too little attention is paid to the abuses of the colonial system.

Our amnesia is nourished by escapism, by ideological indoctrination and by the link with contemporary 'invented' traditions. It was for a long time taken as read that the 'VOC mentality' was something we should be proud of. It is important that we do not fall into the trap of replacing one skewed single narrative with another. In my view it is crucial that we set the stories alongside each other and have them engage in a conversation, as only then can multivocality arise. Juxtaposition facilitates parallel visions and crossovers, and so it is important for stimulating curiosity and openness. I see this as an important way of keeping heritage alive or making it come alive again. Multivocality can provide greater support for conservation, maintenance, and development where necessary. I hope that doing so will contribute to an awareness that is strongly linked to emotions, that heritage is not static but dynamic, and constantly in motion.

Dos and don'ts

Do
- Be aware that museums are inextricably linked to nostalgia.
- Create scenarios on how to go from 'Old Power' inward-looking museum to 'New Power' confident, outward-facing museum.

Don't
- Decolonising collections means creating new narratives, but replacing one exclusive narrative with another is not the solution. Strive for multivocality, the parallel placing of narratives.

2.1 Display in the Hellenistic department of the Allard Pierson with objects found in Rome, Egypt and Gandhara: a Greek pharaoh (APM 8795) and the Anatolian goddess Kybele (APM 3986), acquired from collections in Amsterdam and Basel, and a Hellenistic Buddha on loan from the Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin (inv. I.215).

2

The biography of collections

Now that I have sketched out the challenges facing the postmodern museum, made the connection between three forms of historical awareness, and cast light on the paradox of nostalgia, I would like to look closer at collections in museums, in particular using concepts like musealisation and 'dynamic heritage' that I think merit some scrutiny.

Above all I would like to emphasise and explain the significance of the 'biography of collections'. A good example is the clay seal from the Egyptian temple archive that I introduced in Chapter 1. This collection of clay seals was acquired by a local dealer, who then sold one part of it to Von Bissing in around 1906 and another part to the founder of the Royal Ontario Museum, Charles T. Currelly. While these two parts are now separate, from an historical perspective they belong together and were indeed also investigated together at the initiative of the Allard Pierson a few years ago. Our interest were questions on the life cycle of objects, such as: where was an object found and who used it, but more importantly who took the step to musealisation, what was the collection practice of these museums, and with what ideas and intentions has the object been displayed, studied or restored in these museums? The type of answers we found have led to an impulse towards reconstructing the biography of this collection, a concept that I will set out below.

The second part of this chapter will shed light on three Allard Pierson research projects focusing on Egyptologists William Flinders Petrie (1853–1942) and Friedrich Wilhelm von Bissing (1873–1956). The examples could just as well have been of many other collectors during a different period, but the ones chosen aptly illustrate the relationships between European collections and museums on the one hand and a colonial territory such as Egypt on the other. The early years of the 20th century was the period when the archaeological collections that were finally to form the basis for the Allard Pierson were gathered by C.W. Scheurleer. The figures of Petrie and Von Bissing also symbolise the problematic collection tradition of many academic archaeological museums that demands a critical and pro-active attitude. As a result of the fact that collecting was then done based on the conviction that one was 'saving objects from the commercial private art circuit for the public and science', private collectors, curators, archaeologists, art historians, and dealers turned a blind eye to many ethical codes now regulating our behaviour with regard to mostly looted objects.[1]

Investigating provenance

The aim of investigating provenance in heritage institutions is often to indentify acquisitions in cases of theft, confiscation, or involuntary loss of possession under pressure from the (colonial) occupiers, and to publicise it. However, collection history research in a broader sense goes beyond questions of legitimacy and focuses on human stories, family histories and other information that is linked to objects and collections. We now find that such awareness, as a result of this historical research, deserves a place in the museum. Over the past 10 years, collection history research has received a great deal of attention, at first being caused by questions about art looted in the course of the Second World War and colonial contexts.[2] But beyond these two most important and loaded historical trajectories it is important to know the reasons and the circumstances that led certain collections to end up in a museum. This is a crucial step when interpreting and giving meaning to collections.

The value currently attached to thoroughly investigating heritage objects has led to a fundamentally different mindset at museums and other heritage institutions. Prior to the last decade, many museums easily accepted and dealt with all kinds of dealers and private collectors, along with the information they had at their disposal – all in good faith. But we cannot but notice how even at major art fairs, such as TEFAF, while there is certainly a check on forgeries, consistent and thorough checks on provenances are oftentimes still lacking. This means that for example in the antiquities sections of such venues, the majority of the objects on offer do not meet even the ethical and legal standards that were set a few decades ago.[3]

By contrast, each purchase by a museum is now preceded by a thorough investigation of provenance, with the biography of an object or collection recorded on the basis of its previous owners, the points when ownership changed, and any restauration work recorded up to the moment when an object was created or (in case of an archaeological find) discovered. More significantly, acquisition is these days only possible after a thorough investigation of the provenance, because the funds providing financial support for acquisitions simply demand investigations of this kind. Whenever a fund regards the provenance research as incomplete or insufficient, it may withdraw its contribution and the purchase does not go through.

While in many museums documenting provenance histories may have started, the analysis of biographical networks of collectors, researchers, donors, dealers, and museum staff remains unexplored territory.[4] Analyses of this kind are indispensable for understanding the motifs and working methods of the collectors, enabling a great many new and rather different perspectives. I believe that within the next 50 years, the knowledge about collectors will often be more important than the collections they have compiled. In my view, it is astonishing that so much provenance research is being conducted, while so few museums pay attention, in their permanent exhibitions or otherwise, to their collectors and donors. Presenting the people behind the collection not only does justice to their role but also foregrounds the particulars of the period of acquisition. This enhances understanding and stimulates multivocality.

'Dynamic heritage'

In an way, a museum may be seen as no more than an ensemble of collections that have been brought together, expanded, managed, preserved, interpreted, and presented. By no

means all the objects in the collections can be displayed; items are steadily being added, and collections are also disposed of, usually in line with carefully agreed procedures.[5] Once an object has been included in a museum collection, the status of that object changes: it becomes musealised. This means that it is removed from all its former contexts. With works of art the transition is often less drastic, because (contemporary) art already occupies an autonomous position and is often made precisely for aesthetic or visual pleasure. By contrast, cultural-historical objects derive their meaning and worth to a large extent from the historical context in which they functioned or the archaeological one where they were found. Such contexts are almost without exception neither unambiguous nor static, but dynamic and constantly in motion.

We have to see museum collections as 'dynamic heritage'.[6] Cultural heritage is on occasion literally about handing down or passing on objects, which does not happen of its own accord. As an example, I would like to point to Von Bissing's collection of clay seals from Edfu (including the seal showing Julius Caesar's likeness which I have already mentioned a number of times). They were purchased from a dealer in Egypt and taken via Munich to The Hague, where Constant Willem Scheurleer purchased them for his private collection. In 1934, his holdings moved to Amsterdam, to be taken into the care of the Allard Pierson Museum curators. Had all of this not taken place with care, the collection may well have lost much of its relevance at a certain point. After all, an object is not born as heritage; people turn it into heritage. It is often believed that this happens automatically, but that is not the case. Moreover, this often occurs cynically enough at the very moment that the object is on the point of vanishing, prompted by alarmism. Laurajane Smith goes a step further, asserting that all heritage is intangible because it concerns a process, or structure, of cultural and social values and meanings.[7]

In the 20th century, many museums were able to rejuvenate themselves into vigorous institutions, by seeking links to relevant communities. These could be regional or national communities (villages, towns, regions, provinces, country); religious, ideological, educational or commercial institutions (churches, universities, companies); or else private individuals more or less connected to any of the communities mentioned. The collecting practice of these communities is crucial to understanding how we should evaluate, interpret and comprehend these collections.

The memory of a collection

Just as a book has an author, and a television programme a producer, so each object has its biographical background. We have seen that nothing ends up in a museum of its own accord, and so knowing the intention of incorporating an object in a collection is just as important as ascertaining the motivations of the author of a book or the producer of a television programme. However, the biographical connotation is by no means always evident, known or researched, and almost never recorded. Nevertheless, an object, along with the collection to which it belongs, reflects more than merely a maker or artist, a regional culture, a branch of science, or an historical development. This is what I term 'the memory of a collection'.

How strong is the memory of a museum collection? What is or is not archived in the institutional memory? How often do we not hear that all this information, the memory of a collection, is bound up with the curators that work with it? But the curators too cannot or do not wish to record everything that they know about a collection, or else they simply

may lack relevant knowledge about or insight into (parts of) the collection. As thoroughly as the collection may often be described scientifically, so little do we know about the motivations of curators, educators and managers when they acquired or presented collections. What were the motives of a curator in elevating a particular object to a stand-out item, and why did another disappear into the depot for years? In the event that there is a history of provenance, moreover, not all the known information is always included in the collection record, sometimes as a result of misplaced loyalty to the predecessors, or else even for reasons of guilt (see the Capistello case below).

Given that acquisitions were often made by close colleagues or predecessors, issues of this sort may be sensitive within heritage institutions. As it certainly happens that the desired information on an acquisition in the (recent) past cannot be found in the collection record or other documentation, the point is to correct this and to record additional information as well. This can be done in retrospect through interviews with those in and outside the museum who were involved in compiling the collection. At the Allard Pierson, researchers and curators are currently at work who have access to the documentation of, for example, the illegal (art) trade of recent decades. Heritage institutions could embrace research of this kind by outside parties for subsequent integration into their own provenance research. In this way a more complete picture results of all the information that can be ascribed to an object or collection. It is also desirable to organise provenance research in a networked way, in other words with other institutions and individuals. After all, the acquisitions themselves have usually come about within a network of relationships.

From individual recollection to collective memory

Memory is in the first instance a neurophysiological capacity for storing events and experiences. But the term memory is also used in a broader context when it comes to shaping socio-cultural practices that go beyond individual memory. Maurice Halbwach was among the first to assert that our individual memory is based on a framework of a collective memory. As early as 1950 he described the socio-cultural structure of our memory, where the collective memory in fact stands for a cultural representation of a community. To this he added the relationship between collective memory and a collective identity. Pierre Nora sees our modern (Western) society as a community that, cut off from its past and traditions, consequently tries to artificially recreate its recollections in the form of museums and *lieux de mémoire*: sites of memory and places of remembrance. [8] Nora's research certainly provided an important impulse to the heritage discourse, but we need to dig even deeper into our memory reservoir to create the important link with our historical awareness and gain a better understanding of how museums function as the medium of memory.

Scholars distinguish between various types of memory, from individual to collective, which can be stored in different ways, for example in an archive or diary.[9] Other researchers speak of a communicative individual memory, a collective political memory, or a collective cultural memory, depending on the question to what extent this memory is accessible to a broader public.[10] Another significant distinction made is that between autobiographical, or rather 'authentic' memory on the one hand, and an artificial, or created, memory on the other.[11]

Closer inspection makes clear that all these classifications may be too limited, since they do insufficient justice to the entanglement of numerous, complex and interlinked individual and collective memories. In addition, these classifications take no account of

the new dynamic that digital data generates – barely any research has been done, for example, into the impact that social media have on both the individual and the collective memory, let alone on the relationship between them.

I therefore see objects and collections as dynamic heritage, whose meanings are always in motion. Historical items, as opposed to works of art, are vehicles of our collective memory. As disordered and corrupt as our personal recollections often are, an archaeologist, historian or curator attempts by contrast to go to work in an analytic and critical way. Let us take Caesar as an example once more. He is in our collective memory by virtue of the fact that he is both a classical author and a Roman ruler, and the more so as because countless biographies, exhibitions, films, documentaries, and novels about him have been created. Most of us will have stored him in our individual memory after reading the Asterix and Obelix comics. There are images, inscriptions, writings, and descriptions of him by contemporaries like Cicero. We keep the clay seal that he made with his own signet ring in the Allard Pierson; how much closer can we get to this historical person? Yet to what extent are the individual historical sources on Caesar or the more public and propaganda-driven depictions of him reliable, and to what extent are we seeing Caesar the film character? There is quite a gap between the one extreme where we succumb to uncritical nostalgia – Caesar was a brilliant strategist and enlightened despot, and brought classical civilisation to us – and the other extreme in which we unleash a problematising reflection on our dynamic heritage – Caesar was personally responsible for a case of genocide against the Germanic tribes in the Low Countries.[12]

But we have to be aware of yet another remarkable phenomenon occurring, i.e. that individuals expand their memory to events that they themselves never experienced. People and communities create meaningful narratives that are related to their own identities, both privately and in collective respect. We have here to consider for example the traumatic experiences of second and third generation Holocaust victims. Hirsch terms this postmemory experience: testimonies from relatives and events from their lives are adopted in retrospect and included in one's own biography and may subsequently become part of a collective memory.[13]

In Chapter 1, I outlined in brief certain significant challenges facing the museum of the 21st century. In 2009, Ad de Jong queried when the next turning point in the museum domain would come.[14] That turning point is in my view now in progress: museums find themselves in the midst of a transition from modernism to postmodernism. Critically reflecting on the now well-entrenched modernity is surely crucial, but also problematic when it comes to applying these interpretations into museum practice.

Go along with the times?

The differing value systems of modernism and postmodernism exist alongside each other to a significant extent, but they also regularly collide. How do we deal with this: do we want to go back to the past, do we cleave to what we have, or do we go along with the times? I hope that I have clarified that we constantly create our own pasts by whatever means, that we link those pasts to places and objects, and that this is inevitably and irrevocably bound up with collective memory. The clay seal whose stamp bears the likeness of Caesar exemplifies how parallel universes may lurk behind (the surface of) an apparently arbitrary object: different types of historical awareness and a wide range of appreciations. Such awareness is significant because it may well be used as an ordering principle for museums.

This reflection concerns the collections, and I have aimed to clarify that the objects are the vehicle for our collective memory. Their meaning is always in motion as we see it as dynamic heritage. Speaking about 'going along with the times' may sound simple, but it means that we open ourselves to change, that we are curious about others, sensitive to the biography and diversity locked up in the people and objects around us. And that we then carry all this information into how we deal with heritage. We arrive in our society inevitably at the multivocality and layered nature of our own identity.

Our amnesia is unstoppable and insidious. What we do in fact pick up, gather, and preserve may well be arbitrary. When the temple archive in Edfu burnt down hundreds of documents were lost. The clay seals that remained after the fire, and so coincidentally were preserved, to me represent a kind of balance that we should seek to strike in heritage management. What is important is that we have to allow ourselves a reservoir of heritage as potential source of inspiration. Here the three positions of past, present and future, which I dealt with in Chapter 1 form the guideline. If we apply these stations to the clay seal of Julius Caesar, we may observe the following: the clay seal was a hallmark in Ancient Egypt, and the image on it a value: that of the ruler Julius Caesar. The seal then became an archaeological find and an historical source, which offers different perspectives on Julius Caesar as a person. Following its purchase by Von Bissing, it took more than a century before the relevance and the meaning of this clay seal were perceived. Only now we find it urgent to define the connections of this object to our present place and time. In 2016, the seal was exhibited for the first time, during the MuseumCamp at the Allard Pierson. Since then, a 3D model has been online from which a 3D print can be made.[15] In this manner, the seal will provide inspiration for generations to come, enabling new layers of meaning to grow. But here we confront another paradox: digital storage of our recollections is vulnerable and fleeting. We live at a time in which we are increasingly part of a digital network of information and stimuli that guide and influence our actions. Developments are taking place at a rapid pace, but (safe) digital storage practice and policy are still in their infancy at many museums and memory institutions. In addition, in this area we are constantly being overtaken by social debate on privacy and accessibility. Digital storage is and remains vulnerable, with the result that digital memory may acquire a fleeting character and information may be lost. The more we store digitally, the more we risk to forget.

And what do I store in my own memory? In 2016, I stood in the temple of Edfu and even in the room where the temple archive was kept. I recall that I found just a small empty room that no one was interested in. I stood there noticing that all kinds of things were going through my mind that I now no longer have a clear image of. What I do know is that this small clay seal constantly returns me from the present to the person of Freiherr Von Bissing, to Constant Willem Scheurleer, and even to Caesar and Cleopatra. Each time I see it, it is as if I were again standing in the small empty room in that temple in Egypt.

In conclusion, I am returning to the clay seal with Caesar's likeness. We believe that we see Caesar depicted here, while in fact we do not know what he looked like. The coins with his likeness are not unambiguous, and none of the related attributions of sculpted portraits are confirmed. Nevertheless, there is an image of Caesar in our collective memory. And this museum object, this clay seal impression then also participates in the shaping of Caesar's image. And that is what I mean by the museum as medium of the memory: the biography of an object is determined not only by the finder, the archaeolo-
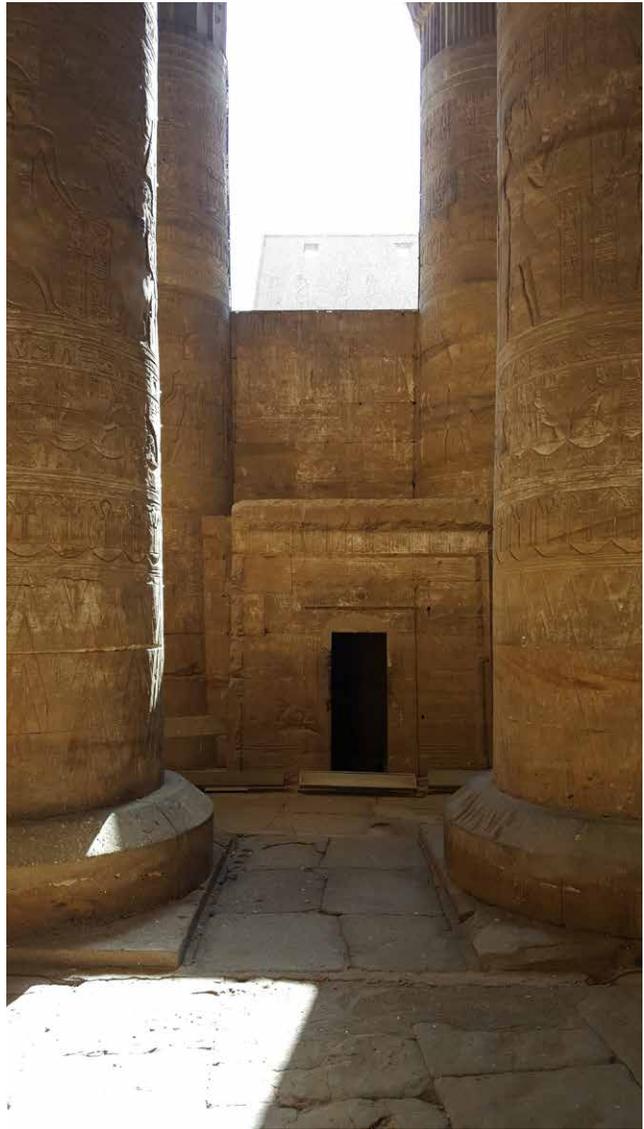
2.2 The entrance to the archive room in the temple of Edfu, Egypt, where the papyrus archive that was destroyed by fire must have been located.

gist, the academic, or thecurator, but also by the collective memory, which influences us and in its turn also, via all kinds of channels, our interpretation of it.

Case studies

The high significance of collectors for the creation of museum collections is receiving increasing attention as a result of the research into provenance that has been high on the agenda for the past decade. Relevant research projects are constantly highlighted in temporary exhibitions, but remarkably enough seldom in the permanent presentations or galleries. And that is astonishing, especially considering how much provenance research is being conducted. Presenting the people behind the collection does justice to their role and also illuminates their influence on the collection, and last but not least draws attention

to the period of acquisition. All of this increases understanding of different and changing perspectives, thereby enhancing multivocality.

These theoretical reflections are provided with context below, using various cases from museum practice. The cases reveal how theory can be translated into practice, along with the results and insights it can deliver. The central themes are the shifting cultural historical perspective and the link between collectors, collections, and their social and historical context. Further research can and must be done here, and the results should be given a more prominent place in our museum presentations. Heritage should not be set apart from its origins and the people responsible for it .

The Capistello case

During preparation work for the 2015 exhibition *Sicilië en de Zee* (*Sicily and the Sea*), provenance research was conducted into archaeological objects that the Allard Pierson Museum had purchased from an amateur diver from Ghent in 1982. At issue were 36 (fragments of) bowls of Campanian pottery (South-Italian, 4th–2nd century BC) and an anchor fragment.[16] According to information from the seller, these objects were 'found in the vicinity of the Lipari Islands', an archipelago to the north of Sicily. They were investigated a few years later and described in a 1987 thesis as pottery from the wreck of the *Secca di Capistello*, a ship that was lost in the third century BC.[17] Although the museum staff knew the precise location of the find, and it was clear that these were objects that had turned up illegally, this information was not included in the collection record. In addition, from the same diver a Greek amphora had been acquired in 1980. Could this have come from the same shipwreck? While this is a legitimate question, there was nothing stated about it in the collection record. These objects were part of a 1995 exhibition on shipping in antiquity, but the problematic provenance was again not addressed in any way at the time.[18] We can only speculate about the reasons for this, but in any event, this is an example of concealment in how information surrounding provenance is sometimes handled.

Given that the objects and the anchor belong to the *Capistello* wreck and so are part of Sicily's cultural heritage, the University of Amsterdam, to which the Allard Pierson belongs, decided in 2015 to return them to the Sicilian authorities. The transfer was announced at the exhibition's opening, and the finds have now been restituted. This course of events shows that restitution does not always have to be associated with legal wrangling.

The Collectors' Cabinet

We at the Allard Pierson have become increasingly aware, through our provenance research, of the biographical backgrounds to our collection and the ideologies linked to them. Since 2015, the Allard Pierson has had a separate room for showing visitors the collectors and the collection history: the Collectors' Cabinet.[19] Here the collectors from the past and their collections are highlighted, with a choice of objects – from those that have never previously emerged from the storeroom to outstanding exhibits that have been cherished for years. Some of the objects and collections have completed a long journey before entering the Allard Pierson collection, for example through excavation or the art trade. But what was the route taken? The journey from find location to the Allard Pierson can be traced on the interactive touch-table in the Collectors' Cabinet and online.[20]

The Allard Pierson Collectors' Cabinet is a special space. This chic period room with its monumental interior was refurbished in 1922 to a design from the 'Amsterdam School'

2.3 In the exhibition *Sicily and the Sea* at the Allard Pierson (2015), visitors were informed that the Capistello finds had a problematic provenance and would be returned at the end of the project.

2.4 A visitor in the Collectors' Cabinet in the Allard Pierson.

architect Philip Warners. Up to 1960, it was the registry of De Nederlandsche Bank (Dutch central bank), which had its head office here. It served as the director's office after the building had been turned into a museum in 1976. Soon after my appointment as director in 2009, I decided it should be given a public role, if only because I felt too isolated from the rest of the organisation in this out-of-the-way room. The original bookcases with glass doors are now showcases for the display of objects from each collector. Since they form the basis for our collection, the collectors are also, literally, given a face.

The Petrie Perspective

The British archaeologist and Egyptologist Sir William Matthew Flinders Petrie (1853–1942) was involved in a large number of digs in Egypt between 1880 and 1920. His finds were distributed, in collaboration with the Egypt Exploration Fund (EEF), according to a global subscription system. More than 500 museums and collectors acted as takers, all and everything properly documented.[21] As a result of this, the Allard Pierson possesses *c.* 300 objects that are part of this international network, along with the relevant correspondence.

The international research project *The Petrie Perspective* (2014–2016) concerned itself with the global traffic in antiquities at the beginning of the 20th century, in particular with regard to the Petrie objects kept at the (then) Allard Pierson Museum.[22] How the finds were distributed around the world, how this process was arranged and how the local, national, international and colonial identities were influenced by this traffic in (Egyptian) antiquities were all subject to scrutiny. One significant result is that a number of new links and networks have come to light. The project followed on from the discussion on the provenance and acqui-

2.5 The Egyptologist William Flinders Petrie (1853–1942) at an excavation in Egypt.

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sition of cultural heritage in Dutch museums,[23] and revealed that the notion that museology and archaeology are two separate disciplines was obsolete and in strong need of nuancing.[24]

The Allard Pierson Museum collaborated with the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology (University College London), and aimed at embedding the project results in the British research project *Artefacts of excavation – the international distribution of Egyptian finds from British excavations*. The results of the research from 'the Petrie perspective' have been included in the database and website of this international project[25] and were shown to the public in an exhibition at the Allard Pierson in 2016.

The 'Bissing' Link

The collection of Friedrich Wilhelm Freiherr von Bissing (1873–1956) is regarded as one of the largest private collections of Egyptian artefacts in the world. Von Bissing's collection was scattered from the start of his career as an Egyptologist (see fig. 1.2). Von Bissing as a person and his work as Egyptologist, collector, and trader was the 'missing link' in a broader, international research project *The Bissing Link* into reconstructing his wide-ranging collection, with his biography looked at from four different perspectives.[26]

For the *postcolonial* perspective, we investigated the colonial system that resulted in the international creation of collections during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This system led among other things to certain Egyptian antiquities currently being contested, with Egypt demanding restitution.

Our investigation has cast light from a *biographical perspective* on the course of Von Bissing's life, which enhanced our understanding of how his collection was compiled. He was a prominent Egyptologist, who was appointed professor in the Art History of Ancient Egypt at the University of Munich in 1901. He had to seek refuge in the Netherlands when he could no longer stay in Munich on account of his reactionary political ideas, money problems, the role played by his father in German-occupied Belgium in World War I, and his increasingly open homosexual activities. Our investigation turned up important answers on his time in the Netherlands.[27] Von Bissing was appointed professor to the University of Utrecht from 1922, but he was sent into retirement (effectively dismissed) in 1926 after he was caught performing homosexual acts. Embittered, he retired to his estate outside Munich, where he remained until his death 30 years later.

The *political perspective* cast its gaze on the reactionary and nationalist Von Bissing, who in 1924 was one of the first to join Hitler's NSDAP and later sought contact in the Netherlands with the exiled German emperor Wilhelm II. His problematic political life lies behind a long-running conflict between the Staatliches Museum Ägyptischer Kunst in Munich, which holds the largest part of his collection, and the Von Bissing family. As a result, this important collector has been allocated only a very modest place in the Munich museum. The person of Von Bissing still evokes quite some resistance in Germany. Neither the family nor the Munich museum is yet prepared to give an open account of events, with the result that some important aspects of his personal life has to date remained largely in the shadows.[28] Our investigation has wrought a change here.[29]

Finally, the *collecting and scientific perspective* provided insight into the Egyptology circles of the 1920s and 1930s. The financial troubles resulting from the hyperinflation in the Weimar Republic and the crisis of the 1920s compelled Von Bissing to dispose of large parts of his collection. Over the following decades he had to sell further items from his collection, which made parts of his collection and archives to end up in museums across
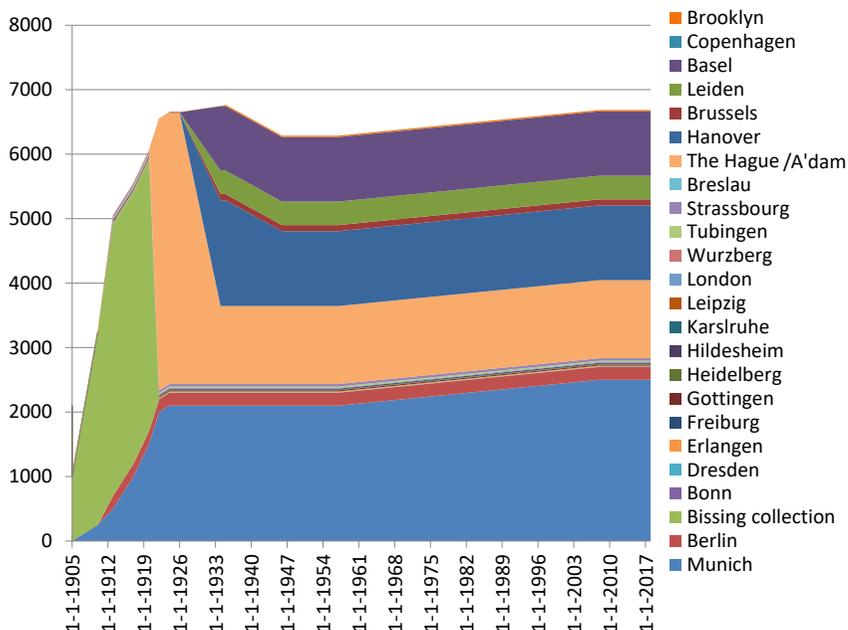
2.6 The distribution of the Von Bissing collection. The project *The Bissing Link* aims to reassemble the collection in a virtual presentation by means of the Cross Culture Timeline.

the world.[30] Von Bissing's personal friend C.W. Lunsingh Scheurleer also collected a large number of objects, which ultimately helped to form the basis in 1934 for the Allard Pierson Museum's Egyptian section. The table provides an impression of the scope and final distribution of the Von Bissing collection in public collections, to the extent currently known.

With this investigation, the Allard Pierson, along with its international partners, has made a major contribution to reconstructing Von Bissing's life and the academic and collecting networks that largely determined the origins of his collection. As a result of the fact that this investigation was initiated by the Allard Pierson, a non-German museum, doors were opened that have to date been closed to German researchers. The international research project will in 2022 see an online presentation, in which Von Bissing's large Egyptian collection will again be brought together, now virtually.[31]

The Edfu Connection

Along with the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, Canada, the Allard Pierson Museum possesses the largest collection in the world of seal impressions from Hellenistic Egypt. The seal impressions (dating from *c.* 185–25 BC) were found in Apollinopolis Magna, today Edfu in Egypt, and were used in antiquity to seal documents written on papyrus. Likenesses of members of the Ptolemaic royal house are often to be seen on the seal impressions, as well as those of non-royals, together with representations from Greek and Egyptian worship.

The *The Edfu Connection* project led to the *c.* 800 seal impressions in Amsterdam and Toronto being made accessible, which now forms an important basis for the iconography of the Ptolemaic royal house.[32] Likenesses on the seal impressions can be ascribed to the kings of the relevant period – from Ptolemy VI up to Ptolemy XII – and many of the

queens – namely Cleopatra I, II, III and Berenice III, as well as the famous last ruler of Ancient Egypt, Cleopatra VII. As mentioned before, we believe we can even identify Julius Caesar's likeness in the series.[33] The concluding publication of this collection facilitates wider (provenance) research into comparable objects, such as seal impressions from other finds, as well as signet rings, cut stones and coins in other museum collections.[34]

Biographical notes

What were the results of these three research projects into the biography of Allard Pierson collections? *The Petrie Perspective* supplied important insight into the impact of Petrie's Egypt Exploitation Foundation (EEF). The Egyptomania of 1880–1920 cannot be viewed separately from Petrie's efforts, and the influence of the EEF, with its more than 500 subscribers from all continents, cannot be emphasised sufficiently. One of the figures in Petrie's network was Von Bissing, an extremely complex personality, both politically and scientifically active in the period 1900–1956, who emigrated to the Netherlands from Germany. The investigation into the diaspora of his extensive collection of Egyptian antiquities has mapped out his political position and his network. Much has been clarified regarding the relationship between Von Bissing and his friend C.W. Lunsingh Scheurleer, the director of the Scheurleer Museum at the time, who laid the foundations for our Egyptological collection. The collection of clay seal impressions from Edfu that the Allard Pierson shares with a museum in Ontario form an interesting part of Von Bissing's collection. By studying this divided collection as a unit, a much richer picture has been created of the Allard Pierson's provenance history. And that is what this sort of research is about.

The focus of the three research projects that I have listed above, is on the Allard Pierson archaeological collections, because my priority here up to 2017 was as director of the Allard Pierson Museum. We subsequently carried out research projects into the archives of for example my predecessors Emilie Haspels[35] and Jaap Hemelrijk. After the Allard Pierson Museum merged with the University of Amsterdam's Special Collections in 2019, I was able, as managing director, to start focusing on this other part of the collections. The Allard Pierson collection policy has been broadened by these research projects and is by no means focused any longer on objects but also on archives, a tradition that goes back much further at the Special Collections.

Looking at the near future, with many estates of the baby boomer generation to be wound up, it is important that museums are open to the acquisition of archives that are crucial to contextualising their own collections. The Allard Pierson has been devoting attention to this challenge over recent years. In 2017, the museum acquired the archive of Maurits Nanning van Loon (1923−2006), professor of Prehistory and Archaeology of Western Asia at the University of Amsterdam from 1973 to 1988. On behalf of UNESCO, he recorded locations of archaeological interest in Syria that were to disappear following the construction of a new dam on the Euphrates. An inventory of his archive has been made by Allard Pierson staff.[36] The museum also acquired half of his finds from the settlement of Selenkahiye, which is now under water. These finds will have a place in 2022 in the Archaeology Station Rokin project: visitors and special target groups will be able to investigate and make an inventory of these finds along with our volunteers in our ArcheoHotspot.[37] Another archive worth mentioning here was stored in the home of the renowned expert on the ancient god Mithras, Maarten J. Vermaseren (1918−1985), which had to be cleared out in 2015 after his wife and stepdaughter had died.[38]

2.7 During the 17th century, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) developed an innovative system for collecting and compiling cartographic information. The Amsterdam printer, publisher and cartographer Joan Blaeu was appointed examiner for the VOC's steersmen in 1658. The 17th-century cabinet made especially for preserving a copy of Blaeu's 12-volume *Atlas Maior* is one of the key objects in the 'Amsterdam, creative city' department at the Allard Pierson.

Colonial context

A wide-ranging discussion is going on among museums and government authorities across Europe on the legality and legitimacy of museum collections that have come about as a result of colonial acquisition. It is crucially important to ascertain the provenance history of these objects. At the 2021 MuseumCamp, we went in search of ways to talk about contested heritage, because this demands a fresh look and can also lead to uncom-

fortable discussions. The complexity of researching colonial collections is closely linked to inherited colonial assumptions on where these collections arose and were brought together.[39] The Egyptological collections outside Egypt date back mainly to the 19th and early 20th centuries when excavations were prompted by modernist, imperialist, or colonial agendas. The source material and documentation available is often very one-sided, and the meanings and provenances of the objects and collections often make the discussion difficult.

There are only a limited number of Egyptian claims on antiquities held outside Egypt. Of course a short list of iconic objects are the subject of already older claims, such as the Nefertiti bust (Egyptian Museum, Berlin) and the Rosetta Stone (British Museum, London), as well as objects clearly stolen after 1970 (when the UNESCO treaty forbidding unprovenanced antiquities trade came into force). But the hundreds of thousands of colonial objects owned by, in particular, European and American museums, do not appear to be the subject of discussion: the large quantity of Egyptian antiquities in Egypt render claims redundant from a quantitative point of view alone. Compared with many other African countries, the Egyptian collections are more removed from contemporary society in time, and so with respect to religion as well. In addition, I have personally noticed from Egyptian government representatives that Egyptian objects in European collections are regarded as strong advertisements for Egyptian tourism. In this respect as well, Egyptian heritage differs from other colonial African heritage. The future will tell whether that remains the case.

Dos and don'ts

Do
- You can't simply do provenance research on your own. Take into account that it will use up a lot of time and expertise that you probably do not have available yourself or in your organisation.
- Focus on a series of projects around clusters of collectors that can be carried out jointly.
- Realise that fresh research will always generate new angles of approach.
- When researching provenance, call in outsiders who will be able to take a fresh look at the collection record.
- People who have given their names to collections and museums are increasingly being examined through postcolonial glasses. Anticipate this by doing the critical research yourself.
- In your policy planning, put the emphasis on provenance research, for example by including it in staff job descriptions.
- Encourage staff to spend time in storage depots and (your own) archives. This may lead to unusual discoveries.

Don't
- Have provenance research done solely by your own people.
- Regard provenance research as a temporary task.
- Try to conceal or disguise issues concerning problematic results of research into provenance. In the end, transparency is the best strategy.

3.1 Participants in the MuseumCamp
register at the Allard Pierson, June 2016.

3

Collaborating, cooperating, and acting together

Museums, collections, collectors and museum staff have for centuries formed networks for collaboration, exchanging knowledge and expertise, and lending artefacts to each other. Collaborating within networks of this kind should primarily be seen as striving for a joint goal or advantage. The Allard Pierson's European collaboration projects, which I will discuss below, can serve as an example. As a result of the cultural differences between various international project partners, and of the complexity of the projects, my experience has been that with partners it was sometimes rather about gaining an individual advantage – in this case the project funding provided by the EU – than about cooperation.

Collaboration is regarded by many as a neutral act for bringing something to fruition jointly. But collaboration can also have a negative connotation. We need merely refer to collaboration in occupied countries during the Second World War. We should not underestimate the complexity contained in the seemingly innocent concept of collaboration. And definitely not when we use it in a museum context or when it comes down to contested heritage.[1]

Cooperation is more hands-on: the partners aim to achieve a joint goal, with involvement and a practical approach being important ingredients. Projects that aim to create joint exhibitions or publications are examples of this. Working together on a project that has a tangible end result means that the collaboration is less voluntary and the goal more concrete. When I look back on all the Allard Pierson's (international) collaboration projects over the past twelve years, I would make a case for cooperating more and for concrete collaboration. I hope to make this clear by means of examples of museum collaboration as well as examples of museum cooperation.

In 2014, the Dutch Museums Association issued a report on collaboration which makes a distinction between various forms of collaboration, from minor to extremely intensive: ad hoc collaboration, network collaboration, programmatic collaboration, organisational collaboration, and merger.[2]

Managing change
Heritage institutions are facing major socially driven change in the areas of digitisation, inclusivity, and participation. Change can only be achieved together. This means that

problems have to be identified and recognised, challenges must be confronted, and the expectations of coming generations taken into account. This is no easy task in a growing and competitive field, in which multivocality and diversity lead to wide discussions and where funding is ever-problematic. The extent to which challenges are met and changes are implemented varies for each institution. The spectrum ranges from an 'Old Power', inward looking museum right up to the 'New Power' confident, outward facing museum as described by Graham Black (see fig. 1.4).[3] Collaboration and networking are indispensable for attaining sustainable change. That is the first, internal level. This is the only way of taking on these challenges, and will have to happen on different levels and often simultaneously. Networking is about linking up, meeting and dialogue, and it is important to develop these aspects at all points within one's own organisation and departments. There is little one can achieve on one's own, even for a director.

Organisational theory is a distinctive field, and here I am reflecting primarily on the basis of my own experience. Every organisation has different kinds of employees, with their varying qualities and limitations. Without wanting to frame too much, I would nevertheless like to identify a few categories of staff characteristics. A distinction is made in change management between roles and positions. We recognise here the stickler for protocol, the creative spirit, the compromise-seeker, the follower, and those with potential.[4] We can of course find a combination of roles in a single staff member. All these separate roles are required in any organisation, but preferably in balance, whenever possible. This somewhat exaggerated classification was helpful to me personally, but I will immediately admit it is not definitive.[5]

Change processes are experienced quite differently by different colleagues, certainly when a great deal changes in a brief time. It is as well to realise that certain members of staff are unable or unwilling to change. Whether there is space for dissenting voices and how these are coped with is entirely dependent on the corporate culture. External collaboration in museums and libraries demands constant attention, because there is a strong tradition of collective thinking, with the outside world seen as a threat. The Dutch term for curator – *conservator* – literally means 'keeper', which in turn calls up an association with prison. The collection is sometimes literally kept under lock and key and is protected by the curator against external influence.

Dutch employment practice may be based on hierarchical organisations, but these leave a lot of leeway for criticism. Nevertheless, my experience is that there can be a lot of hidden resistance, with criticism that is not expressed. There may be different reasons for this. Sometimes, the (new) policy that a staff member does not agree with has led to frustration, but one remains loyal to the collection and withdraws into one's own field or department. If such a colleague regularly witnesses new policy plans, apathy is the result, and the resistance emerges only in indirect form: one says yes and does no, does not cooperate, even delays or obstructs. The longer this situation persists, the more complicated it becomes to get these staff members, who may have important expertise and work in relevant positions, to accept the change processes. The most important lesson that I have learned is: Do not try to get the staff to go along with you whatever the cost, but rather enrich the organisation with new employees who are not subject to the frustrations mentioned above. By developing new projects from a content-based vision with additional financing, it was possible at the Allard Pierson to add a further ten employees, both full and part time, to a team of approximately 25 over the course of a decade. This made a con-

siderable difference and also injected much dynamism and creativity into the institution. These 'auxiliary troops' – as I irreverently refer to them – ultimately made the difference and ensured that we were able to implement the desired changes.

Case studies

Collaboration is in fact about organising a network, whether at internal, local, national, or international levels. The theoretical reflections above are now provided with examples from my time at the Allard Pierson. First of all, I shall dwell on our initiative for arriving at greater *internal* collaboration by creating, at the Allard Pierson, both the physical and mental space for experiment: the *Heritage Lab*. Our aim was to set up interaction between our own staff and a range of outsiders who were invited to present our collections in a new light or from a new perspective.

Greater collaboration at *local level* led to the Digital Museum Network Amsterdam. Its links with the Digital Museum Lab and, through our European projects, it provided a great deal of outreach and meaningful interaction with relevant communities outside the Allard Pierson.

International collaboration demands a great deal of time and successful initiatives runs mostly along personal lines mixed with professional networks. The central theme in our international projects was 'sharing is caring': objects, knowledge and expertise, staff, exhibitions, and (digital) content were exchanged with the aim of highlighting recent research in the field of cultural heritage for a wider audience. Both the international *COBBRA* museum network and the *CEMEC* project resulted in travelling exhibitions in various European museums. The key conditions and lessons from these collaborative projects will be discussed below.

And of course, it is not only successes. There are also those plans that fall apart at an early stage, because they, on closer inspection, do not fit into current or previously planned projects. In addition, there are projects whose results have been adapted over the course of time, such as the *Keys to Rome* exhibition, the pilot project for the renewal of all

International:
COBBRA

National:
ArcheoHotspots

Local:
Meetups

Internal:
HeritageLab
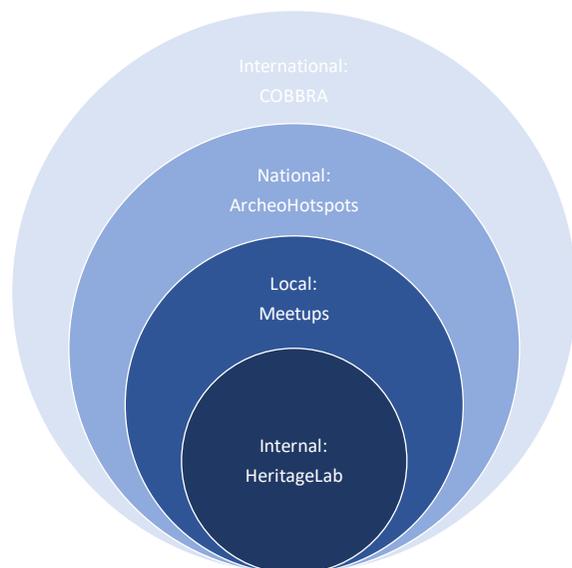
3.2 The four levels of networking at the Allard Pierson.

the Allard Pierson Museum galleries. Following an evaluation after the project, we made major changes to the digital content and design to arrive at an improved presentation. And finally, there are projects into which a great deal of time and money is invested but unfortunately do not go through in the end. An example I can point to is the ambitious *Mythe en werkelijkheid* (*Myth and Reality*) project on excavations by the University of Amsterdam in the Etruscan settlements of Satricum and Crustumerium, which had to be taken off the schedule as a result of the unanticipated but essential removal of asbestos from the Allard Pierson exhibition rooms. Protracted collaborative projects with international partnerships are after all a matter of trial and error. A great deal, but not everything, one undertakes turns into a success. And then any follow-up projects can only benefit.

The Heritage Lab as link between collection and the outside world

In 2009, the Allard Pierson Museum took the initiative to set up the *UvA Heritage Lab*, a topical and inspiring platform in the quest for innovative heritage presentations. The Heritage Lab focused in the first instance on the collections of the Allard Pierson Museum and the Special Collections of the University Library. Four or five short-term experimental presentations were set up annually in a space especially reserved for the purpose, in collaboration with a mix of students, researchers, and heritage professionals.

In the Heritage Lab, we aimed to study processes like the 'updating', 'contextualising', 'problematising', and 'moralising' of cultural heritage. Our (collective) memory is characterised by loss and is corrupt, which means that there are and will be constant shifts in it. On the basis of that awareness, scientific research, reflection and especially deepening of knowledge are essential. The Heritage Lab aimed not only to stimulate this research and reflection, but also to make it visible and to provide space by initiating conversations with both colleagues and outsiders. The ensuing dialogues were not always easy, while we experienced many a lack of understanding and the need to take time to learn to understand one another; but within a university community, the potential is almost infinite.

Our endeavours resulted in a physical and mental space where heritage could be approached and presented in a refreshing way, where the University of Amsterdam's teaching, research and collections are put on display, and where renewal is sought in the form of pilot projects and adventurous programming. Over the course of five years, the *Heritage Lab* was simultaneously a studio, a workplace and an exhibition space. With its accompanying programme of lectures, symposia and associated publications, it was a significant source of inspiration for the conceptual development of new exhibitions and the refurbishment (#6) that was continued in the *Digital Museum Lab* (#10, #12, #13, #17) and the *ArcheoHotspots* (#11). [6]

Heritage Lab #1: Max Havelaar Academy – *Makelaars in erfgoed* (Brokers in heritage)

The Max Havelaar Academy gave shape to the subtle difference between a book exhibition and an exhibition about a book: the *Max Havelaar*, an indictment of colonial rule in the Dutch East Indies, published in 1860 and since recognized as a milestone in both Dutch literature and global anti-colonialism, has been absorbed into the Canon of Dutch History.

The manuscript of the *Max Havelaar* is kept in the Special Collections of the University Library of the University of Amsterdam (now the Allard Pierson) and may accurately be described as literary heritage. This does not mean that it has become a static museum artefact. The history of the work's editions on its own reveals how layered and complex the genesis of this book is. The potential number of angles of approach are legion, as well as the ways in which the characters are able to still intrigue us today. The *Max Havelaar* continues to be a rich and often contradictory source of inspiration. It has been interpreted in analyses, theatre, film, a Fairtrade hallmark, and constantly by new readers.

In this first edition of the Heritage Lab, five students were given the task of investigating current meanings of the *Max Havelaar* from the viewpoint of various disciplines (sociology, political science, religious studies, cabaret, museology). The student group – invariably called Maxists by me – evolved into a strike force that interviewed a broad swath of researchers (speakers in the accompanying series of lectures), using them as reference for the group's updating of the *Max Havelaar*. In the meantime, they made use of the Heritage Lab as workplace, showcase and discussion platform.

Heritage Lab #2 Fragments & Frictions

Context is the glue that keeps any group of individual objects in a museum collection together. For this reason, binding factors, such as period and location, are frequently used in an archaeological museum. Archaeological objects were shown in the trial setup in the Heritage Lab that represented an instance of religious, moral, ethical, cultural and commercial frictions, or a combination of these. In collaboration with Mirjam Hoijtink (cultural history of Europe/Museum studies at the University of Amsterdam) and the 'Museum Archaeologists' group.

Heritage Lab #3 Capturing Metamorphosis

Starting with the concept of metamorphosis – sudden and cataclysmic change – the aim of this exhibition project was setting up a dialogue between the representative arts of

3.3 Multatuli (Eduard Douwes Dekker), author of *Max Havelaar*. Lithography by August Allebé, 1874.
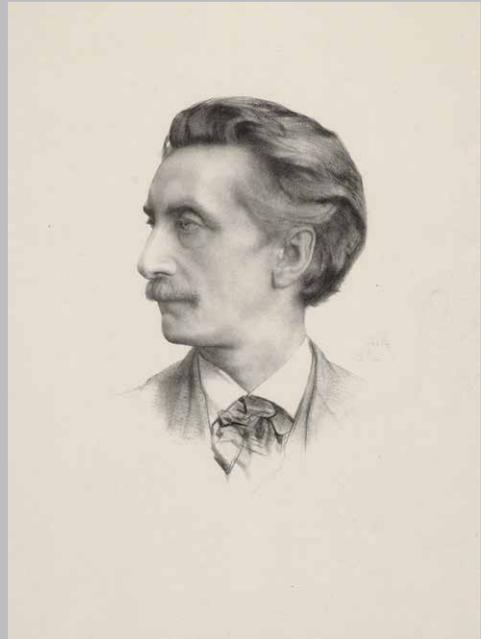
antiquity and modern day art, using installations by five artists: James Beckett, Rob Johannesma, Lawrence Malstaf, Barbara Philipp, and Rebecca Sakoun. In collaboration with Alena Alexandrova and Vladimir Stissi, professor of Classical Archaeology and Art History of Antiquity, University of Amsterdam.

Heritage Lab #4 Good intentions and modern living / photographic notes on the Bijlmer

The Heritage Lab presented a photographic exhibition by Hans Eijkelboom, who depicted the cultural and ethnic diversity of the suburban Bijlmer area populace, commissioned by the Amsterdam Medical Centre (AMC).* The new development of the AMC building complex in the Bijlmer formed the impetus for the commission.

Heritage Lab #5 Improve the World, start here!

Heritage Lab at the exhibition *Wereldverbeteraars! 75 jaar IISG* (Do-Gooders! 75 years of the International Institute of Social History). Students from the Heritage and Museum Studies Master's programme displayed objects, made interventions, and posed critical questions on for example the selection of heritage, historiography, the concept of 'do-gooding', and current meanings of 'heritage'. Visitors were invited to take an active part in the dialogue. In collaboration with Rob van der Laarse and Alexander Westra.

Heritage Lab #6 LEDs Talk Light

Guest curator Sjoukje Kerman created a trial setup in the Heritage Lab on museum lighting, contrasting standard halogen lighting and LED lighting. The setup made room for discussion, investigation, and play. The difference was noticeable in the presentation of books and with sculpture and paintings. This graduation project turned out to be a useful testing ground for the Allard Pierson Museum, with a view to the refurbishment of the museum galleries that was anticipated at the time.

Heritage Lab #7 CV Café: largest collection of 'portraits in writing' in the Netherlands

In collaboration with the Biographical Portal – the largest digital collection of written portraits in the Netherlands – the Heritage Lab organised a CV Café, in connection with the theme of the national Book Week: *Curriculum Vitae*, and in collaboration with Els Kloek. The doors of the Biographical Portal opened literally with this pop-up CV café. With the slogan 'authors to remember: help them write their CVs', anyone could participate in collecting biographical details on Dutch authors and poets. Contributions could also be made via Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and www.biografischportaal.nl. A forum discussion concluded the event: 'Crowdsourcing: from Wiki to Knowledge?'

* Den Hartog Jager, Eijkelboom, Kamstra (2010).

Heritage Lab #8 *De Zwoele Pen*, the scandalous novel in the 17th century

In the temporary bookshop *De Zwoele Pen* (The Sensuous Pen), the visitor was invited to get to know Amsterdam street life in the 17th century: fighting students, heroic adventurers, and outspoken whores invited them to discover their world. Students used the occasion to present their research into bestsellers from the 17th century. As they were none too choosy when it came to morals, these novels were seen as scandalous. But were they in fact? In collaboration with Lia van Gemert and the Amsterdam Centre for the Study of the Golden Age.

Heritage Lab #9 The *Batavians* series, restored

Freshening up a Flinck, Lievens, Jordaens, Bol, and even a Rembrandt: what art restoration student would not like to join? The Conservation and Restoration Master's programme of the UvA made this possible, in connecting the UvA Heritage Lab to the restoration of the *Batavians* series of paintings in the Royal Palace on Dam Square, in collaboration with the Royal Palace in Amsterdam and the Stichting Restauratie Atelier Limburg (Limburg Restoration Studio Foundation – sRal). This project plus exhibition focused on the moral and ethical, as well as on the technical questions that surrounded the restoration of these grand historic paintings. The project illustrated the developments that have influenced the field of conservation and restoration down the centuries.

Heritage Lab #10 Cultural Virtual. Virtual applications in presenting heritage

Bring your own device: a smartphone was essential to visiting the Heritage Lab in 2015, when it showed the latest developments in virtual and augmented reality. Four professional parties revealed surprising opportunities for virtual applications in presenting heritage. One of the themes was 'from medical to heritage', which linked up to the exhibition *De ontdekking van de mens. Anatomie verbeeld* (Discovery of the human. Anatomy depicted). MuseumSolutions provided the technological bridging between the medical and heritage sectors. ab-c media developed a mobile application that linked pictures of animals from the Artis Library to locations in Artis, designer Feddow Claassen showed one of the anti-screen techniques developed by himself, and Joachim Rotteveel provided a literal glimpse into his creative brain with the project 'Introspection'. As developments in this area are proceeding so fast, two work-in-progress projects were also carried out.

Heritage Lab #11 The river as mirror of the city: the archaeology of the North/South Line

During work on the North/South Line, the new metro line under Amsterdam, 700,000 objects were found that had fallen or been thrown into the river Amstel over the years. These archaeological finds provide a unique glimpse into daily life in Amsterdam down the centuries. The Heritage Lab functioned as a thinking space during the documentary exhibition on the construction of the new metro line, in collaboration with the Monuments & Archeology Office of the Amsterdam municipality and Jerzy Gawronski. In three meetings, experts deliberated on how to present the archaeological finds in the metro station on Rokin that has since been built.

3.4 Aesthedes was a Dutch computer graphics or computer-aided design system designed and developed in the 1970s and 1980s and launched in 1985. From 1984, however, the Apple Macintosh revolutionised the graphic design world and rendered the Aesthedes effectively obsolete.

Heritage Lab #12 Dutch Digital Design: the Aesthedes

The Aesthedes, a legendary Dutch design computer from the 1980s, was at the centre of an oral history project at the Heritage Lab. It was clear that a large number of former Aesthedes users and developers still cherished warm memories of the computer and wanted to share their recollections. The Aesthedes is part of the University of Amsterdam's computer collection. This Heritage Lab, in collaboration with Edo Douwes (†), was a good reason to display this underexposed heritage field.

Heritage Lab #13 Media Art Conservation and Restoration Workshop

Collaboration between the UvA Master's programme in Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Heritage and that in preservation and restoration of the moving image led to the Media Art Conservation and Restoration Workshop in the Heritage Lab. In collaboration with the former Dutch Institute for Media Art, six Master's students worked on a plan for the restoration of three media artworks. The workshop provided insight into the dual set of problems surrounding the conservation of media art, with the authenticity of the art object on one hand, and on the other the frequently obsolete original technology demanding specific interventions.

Heritage Lab #14 Archaeology Imagined

In this Heritage Lab, Olivier Nieuwenhuyse (†) linked archaeological finds from ancient cultures to modern day design, in collaboration with two artists representative of two significant aspects of current archaeological practice. The objects of Sjoerd Jonkers play a role in an imaginary world in a manner that recalls the way in which archaeologists reconstruct the past. The work of Lies Arts resonates with the manner in which archaeologists make use of anthropological models in comprehending past societies. With this

aesthetic experiment, the working methods of modern artists rubbed up against those of archaeologists to give rise to a refreshing look at both disciplines.

Heritage Lab #15 The Living Dead

Following on from the Dutch Research Council (NWO) project 'The anastasis of the Merovingian Netherlands', the UvA Heritage Lab presented *The Living Dead* about the evolving practice and insights in funerary archaeology, in collaboration with Frans Theuws. Grave finds play a major role in archaeological research into daily life and into the mentality and 'values' of times past. In this context, the phrase 'living dead' got traction for a while. There is now the realisation, however, that the dead are precisely not representatives of living people or the living community.

Heritage Lab #16 Exhibiting Women

During the exhibition *1001 Vrouwen uit de Nederlandse geschiedenis* (1001 women from Dutch History), the Heritage Lab looked at the representation of women in exhibitions and the position of women in museum practice. Following a number of roundtable talks with specialists in the fields of history, gender and museum studies, professionals and researchers presented their findings in the fields of gender and museums at two thematic meetings.

Heritage Lab #17 Who is afraid of... CHANGE. Material Encounters with Digital Cultural Heritage

The rise of digital tools is leading to radical change in the way in which we use, share and create information on heritage. Using the exhibition concept 'Tag me!', a dialogue between the curator and the visitor was set up in the Heritage Lab. The visitor's reaction was a central part of the presentation in the form of post-its. In conclusion, there was a lively debate on the findings of visitors, students and professionals in the cultural field. In collaboration with students from the Digital Heritage optional course in the UvA Humanities Master's programme.

Heritage Lab #18 Incomplete readings

The UvA Heritage Lab and the Werkplaats Typografie (Typography Workplace) offered artist in residence Hanna Bergman the opportunity to make a presentation on the Book of the future. The focus of the presentation lay on translating traditional sections of the book, such as the cover, the table of contents and the text, into digital concepts like PDF and tablet. This resulted in an aesthetically alienating setup where for once the contents of the book were not of interest.

Heritage Lab #19 Library without Books

This project on the role of the physical book in the university library of the future was set up in collaboration with Nol Verhagen, departing director of the University Library of the University of Amsterdam. During the Students Museum Night, he engaged in discussions with prospective students on topics such as digital native, magazines and old manuscripts, the disposal of books, and relocating books from the library to a central depot.

3.5 On taking his leave as director of the University of Amsterdam's University Library, Nol Verhagen entered into discussions with students in Heritage Lab #19: Library without Books.

Heritage Lab #20 From Triangulation to the Digital Domain

In the 1530s, the Dutch geographer Gemma Frisius introduced triangulation: measuring angles and distances by means of intersecting projected lines. This technique was for centuries used universally for mapping larger regions. But the introduction of new digital techniques seems to have put an end to the triangulation era. Following on from the exhibition *De Atlas der Neederlanden* (The Atlas of the Low Countries), the Heritage Lab devoted attention to the rise of triangulation and to modern forms of map projection. In collaboration with Geonovum and the project 'The Deleted City' by Richard Vijgen, among others.

Local and National Networks

As a follow-up to the Heritage Lab, in which we provided space for new ways of internal collaboration, in 2010 the Allard Pierson launched a new platform for experimenting at local level: the Digital Museum Network Amsterdam. By now, more than 70 meetings of this network have been organised, informal meetings in small groups of 10 to 25 participants intended to put local solo operators in the creative sector in contact with Allard Pierson (digital) projects, such as an EU project on virtual museums (*V-MusT.net* 2010–2015), the national experimental platform *Digital Museum Lab* (2015–2017) and the EU project focused on the materiality of sensor technology (*meSch* 2015–2019). This was also a platform for *MuseumCamp* (from 2016). The meetup group numbers around 900 members.[7]

3.6 One of the many Meet-ups of the Digital Museum Network Amsterdam at the Allard Pierson.

The Allard Pierson has initiated collaborative initiatives at national level as well. The main example in this category is our *ArcheoHotspot*, a place where visitors can become acquainted with archaeology by helping with (the interpretation of) archaeological finds. Over the course of six years, ArcheoHotspots has expanded into a national network with 25 branches. This project will be described in greater detail in Chapter 6. What is needed to allow a project of this kind to grow and – what is more important and difficult – to give it a long-term existence is set out there. Archeohotspots is a grassroots initiative, and a network of this kind can only be successful through the efforts of volunteers. An alliance with the Portable Antiquities of the Netherlands (PAN) has now led to the PAN regional coordinators using the ArcheoHotspots across the country as workplaces. Conversely, the ArcheoHotspots coordinators' network is supported with courses in the areas of public relations and archaeological content through the structural financing of PAN.

Experiences with international museum collaboration

International networks, alongside local and national networks, are of increasing significance for heritage institutions, as will be explained further on. Initiating networks and consortia of this kind is stimulated by the fact that there are all kinds of opportunities for securing project subsidies. Horizon 2020 and Creative Europe are examples of the kind of subsidy that the European Union has offered to stimulate research, technological development and innovation in an international context. Application for an EU subsidy can only be made by an international consortium of museums and technical partners, and once you are operating in a consortium like this, and have got to know your project partners better, ideas for new projects arise virtually of their own accord. The Allard Pierson has benefited greatly from this interaction, with the result that it has been a partner in five

consortia over the past decade (as coordinator in three of them) and has been able to arrange nine international (travelling) exhibitions.[8]

There are many good reasons for museums to embark on international collaboration. A series of observations, practical tips, inspiring examples and useful experiences that I presented at a symposium in 2018 on international museum collaboration follows below.[9] Through international collaboration, you enrich your own organisation with view from outside, and this can ultimately lead to multivocality. It also provides the opportunity for sharing your experiences and expertise with partners of like mind. You can view your own work in other locations in combination with other collections, for example in the form of a travelling exhibition or publication. Don't count on getting rich, however, but do consider that with the same budget and with more partners you can achieve greater things. And, last but not least, you more often have a celebratory opening for a travelling exhibition.

A number of tips from my own experience: go for a longer-term perspective and work on your international CV by visiting as many conferences abroad as possible. Travel budgets are a problem for many small and medium-sized museums and frequently stand in the way of interactions of this kind. For this reason, travel grants are often available from cultural funds. Work only with partners that you have met in person. Emails and online meetings are useful but allow for only a limited impression. Go out into the world, make contact and make use of opportunities for a follow-up to international meetings. Start off as a small partner, and give yourself the chance to grow. And make sure that your administration is in good order.

Apart from that, I can point to a few important pitfalls. The project partners usually have to match part of the costs of a project, an aspect that is sometimes underestimated. Lack of matching funds can lead to problems in a project over the longer term. Also, don't underestimate cultural differences between the various nationalities working on a project. For example, seen from the Dutch perspective, blunt Dutch social manner can lead to a negative reaction. This may be a significant negative, but realise at the same time that it can also be a positive, because desperate situations demand desperate measures. I have regularly observed that Dutch directness has made for a breakthrough in the discussions. It is also useful to take the initiative rather than to wait for others. At the start, preferably join an existing consortium. Proceed from your own agenda, and make sure you are based in a strong local network. Ensure that your home institution is kept up to date and that the management backs you.

By their nature, museums are linked to each other through collections and loans, through exhibitions, purchases and restoration work. There is an organic web of collegial personal threads that can lead to great results, but there are also feuds and arguments that get in the way of exchanges. Collaborating within the museum domain often remains restricted to lending objects out or requesting them on loan for exhibitions. It was soon clear to me that the joint development of exhibitions can and must deliver much more than cost-cutting or exchanging objects on loan. By launching projects together, conducting the research together and setting up the exhibitions together (often with an accompanying publication), you can present collections in new contexts and with new issues, and you can combine them with other collections in other cultural traditions and environments. But this does come with a profit warning: it costs a lot in time and travel to forge the personal relationships, the bonds that are ultimately needed for any collaborative effort. And then

MUSEUMS, HERITAGE, AND DIGITAL CURATION
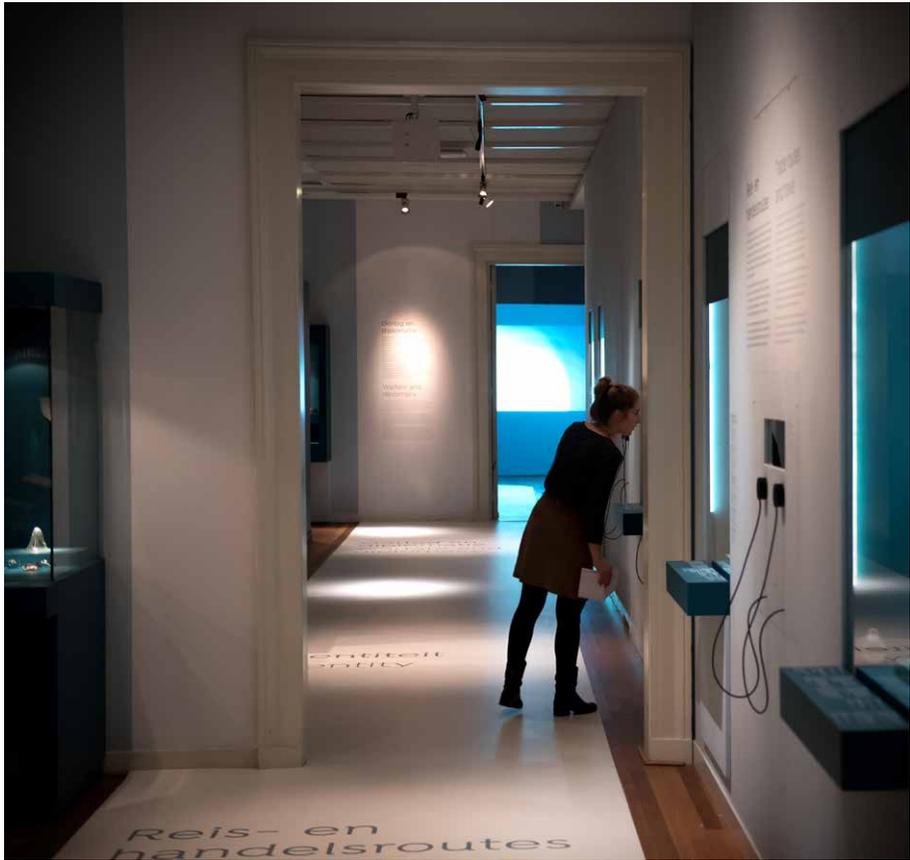
3.7 The exhibition *Crossroads. Travelling through the Middle Ages* at the Allard Pierson (2018) was the outcome of an EU funded project.

you sometimes also need luck, if projects are to fit into the plans and preferences of the decision-makers within a heritage institution.

When selecting collaborative partners and putting together a consortium, it is important to find partners of like mind. You will be working together for a long time, and that can only be done by partners characterised by what I term 'similar DNA'.

The COBBRA Museum Network
In 2015, the Allard Pierson set up a longstanding association by means of the international *COBBRA* network, based on the need and will to organise joint exhibitions with their collections and working with jointly formulated research questions. As coordinator of this project, the Allard Pierson put together a consortium with five museum partners that comprised academic institutions, outreach organisations and commercial parties, including publishers that distributed the publications accompanying the exhibitions.[10]

The museum partners in the COBBRA consortium worked together on developing and producing international travelling exhibitions. This resulted in a new model of collaboration that focused on the exchange of knowledge, collections and staff. A cooperation agreement was concluded by the museum partners for each separate exhibition project.

A major component of this agreement is the Shared Cost Budget, with the partners jointly providing the financial cover for each project. By developing this cooperation agreement, a long-term form of international museum collaboration has been established that can be used for projects in the future and may serve as an example for other institutions.

The COBBRA project has resulted in tangible and innovative outcomes.[11] The following figures provide an impression of the huge output of this European cooperation project:

- 1 blueprint for international museum collaboration
- 4 kick-off meetings
- 9 project meetings
- 4 curatorial meetings
- 4 registrar meetings
- 8 technical meetings
- 4 international travelling exhibitions
- 1 Cross Culture Timeline, a digital tool that can be used over the long term to provide added value to visitors, both onsite and online
- 31 lectures
- 8 international conferences
- 4 group trips
- 1 museums tour
- 1 symposium on international collaboration between museums
- 2 publications in the Allard Pierson Museum Series, with editions in 3 languages and with a total print run of 13,400 copies
- 3 special magazine issues
- 2 digital publications
- 2 scientific books
- As well as dozens of blogs and hundreds of social media posts

Execution

A format that offers a wide range of advantages has evolved through organising the COBBRA travelling exhibitions, which are put together by the various partners. Transport and insurance costs are shared, as are the costs for the introduction movie at the start of the exhibition, the narrative, and the exhibition texts for the list of key objects. The curators of the different partner museums collaborate and share their knowledge and expertise, so that the result easily reaches a higher level. In addition, they engaged in creating the publication, as author and/or member of the editorial board.

The communication campaign around the exhibitions is agreed between the marketing, PR and communications departments, in such a way that the international nature of the collaboration is drawn to the attention of the target groups, visitors, and stakeholders of all different partners.

The lending procedure, transport and insurance for the four travelling exhibitions were arranged by the Registrar's Office of the Allard Pierson in close collaboration with the different project partners, both at a distance and during meetings in the various partner museums. New conventions and rules have been developed by mutual agreement for the list of objects, which greatly eased both the lending procedure and the transport logistics. Planning efficiency increased, leading to savings. In addition, through the network and

commercial partners the COBBRA project was able to make use of knowledge, expertise and experience from outside the museum world for achieving the abovementioned goals.

The COBBRA project really can point to a lot of results. We observed a significant shift within the consortium towards peer-to-peer collaboration rather than top-down coordination from any particular partner. We also saw an enhanced quality with respect to content as a result of improved scholarly embedding. As the curator pool of each exhibition was made up of representatives from all the museum partners, who were specialists on the content, the academic research that preceded the exhibitions and their associated publications, was lifted to a higher level, leading to a collaborative end result that was significantly better than when the partners had all organised an exhibition independently. We also saw a simplification of the lending and exchange procedures, simply because there was greater mutual trust.

The four years of the consortium turned out to be a success in various respects. The four exhibitions met all expectations at all the venues where they were shown, and the use of new media digital applications led to connecting up with a new generation of museum visitors. This meant that the collaboration not only resulted in wider awareness of the parties involved and their collections, but has also contributed to a better understanding of the collections by a wider audience. The partners greatly appreciated the collaboration, at both a professional and a personal level. Along with its new partners, the Allard Pierson created the exhibition *Goddesses of Art Nouveau*, which will after Amsterdam travel on to Karlsruhe and Braunschweig in 2022 and 2023,[12] and various new projects are now under discussion, with the result that this collaboration will be enhanced over the years ahead. The collaborative agreement for this project was drawn up in accordance with the exhibition cooperation format that was the outcome of the COBBRA project.

Lessons from the CEMEC Network

The *Connecting Early Medieval European Collections* (*CEMEC*) project came about from the Allard Pierson's existing partnerships that arose from earlier European collaborative projects, like *EPOCH*, *Etruscanning*, *V-MusT.net* (see Chapter 5) and *COBBRA*. It originated from the idea of linking up museum collections concerning the Early Middle Ages in a more meaningful way.[13] In 2012, I attended a conference in Milan of the International Society on Virtual Systems and MultiMedia (VSMM) through the V-MusT project. It was there that the concept and aim of the collaborative project occurred to me, both as the consortium and its acronym. The idea was in fact simple: connect museum collections within a travelling exhibition and create a new narrative that will be conveyed using innovative visualisation techniques. An additional aim was to create a lasting support tool for digital curation that enables heritage professionals to use their own creativity and expertise in the visual storytelling domain.

Something that is often left unsaid is that ideas of this sort are constantly being thought up, whereas most of the proposals for a project do not come to fruition. This application too did not go through automatically. Only after many people had added their input and brought in their creative ideas on improving the project proposal was the application accepted the third time round by the European Union's Creative Europe Programme – after two failed attempts. We were able start work in 2015, with the Allard Pierson Museum as the project coordinator.[14]

3.8 The CEMEC project partners during the final meeting of the project in the Art & History Museum in Brussels.

The partners in the consortium were more or less experienced in EU projects and one of the main lessons learned was to prevent the development of fancy prototypes that are not open or too complex in use for cultural-heritage professionals. In the end we were able to create an easy-to-use support tool for digital curation. On the other hand, we had the ambition of creating new narratives for our audiences. With three (later four) venues for the exhibition and very different museum organisations and audiences, maybe this was a bit over-ambitious. Evaluation studies have shown that it is very difficult to convey a layered and open narrative to different visitor groups. It was already a big step to create a new narrative. The next step to realize multiple narratives, to be selected or chosen by the visitors, requires a different context and a different project. At the same time, we achieved huge visibility, reached many cultural heritage professionals, and created a hoard of ideas for new collaborations and projects.

The added value of network collaboration

CEMEC was more than a project: its aim was to bring professionals together, foster ties between different disciplines, create enduring and flexible support tools and, maybe most importantly, create the awareness of openness and inclusivity toward partnerships and new practices and methods. CEMEC was the cradle of a new way of collaboration as it stimulated new and exciting models of collaboration and innovation.

Benefits for institutions involved lay in the fact that they could work together towards tangible deliverables while being aware that these are not the ultimate goal. This allowed for more flexibility in the collaboration and for more mid-term evaluation to improve

later results; investments in the inter-institutional contacts pay off also after a one-off project. Another benefit was that being part of an international network raised the profile of the institutions involved and led to international recognition and higher visibility. The network served as a permanent international context for local objects, not just for one exhibition but for collection presentations in general. Including different types of organisations in the network (not just museums) furthermore broadened the experience by working with partners outside the institution's 'usual circle'. In this way, good practices from other partners could be adopted for the long term. Partners had the opportunity to use the collaboration to inform national or regional policies and decision makers by bringing in these good practices from other countries/regions.

The people working on the project benefited from the personal contacts that grew over time and proved to be a strong basis for future collaborative projects. The network gave them the opportunity to look behind the scenes at related institutions, which raised an awareness of their own way of working by comparing it to others. Moreover, the collaboration with people from different types of organisations brought together different perspectives to enrich their own; it helped to increase knowledge on themes that were central to the cultural heritage field, such as digitisation and digital tools. And last but not least, the international character of the network allowed for more network opportunities, internationally, but also within their region and institution.

Lessons learned

I reflected earlier on my own personal experiences, but the recommendations below derive from the experiences of all participants in the CEMEC project. Take the time to get to know one another's institutions (social/ cultural/economic/legislative background) and what this means for the collaboration. Be aware of the administrative obstacles that have to be surmounted (who your point of contact is for financial issues, for taking decisions, for passing budgets and for issuing loans). Take the time for making practical arrangements: who will do what, when, under what conditions, from what budget, who takes decisions, who manages risks, etc. Carefully check your financial and staff availability and plan the corresponding expenditures and staff input in advance. Appoint a central coordinator who takes into account the interests of all the partners and who is responsible for continuous supervision, feedback and stimulation. Establish an online platform for internal communication and for sharing and working together on documents. Spend time on training, and provide troubleshooting from the network to help raise each other's skills and make the most of such collaborative tools. Develop a communication strategy for the network, integrated with the communication on specific public results (decide what channels will be used, for what messages, and who will control and update them).

Once the project is up and running, it is important to meet regularly with representatives from all network partners to keep everybody informed; but work in smaller groups to reach actual results. Make clear agreements to lay down formal arrangements for the collaboration, both in the short and long term (decision-making processes, financial investments, staff involvement, intellectual property rights, etc.). Leave room for experiment, shifts in focus, and the opportunity to grab chances as they come by, but constantly check compliancy with the original agreements or else update them.

Dos and don'ts

Do

- Before you start working, create an open dialogue to get to know the expectations of everyone involved. Include in this conversation (for each exhibition venue): experts on the contents and collections (curators), experts on the organisation and process (registrars), policy and decision-making level (directors) and experts on public involvement (marketing & communication). Make room for discussion, with respect for each other's position and situation.
- Decide – together – what type of joint exhibition you are going to develop: will you co-create a 'fixed' exhibition that will travel from venue to venue without alteration, or will you develop a more open concept that can be adapted by each venue? Both options have pros and cons:

    The more fixed, the more time you will need for preparation and getting everyone on the same page. But: less costs, less organisation time, knowing at the beginning what you are up to (loan agreements, insurance and transport can be organised for all venues together).

    The more open, the sooner you can start with the first venue, the more you can use experiences from this and improve things for the next venue, or else better adjust it for a local audience. But: more costs, more organisation work, less surety of the outcome (changes to the loans list mean expensive extra transports). If you go for this open concept: agree on the 'core' of the exhibition and what should thus stay the same at each venue to do justice to everyone's input while preserving the original concept and message.

    And of course there are many options in between...

- Explore the possibilities for a joint catalogue (one of the fields where some museums are more bound to local regulations) and a joint promotion package. If you know in advance that you can share this with more venues, you can get better deals for image credits, translations, design, etc. and save costs.
- Balance between classic ways of museum presentation and innovative digital installations. Museums have ceased to be mere spaces for preserving and exhibiting works and collections but have become places where visitors can interact with the objects and become involved with the stories around them. There is no substitute for the experience of engaging physically with a unique museum object, but explanation and contextualisation can be improved by using different interactive and digital resources (see also the next chapter).
- Gather all the information on local, regional and national regulations regarding loans, transportation systems and possibilities for extensions of venues. Check if loans need to return to the lender between venues, if extra security measures are required, if objects can be stored between venues, etc. There are many differences between countries and between institutions. Accept that some museums are more bound to policies and regulations from governing bodies, while others can operate more independently.

- Make a clear and realistic budget, distinguishing between costs for the benefit of all venues (such as transport crates, pedestals and mounts, digital applications, overall management, etc.) and costs for one venue only (such as customised design, installation and de-installation, etc.). Agree who will take the costs for all venues and how this will be reimbursed. Make sure that each partner has the necessary budget to participate.
- Look at the possibilities for reuse of constructions and materials for the sake of efficiency, economy and waste prevention. This could also be reuse of materials for another project at one of the venues. Things like display cases are usually cheaper to produce again at each venue than to transport over long distances.
- Give partners the freedom to choose the title of the exhibition for their venue. This will give them the opportunity to align the exhibition and its marketing and communication campaign with their own visitor profile and institutional style. This applies to the publication's title as well.
- Seize opportunities when you have the chance: an extra partner, an extra venue, smaller local presentations as preparatory stage or spin-off, etc.

Don't

- Don't assume that the situation in your institution – the one that you are used to – will be the same as in other institutions. Accept the fact that there are many differences and make sure that you get acquainted with the local situations as soon as possible.
- Don't think that there will be 'one audience' for your exhibition. Respect the differences between age groups, group compositions, and audiences from different cultural and social backgrounds and from different countries. Each group has its own level of existing knowledge on the subject, its own attitude and know-how regarding digital applications, and its own preferences for experiencing an exhibition. Get to know your different visitor groups and involve them in the exhibition-making process in order to make their visit to the exhibition as relevant and accessible as possible for them.
- Don't stick to knowledge and expertise sharing in your own usual circle, but share with a wider and diverse group of people. Pooling knowledge from different museums and universities will broaden the scientific approach. Pooling expertise from different working fields will take the results to a higher level and broaden the experience of everyone involved.
- Don't disrespect each other's fields or control. Curatorial contents should not be changed without the consent of the curators responsible for creating them. The same goes for the creations of developers and designers.
- Don't stick to your 'dream team' if it turns out that some of the institutions cannot join – for whatever reason. You might spend a lot of time and energy that could also be spent on alternatives. Sometimes a museum is too small, understaffed or not sufficiently independent to become a partner. In this case a local university might be interested and able to join the team.

4.1 The 'City and Script' department with the plaster cast of the Lions' Gate in Mycenae (Greece) giving a view of the Amsterdam canals.

From object to narrative

The previous chapter set out important conditions for the transformation and innovation of the museum and heritage discourses. The process starts with thorough theoretical reflection on tradition and renewal in the museum field. Collections are often regarded as a classical and traditional given, but nothing could be more wrong. Insight into the biography of collections supplies essential fuel for ideas on presentation and dynamic meaning making. It also informs the theoretical framework of our practice and the ways this can be translated into more inclusive museum engagements.

Exhibitions and collaboration with peer museums, external designers, and curators are all necessary ingredients in the quest for new communication concepts and presentation forms. But heritage organisations can also set in motion processes internally that can lead to fresh insights and inspiration. The various collaborative initiatives at the Allard Pierson were set out in the last chapter. We should also not underestimate the impact of the 20 *Heritage Labs* (see Chapter 1), the *Digital Museum Lab* (see Chapter 5), *MuseumCamp* (which will be dealt with in Chapter 6), and the many exchanges and workshops that we have organised with colleagues in the various collaborative projects that were discussed in Chapter 3. With all these initiatives we strove to stimulate openness and reflection that are essential for a transformation process.

I have described the museum as medium of the memory, the biography of collections, and museum collaboration because these were crucial in the conceptual development of the new Allard Pierson Museum collection presentation, which would later culminate in the new Allard Pierson. The process of presenting objects and collections is at the focus of this chapter, and the basic theoretical principles will also be outlined here. I shall then document how the redesign and refurbishment, that started in 2009, evolved step by step, and how they were implemented between 2014 and 2020. Finally, I shall describe the new storyline of the museum galleries.

The evolution of a new semi–permanent collection presentation

Refurbishing a museum with historical collections demands reflection on the structure of their presentation. Over recent decades, we have seen an ongoing alternation between thematic and chronological approaches. It has almost become standard that a (more) thematic classification alternates with a (more) chronological one.

Heritage institutions find themselves in my view in an ongoing struggle with their selection, presentation and ordering principles. Social issues, discussions and new

academic insights increase the pressure for renewal. Globally, we can discern two trends in historic museum presentations. On the one hand, there is the so-called DNA trend, which aims to present collective identities. The glorious story of a city or region is primarily what is told. On the other, there is increasing critical (self) reflection on the presentation of collections and the construction – or reconstruction – of narratives. New methods have also been employed over recent years to present various perspectives in collections.[1]

Major renewals and refurbishments usually call for large investment in new showcases and an innovative design, and that means that the result will have to last for at least a decade. In practice, however, new permanent setups will often be on display much longer than the planned five, seven or ten years. For example, the five galleries that I redesigned as curator of the Limburg Museum in Venlo in 2000 have undergone only minor changes up to today (2021). The prehistory and Roman departments were renewed in 2017, but the other three departments are still on show and so have survived for more than twenty years.[2] Some parts have of course undergone minor changes, which certainly applies to the interactive computer applications.[3] At the time, I noticed how much was being invested in design and customized showcases, and in digital media. These elements in particular make renewing semi-permanent galleries costly. As a result, showcase design and digital media received special attention when we started out on the redesign of the Allard Pierson.

In the end, the refurbishment of the Allard Pierson has created a museum presentation in which a number of important objectives were pursued. Our monumental building is not excessively large, and we had to turn this limitation to our advantage. The challenge was to use the collections to provide visitors with a compact journey through time in a relatively small area (2,000 m²). At an early stage, we looked at flexible showcases, there was the question of sustainable digital content, and we had the aim of creating not a fixed permanent display but rather a semi-permanent one that could readily and often be updated.

The quest for new starting points was launched in 2009 when we invited a group of museum colleagues to tell us how they perceived the Allard Pierson Museum.[4] Their ideas and feedback were extremely valuable but had to be put on hold for a while, because there were no funds available for rebuilding or refurbishment. As a result, from that point the strategy of closing the museum temporarily for a total refurbishment carried out in one go was abandoned, and we focused on a step-by-step, phased approach. The masterplan for expansion and refurbishment, for which no funding was available from the University of Amsterdam's housing budget, had to be cut into segments. In this way, it was possible to carry it out based on funding from the university's annual budgets for maintenance and restructuring. First, the space for temporary exhibitions was tripled in size (2011). Then a new staircase with lift was built to improve the link between the two main sections of the building. We were able to carry out a pilot project for refurbishing the Roman department in 2014 using European project subsidies. This was the starting point for the redesign of all galleries. Flexible showcases were designed, the concept of key objects was applied, and a great deal of experimentation went into developing and producing a digital layer of information.

Various (international) collaborative projects were at the basis of our conceptual development which benefited the quest for renewal and improvement. This involved previously mentioned projects, such as *Heritage Lab*, *Network of Excellence on Virtual Museums*,

ArcheoHotspots, *Material Encounters with Digital Cultural Heritage*, *Digital Museum Lab*, *Connecting Early Medieval European Museums* and *MuseumCamp*. The many collaborative projects offered us the opportunity to carry out research into ways of presentation, and to share knowledge and experience with other museums, heritage institutions, and creative parties in the Netherlands and abroad. Looking back, however, I regard the new and often temporary colleagues on these projects in particular as the most important source for renewal. They had fresh eyes and provided significant added value, with the result that the renewal process gained a great deal of momentum, as well as offering opportunities for evaluation.

Presentation history

The way in which collections are presented and framed says a great deal about the zeitgeist and the perspective adopted by a museum. The Allard Pierson collections not only have an interesting genesis, but also an exciting presentation history that reaches back to the University Museum, the Allard Pierson Museum, and the Special Collections of the University Library, which together constitute the Collections of the University of Amsterdam.

The University of Amsterdam has had its own museum since 1921. It showed objects from the history of the university in the Agnietenkapel (1470), Amsterdam's oldest lecture theatre, but not much was recorded about the actual exhibitions against the backdrop of 47 magnificent portraits of humanist scholars, which were donated to the Athenaeum Illustre by Gerardus van Papenbroeck in 1743.[5] From the 1980s onwards, temporary exhibitions drew an increasingly large public.

The Allard Pierson Museum was the University of Amsterdam's most visible heritage institution. The museum was launched with a traditional academic collection presentation on Roeterstraat in 1934 but evolved following the move to the Oude Turfmarkt into a genuinely public museum, even if the collections were less extensive than those of many other large archaeological museums. The layout of the former head office of De Nederlandsche Bank was created by the graphic designer Dick Elffers (1910−1990). The themes with respect to the museum and its contents were outlined by directors Jaap Hemelrijk and Herman Brijder, both professors of Classical Archaeology. Subdivision by region was chosen, with Egypt, the Middle East, Cyprus, the Greek World, Southern Italy, and the Roman World as the starting points. The Etruscans were given greater prominence under Brijder. This was a classical regional subdivision that is still used in most of the larger archaeological museums in Europe and the United States: in the modernist museum, the visitor is approached with a canonical narrative.[6]

The Special Collections of the University Library are extremely extensive and exceptionally diverse, as they consist of over 1,000 sub-collections.[7] They had long had a small room for temporary presentations only in showcases on Singel in Amsterdam, and no opportunities for (semi-)permanent presentations. The Special Collections were provided with new accommodation in monumental premises on Oude Turfmarkt, next to the Allard Pierson Museum, in 2007, with facilities intended to improve academic access: a Reading Room where students, scholars and other visitors are able to consult the large and sometimes valuable collections and objects, and three temporary exhibition rooms.[8]

Between 2007 and 2017, the Special Collections descriptive name was turned into an official brand name, but this was not noticed by the general public. The diversity of the collections referred to above made for highly varied exhibition themes, from book design,

through social history, Baptists and Armenian book printing to circus and cartography, but a common denominator was lacking. There were also only restricted marketing budgets for raising the brand's profile. The pressure was severe on the small team responsible for putting on three exhibitions a year at the Special Collections and two at the Allard Pierson Museum, and this led to a change of course. A major policy shift was implemented in 2016 that meant linking all collections, buildings and organisations in a more organic way. The merger of the Allard Pierson Museum and the Special Collections was intended to lead to stronger positioning, in Amsterdam as well as nationally and internationally.

Connecting the archaeological and the special collections

After the decision was taken, in 2016, to present the University of Amsterdam's heritage collections to a greater extent beyond the modernist frame,[9] a unique opportunity arose at the Allard Pierson to create a journey through time – which ran in the Allard Pierson Museum from prehistory up to the Middle Ages on the basis of the archaeological collections – through to the 21st century on the basis of the Special Collections. The collections continued to be the guiding factor and base, and the narrative was brought together under the title 'From the Nile to the Amstel'. The new design of the semi-permanent presentation now offers the visitor an easily accessible journey through time covering 10,000 years of cultural history.

Depending on their collection field, museums have differing traditions when it comes to the philosophy of presentation. There are major differences in collection display between art historical and ethnographic museums, and between technical museums and open-air museums. Museums' position in society changes with changes in society. Sociologists often say that the way in which we display collections, and the story that we present, often reveals more about us than about for example the Greeks or the Romans that our story is about.[10] Heritage institutions currently face challenges primarily in the area of digitisation, inclusivity and participation, and strive to translate these into semi-permanent displays. This turns out to be extremely problematic.[11]

The following quotation from Gordon Fyfe is perhaps somewhat apocalyptic, but shows that we are no longer dealing with simple one-way traffic from the curator to the public visiting the museum: 'The contemporary museum operates in a mediated world of digital networks and fast-paced visual culture, where culture is marketed, where mass tourism is becoming increasingly important and where meanings invariably evaporate on the horizon of curatorial control.'[12] The biography of collections and collectors, the link with communities, and the fact that each visitor should be able to create their own narrative together turn the presenting of collections into a challenging but also complex puzzle. For these reasons, in the refurbishment process at Allard Pierson we aimed at creating more room for dynamic and change, while keeping a number of permanently displayed so-called 'key objects'.

The overkill pitfall

One of the strangest phenomena that I constantly encounter as a professional museum visitor is the fact that virtually every (semi) permanent collection presentation suffers from overkill. Many museum visitors will recognise this. You set out on a museum visit excited and full of energy, and after three rooms you are drained. You drown in the quantity of objects exhibited; every object – and there are usually dozens or even hundreds in each

4.2 The layout of the Egyptian Museum in Berlin's Neues Museum has a sense of overkill.

room – shrieks for your attention. Each object appears to be more significant than the next, and this goes on and on as the curators wish to share as many of their favourites with the visitor as possible by creating a space for each of them. The adage 'kill your darlings' is the curator's biggest nightmare. Nevertheless, this overkill gets to me every time I walk into a cultural history museum, wherever I went. This happens mainly in archaeological, natural history, city and regional history museums. The simple principles of what a visitor can cope with in terms of visual overload tends to get forgotten.

One important starting point in designing the new Allard Pierson collection presentation was to avoid overkill. We have done this by laying out a direct route in de 2,000 m^2 area that takes the visitor past the key objects in our collections through ten historical periods – well knowing that many a visitor will take a detour. In this way we have managed to lay out a new logical route through the monumental building, to show our collection in an unhurried display of simple showcases, and above all to draw attention to new research and additional small thematic presentations as well.

The redesign evaluated

During the course of the redesign, we worked not so much along project lines as rather programmatically. Since no budget was available for large-scale redesign in one go, we were compelled to arrange the refurbishment in a phased way. We then turned this into an advantage. The process was split into four large phases, and the insights from the evaluation following each phase were used in the subsequent phase. We were able to learn from the visitors' surveys that we conducted, and lessons were also learned from the use of the new modular showcase system. This was not a standard refurbishment determined by a brief and intense phase of closing and reopening. This meant that for seven years, from 2014 to the end of 2020, we were trying to balance the challenges set by our organisation and institution, our collection, and our building, as well as social and museological challenges.

This long lead time meant that we had the opportunity to anticipate organisational change, such as the merger of the Allard Pierson Museum and the Special Collections. As a result, the concept of a visitor journey through time could be extended from Prehistory and Antiquity to present-day Amsterdam, but gradually major differences emerged in the management and conservation requirements for archaeological objects made of pottery and metal on the one hand, and collections mainly consisting of works on paper on the other. This led to the decision to change the display of books, maps and other paper objects every four months – meaning more work but also the advantage that much more of the collection can ultimately be displayed for the diehard visitor. It took some time before we could arrange this in the curators' daily work, since these regular changes have led to a new way of working. Moreover, library curators are sometimes less inclined to share their collections with the public and will raise objections on grounds related to conservation and to technical problems with the materials. When presenting works on paper, a tightrope has constantly to be walked between public accessibility and preservation concerns.

When deciding on a presentation strategy, developing a flexible digital educational layer is difficult. By using digital tools, museums strive to remain attractive to the *digital natives*, for whom there is scarcely any boundary between online and on site. A significant danger here is that digital content either gets lost after a few years or is not maintained. That is not only a pity but also undesirable. The starting point for the digital content that we wished to develop for each department during the Allard Pierson refurbishment was that the museum staff would have control of the digital content; only then can it be updated frequently and stay relevant. To this end, we used the expertise we had gained in various European projects and the *Digital Museum Lab*. Our strong international museum network meant that we were in a position to introduce in our museum galleries a concept from the *CEMEC* project that had already been tested: the Cross Culture Timeline, which had evolved in collaboration with seven European museums and a number of technical partners (see Chapter 5).

Case studies

In fact, the entire redesign process of the Allard Pierson consists of case studies. The laborious search for a new narrative in the 'From the Nile to the Amstel' presentation based on the principle of multivocality is illustrated below, combined with a description of the new museum galleries. It reflects on ordering principles and choices for combinations of objects in the light of curatorial traditions and academic discussions.

In order to further illustrate the search for and final selection of objects, a series of objects with hidden narratives is presented. These hidden narratives originate from my personal knowledge, vision and interpretation. I present these stories here to make clear that with every object come different perspectives. These perspectives lead to various narratives that can exist simultaneously but that often cannot be presented together in the context of a museum gallery. I am convinced, however, that it is always important to look at both familiar and unfamiliar objects again and again with fresh eyes; the combination of knowledge, experience and an ever-changing society will always lead to new narratives that will challenge both visitors and museum staff. In line with this, practice and theory at the Allard Pierson have led to a display that can easily be adapted thanks to its flexible infrastructure, and so we call it 'semi-permanent'.

Flexible showcases via a modular system

We had a flexible showcase system designed for the Allard Pierson renewal that allows a more dynamic display in the museum galleries.[13] The showcases are made up of modules measuring 40 × 40 cm that can easily be stacked, enlarged or reduced in size (see fig. 4.4, 4.7, 4.12, and 4.16). This offers the advantage that we are constantly able to make changes and improvements to the displays and their arrangement in a fairly simple way, for example when new research or current events require this, or if we would like to include a new acquisition.

A visitor survey of the Roman department, the pilot project of our redesign, revealed that there were too many showcases presenting too many objects. The curator was then effectively asked 'to kill your darlings'. In a complete reshuffle of the department, the total volume of the showcases was cut by a third. This was done by simply removing a third of the blocks from each set of showcases, and by creating smaller cases within the existing case infrastructure. Having new cases made was thus unnecessary, and the blocks that were removed were later put to good use in other departments.

The modular showcases turned out to be cheaper and more flexible than most custom-made ones. Moreover, integrating new technology often demands alterations to existing cases, and then it is important for them to be flexible. To be honest, however, flexibility also has its drawbacks. The biggest disadvantage is that the gaps at the corners mean that the showcases are not dust-free. In addition, opening and closing the cases with their large glass sheets is sometimes impractical and can even lead to dangerous situations. A mechanical lifting machine has for this reason been acquired for the heavy glass panes. However, in practice this was found to be too cumbersome, and so opening and closing is still generally done by hand. In the end, this modular system was used only in the archaeological displays, as for the most part climate-controlled cases are not needed there.

From the Nile to the Amstel, a journey through 10,000 years of cultural history

'From the Nile to the Amstel' takes visitors to the Allard Pierson on a journey through history, from the history of writing up to the first industrial book production, from powerful kings to an influential burgher republic, from agrarian villages to a metropolis, from temples, churches, synagogues and mosques to radical freethinkers and devotees of the Enlightenment. This journey reveals the interchange between the ancient and the modern worlds, shows us sources of inspiration, tells us about human curiosity, leads us into the past and accompanies us in the quest for new destinations.

With this new way of presenting the collection, we wanted to replace the concept of a static permanent display with a dynamic presentation, with a view to our new visitor groups and the demands of the 21st century. This display can constantly be brought up to date and revitalised.[14] Shifts in emphasis in the collection, in teaching, in archaeological and historical research, along with social topicality, can and should be incorporated into the display. In this way, we will lend more and new meaning to our collection, and link up with the dynamic nature of heritage. We will also be able to bind the public in to this display over the longer term. After all, the periodic changes are invitations to a repeat visit, as once visited does not mean seen it all. The Allard Pierson unlocks a huge potential with this approach: every year we can put new students and researchers to work on the collection to generate fresh insights.

The presentation 'From the Nile to the Amstel' has a main route that takes the visitor through ten historical periods and along key objects of our collections. Anyone wishing to explore the galleries in greater depth can leave the 'highway' to follow a detour into the so-called 'second layer'. This second level is presented by means of showcases with objects and texts that illustrate four major themes: Power, Mobility, Religion and Death, and Everyday Life. The Allard Pierson also presents the Cross Culture Timeline, a digital application that provides additional digital information via touch tables (see Chapter 5). Cabinets have been added to the historical periods, constituting a third information level of displays rich in objects, in which our curators add more depth to the collection, show more material and deal with subjects related to research. These cabinets are positioned separately from the main route or 'highway' through the museum and are intended to reveal the rather more complex interpretive background to our collection, both for the visitor looking for more information and for the specialist.

The combination of the layered concept (presenting information to our visitors at various levels), the emphasis on the research process, and our dynamic collection display is unique in the Netherlands and has resulted in a museum equipped to welcome the digital natives of the 21st century, who are accustomed to getting their information through digital media. But we have also tried not to lose sight of the more traditional museum visitor. The fact that visitors' reactions have been extremely positive, almost without exception, indicates that we have succeeded here.

Over the following pages, the spotlight is turned on the historical periods and cabinets of 'From the Nile to the Amstel' one by one. In addition, I present a series of hidden narratives about objects with an interesting biographical context as the thread running through the various historical periods and cabinets; either because they did not fit into the narrative presented in the departments, or because they provide an example of the multivocal perspectives that can be brought forth from the objects. By means of this 'director's choice', I aim to show that there are many narratives in the current display that do not always get the attention that we would like them to. The selection for this series of objects is arbitrary and derived from my own interests and expertise, and so it does not represent the full Allard Pierson collection. It is my personal narrative running through 'From the Nile to the Amstel' that reveals how multivocality can be coloured in.

From the Nile to the Amstel: Interconnectivity in the Ancient World

By breaking with the regional classification (Egypt, Greece, Middle East, Italy, Cyprus) that originated from the classical tradition of Graeco-Roman art history, the Allard Pierson offers the visitor a new dynamic among the objects presented. For each historical period, we link up our archaeological collections. This means that we combine Linear Band Ware pottery from the Netherlands with that from Egypt and the Middle East, that we combine Greek-Mycenaean artefacts with finds from the Hittites from Turkey and the New Kingdom in Egypt. In the Hellenistic department, we combine artefacts from Egypt, Rome, Greece, and Afghanistan, with the syncretism of this period coming into its own. Similarly, in the Early Middle Ages we see a strong link between the Carolingian Empire and the Islamic caliphates. Here too, the emphasis is on the economic and diplomatic relations that existed around the eastern Mediterranean region.[15]

The Egypt Cabinet

The Allard Pierson's Egyptian collection is not large, but it does provide a good overview of the most important periods of Ancient Egypt. While Egyptian objects can be found in several galleries as a result of the chronological classification, this collection deserves a place of its own, which for many visitors now functions as a starting point for 'From the Nile to the Amstel'. The Egypt Cabinet displays the Egyptological collection based on two themes and so in two large rooms: 'temples and gods', and 'a journey through the underworld'.[16] We make use of the Egyptian pharaonic Old Kingdom as reference, when script made its entrance and agrarian society became more successful economically. As a result of surplus, there was time and money for building temples and developing a rich burial culture – the two major themes in this cabinet.

For centuries, Egypt was relatively isolated, surrounded as it was by deserts, jungle to the South and a delta to the North. Egyptological research was for long characterised by a similarly relatively isolated academic tradition, which was not that strongly developed theoretically. The archaeological investigations of the many teams from outside the country took place to a significant extent under conditions that were still semi-colonial. More recently, new collaborative projects have given rise new approaches,[17] and fortunately research increasingly connects up with the new material-technical opportunities, such as scanning mummies of animals and people. At the same time, this biomedical examination of these sacred objects is seen as a violation of their integrity from an ethical perspective.[18]

4.3 The new mummy display case is the centerpiece in the Allard Pierson's Egyptian Cabinet.

From Hunter to Gatherer (Prehistory, 10,000–3,500 BC)

Prehistoric pottery and flint are given little recognition and certainly no visibility in the classical archaeological tradition and the art-historical canon of Antiquity. The Allard Pierson's prehistory collection is now being displayed in context for the first time.[19] The emphasis is on agrarian developments from the Neolithic onwards. In around 7,000 BC, the first farmers migrated to the European continent. The Neolithic 'package' comprised flint and stone tools for working the earth and wood, the first pottery, rectangular wooden farms, sheep, goats, cattle and pigs, and naturally various types of grain. The initial traces of kingship and an hierarchical society can be discovered from the grave ceramics. Our own collection is supplemented for this period with a number of long-term loans from the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden (National Museum of Antiquities) in Leiden, and with dolmen stones donated by the Alliantie Markermeerdijken (Markermeerdijken Alliance).

The Neolithic Cabinet

The Stone Age collection that the British archaeologist and women's rights activist Gertrude Caton Thompson (1888–1985) excavated in Egypt's Fayum Oasis in the 1920s is on display for the first time in the Neolithic Cabinet. These artefacts often still have an inventory number in Caton Thompson's own handwriting. The original inventory is also there. The Allard Pierson is exhibiting this unique collection of prehistoric finds for the first time in a separate display case.

4.4 The Stone Age collection of Gertrude Caton Thompson in one of the Cabinets in the semi-permanent presentation 'From the Nile to the Amstel'.

City and Script (Bronze Age, 3500–1000 BC)

The former boardroom of the Nederlandsche Bank (Dutch central bank) from the period 1867–1960 has now been transformed into Lion Gate Hall, named for the oldest European city gate that gave access to the Greek city of Mycenae.[20] The lions (incidentally, they are probably lionesses) guarded the gate, impressed visitors and symbolised the city elite's religious and far-reaching power. In the 'City and Script' section, the rise of kingship, state-building and script are presented.[21] Here we can see the added value in combining different regional collections, as the diplomatic Bronze Age trade networks between Egypt, Babylon, Ugarit, Assyria, Mycenae, Crete, Cyprus and the Hittites (in Turkey) have been

explicitly documented. The 'first international world' arises in the Eastern Mediterranean region, with Mycenae (Greece) as the link between Europe and the extremely prosperous Middle East and Egypt. This network came to an abrupt end around 1200 BC as a result of a combination of natural disasters, invasions and economic crises.[22]

Hidden narratives: On the trail of the pharaoh

In 1920, Constant Willem Scheurleer bought a large fragment of a red granite pharaoh's head from the Léonce Rosenberg collection.* Rosenberg was a well-known Paris art dealer who promoted Cubism in particular. He probably sold his father's collection to free up funds for his own avant-garde art interests. Scheurleer bought various works at this auction. At the time, little was known of the fragment's provenance, but 48 years later the other half was found in one of the side chambers of the so-called 'Festival Temple' of Thutmose III, a major component of the Karnak Temple Complex at Luxor. Thutmose III had this temple built in memory of himself and his ancestors. So, this head may be identified as the Pharaoh Thutmose III (or possibly his son Amenhotep II). I visited the site where this head was found when I was in Luxor in 2016. I saw the spot in the Karnak Temple where in 1968 the section was found that goes with the fragment in the Allard Pierson. A little further away, this half can be viewed in the Luxor Museum, and a day earlier I was in the grave of Thutmose III – it felt like I was on the trail of the object's history. The head can now be viewed in its entirety in the Allard Pierson; we have combined the two halves that are kept separately in Amsterdam and Luxor, initially in 1987 in an exhibition in Hildesheim and later by means of a copy and digital visualisation.**

4.6 Head of Pharaoh Thutmose III or Amenhotep II. The section on the left is part of the collection in the Allard Pierson (APM 01387); while that on the right is a replica of the original in the Luxor Museum (Egypt).

* See Mak (1920); Collection Léonce Rosenberg (Paris), no. 60.
** Lunsingh Scheurleer (1987); https://youtu.be/5jMnp5W9wek.

The Script Cabinet

The Script Cabinet in the 'City and Script' department deals with the origin and history of script. The objects in this showcase illustrate the different types of script. Cuneiform arose in Mesopotamia around 3500 BC. It was used to record a vast diversity of languages, from the oldest Sumerian in Mesopotamia and Elamite in Iran right up to the Indo-European Hittite with its direct relations in modern Turkey. Not much later hieroglyphic script arose in Egypt, and during the same period, a script evolved in the Indus Valley that has yet to be deciphered. Later in Egypt, Hieratic script (a cursive form of hieroglyphs) and Demotic (a simplified, near-stenographic development of Hieratic) arose. The cabinet then turns its attention to the Greek alphabet, Linear A (the script from Crete that has still not been completely deciphered), Coptic (Greek alphabet for writing Egyptian, supplemented by Demotic signs for sounds lacking a corresponding Greek letter), and cylinder seals.

Greeks and Great Powers (1,000–335 BC)

The presentation on the world of the Greeks and Great Powers combines Greek, Etruscan, Assyrian and Egyptian artefacts.[23] After the end of the Bronze Age, following the collapse of the established order in the eastern Mediterranean, societies in Greece and Italy continued on a small scale. The Assyrian Empire remained dominant initially in the Middle East. Ultimately all the small kingdoms and statelets in the Eastern Mediterranean were combined into the Achaemenid Persian Empire, which stretched up to the Aegean Sea in the west. The major powers and city states enjoyed intensive contact with each other,
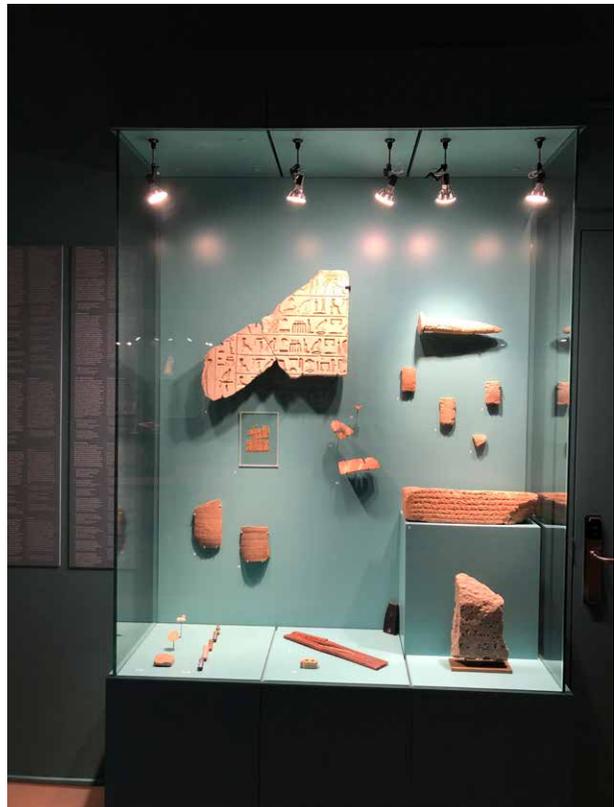
4.7 The Script Cabinet. The Cabinets in the new Allard Pierson show the rather more complex background to its collections, both for the visitor looking for more information and for the specialist.

primarily by sea. Merchants, colonists and armies traveled over great distances. Increasing demographic pressure lead to migrations and the rise of many new settlements by Greek and Phoenician colonists along the Mediterranean and Black Sea littorals. At local level, cultural complexity increased as a result of rising prosperity and connectivity. An innovative society arose that is still seen as the cradle of European civilisation. However, this reception history of Graeco-Roman Antiquity is increasingly the subject of debate, with decolonisation of classical studies also ongoing.[24] There is increasing understanding, derived from the colonial collections, that the description of an object sometimes is just as meaningful as the object itself. Recent research embraces an inclusive look at Antiquity and will inevitably lead to new presentations.[25]

4.8 The Mediterranean Sea is at the focus of the 'Greeks and Major Powers' presentation, as resource of trade contacts and cultural exchange between the Greek city-states, Persia and Egypt.

MUSEUMS, HERITAGE, AND DIGITAL CURATION

Hidden narratives: Words matter

Pots don't talk, but archaeologists and art historians do in fact present them in their stories as 'speaking'. But their voices are not objective and may even be coloured. This was set out recently during a lunchtime lecture in the Allard Pierson in which the old, and sometimes racially coloured, object labels were challenged.* For example, there are small pottery bottles in the Greek cabinet that we refer to as *alabastra*, sometimes depicting black men, with the n-word used in the collection management system.** In accordance with fresh insights in the publication *Words Matter*, these references will be changed in the near future.***
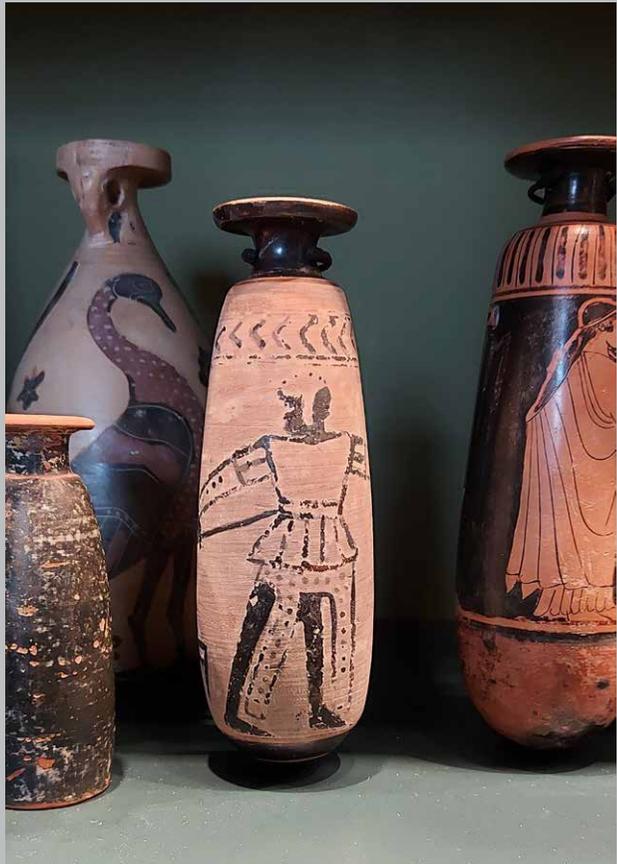
4.9 Greek *aryballos* (oil flask) showing a black man. APM 1900.

* https://youtu.be/PBaX6rqqZcE by Laurien de Gelder.
** Neils (1980). The word originated in the 18th century as an adaptation of the Spanish word negro, a descendant from the Latin adjective niger, which means 'black'.
*** https://www.tropenmuseum.nl/en/about-tropenmuseum/words-matter-publication.

The Greek Cabinet

'Greek pottery' is a catch-all term for a range of vase shapes made in the Greek cultural region between approximately 1000 and 150 BC. Pottery had many guises and functions, of which transport, storage and drinking were the most important. Archaeologists are able

4.10 The Etruscan Cabinet at the Allard Pierson is designed like an Etruscan tomb full of grave goods.

to read off lots of stories about the societies of the past from pottery. Some of these stories are told in the Greek Cabinet. How does an archaeologist know what the piece of pottery was for? When was it made? And how do Dutch archaeologists research Greek pottery? In this cabinet, the Allard Pierson displays as many examples as possible from its large collection of Greek pottery, and its diversity in shape, style and decoration. How pottery was produced in Antiquity is also explained.[26]

The Etruscan cabinet

In the last millennium BC, the Etruscans inhabited the area in Italy that we now call Tuscany, between the Tiber and Arno rivers. The name of the region is derived from Etrusci or Tusci, as the Romans called this people. Prosperity flourished in the towns between approximately 750 and 450 BC, thanks to the mineral resources and fertile agricultural land available, the location on the Tyrrhenian Sea, and the Etruscan trading instinct.

The centuries-long fascination with the Etruscans stems from the mystery surrounding their oriental origins, foreign language, and exotic customs. The Etruscans were already a subject of discussion in Antiquity. Since the 'discovery' of Etruria in the 18th century by archaeologists and collectors, we have come to know much about their intriguing society. Through excavations and research of their temples, cities and especially necropolises (cities of the dead), we can now read their language and have insight into their social networks and mutual power relations. The Etruscan Cabinet in Allard Pierson is designed like an Etruscan tomb full of grave goods.[27]

The Etruscan collection of the Allard Pierson was greatly augmented through acquisitions in the 1980s and 1990s, when a great deal of pottery from Etruscan graves was sold at auction. Given current information and the knowledge of today, we would nowadays not acquire many of these objects, as a lively illegal trade in antiquities was conducted through allegedly reputable auction houses and dealers. It is increasingly becoming clear that the provenance of particular objects is uncertain.

From Alexander to Cleopatra (335–30 BC)

The era from Alexander the Great to Cleopatra is known as the 'Hellenistic period'. Hellenism, named after Hellas, the ancient name for Greece, is an important focal point in the archaeological collection of the Allard Pierson but, remarkably enough, has never been the focus of the museum galleries because it is not limited to one region. Hellenism is the perfect example of the connections between all corners of the ancient world, and in 'From Nile to Amstel' it is given the attention it deserves.[28]

The conquests of the Macedonian king Alexander the Great spread Greek culture as far as Mesopotamia and India. People exchanged their ideas across the immense area

4.12 The 'From Alexander the Great to Cleopatra' department at the Allard Pierson.

between the rivers Tiber and Indus, Nile and Oxus. Through trade and war, diplomacy and migration, distant peoples also became involved, such as Celts in Central Europe, Phoenicians in North Africa and Scythians in Central Asia. 'From Alexander to Cleopatra' shows the Hellenistic style as a melting pot of all these cultures.

The presentation ends with Cleopatra, the famous Macedonian-Egyptian queen, who, with the help of Julius Caesar, seized control of the eastern Mediterranean. In the end, it was his successor Octavian – the later Emperor Augustus – who would unite the Mediterranean world in the Roman Empire in 27 BC.

Hidden Narratives: A Hellenistic or a Parthian Buddha?

A Hellenistic Buddha from Gandhara (the Swat Valley region in modern-day Pakistan) can be seen in the Hellenistic department (see also fig. 2.1). He shares a showcase with a statue of the Anatolian mother goddess Cybele and a Macedonian depicted as a Ptolemaic pharaoh. Syncretism pure. But is this really a Hellenistic statute?

Sculpture of this kind from Gandhara reveal the intertwined nature of the Graeco-Roman, Parthian, and Buddhist cultures. The Buddha, the eastern founder of Buddhism, stands erect, has a pleated robe, waving hair and a halo, much like deified rulers in the West, whereas the refined face by contrast looks Egyptian.* Here we are confronted with a chronological problem, because sculptures with Hellenistic-Parthian characteristics date back to more than four centuries after the conquests of Alexander the Great. In Gandhara, moreover, the Buddha was depicted as human only in the first centuries AD. The Roman-Palmyrene influence via the neighbouring Bactrian Empire for this reason provides better points of linkage and makes direct influence from Alexander unlikely. A fresh look through the spiritual third eye, represented by the dot on the Buddha's forehead, is thus desirable.

4.13 A Hellenistic Buddha from Gandhara, the Swat Valley region in modern-day Pakistan. Slate, 250-300 AD. Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin.

* https://www.ancientworldmagazine.com/articles/graeco-buddhist-art-gandhara-connection/.

4.14 The display in the Hellenistic cabinet of the Allard Pierson gives a good idea of the sheer multitude and diversity of this collection.

The Hellenistic Cabinet

The Allard Pierson has a beautiful collection of sculpture, tableware, glass, bronze, terracotta, faience, and coins from the Hellenistic period. In the Hellenistic cabinet, as many of these objects as possible are displayed to give the visitor a good idea of the sheer multitude and diversity of this collection. In the portrait gallery, Alexander the Great and his successors from the Ptolemaic dynasty, among others, are on display, and anonymous heads show the rich variety of inhabitants of the Hellenistic world. The many terracotta figures show how styles, gods and mythological stories from all walks of life came together in this period.[29]

Hidden narrative: Cleopatra's impression

One of the portraits in the Hellenistic cabinet is a clay seal with the head of Cleopatra, the last Ptolemaic ruler and last pharaoh of Egypt. The clay seal comes from the Temple archive in Edfu, which was destroyed by fire in around 30 BC (see Chapter 1 and fig. 2.2). In 2016, I visited the ruins of this temple, and suddenly found myself standing in the room identified as an archive room or library; this is where the temple archives used to be kept. It must have been a room full of legally important documents on papyrus, which were sealed by folding the sheet, closing it with string and affixing one or more official seals of dignitaries. After the fire destroyed the archives, only those seals, the prints of signet rings, survived. And among the seals that are now in the Allard Pierson, several have been identified with Cleopatra's portrait. So sometimes you can literally go back to the source of objects in the Allard Pierson: Cleopatra has also been in this temple, probably in the company of Julius Caesar, and sealed documents there with her signet ring. That is an important perspective on this small, intriguing object in the Allard Pierson.

4.15 One of the eight clay seal impressions of Cleopatra in the Allard Pierson collection. APM 8177-56.

From Rome to Roman (30 BC–AD 500)

In 261 BC, the Senate in Rome decided to build a fleet and launch Rome as a maritime power. From Rome grew, at first, the Republic and later a world empire based on brute military strength and a successful socio-economic system, which offered opportunities for social advancement and in which there was a relative high degree of social and religious openness. Rome and the Roman Empire changed over time, from its creation in 753 BC to the fall of the Western Roman Empire in AD 476. This illustrates the title of the department in the Allard Pierson: 'From Rome to Roman'. The changes became greater as the empire grew. Rome was not only the centre of a larger world, it was also part of

4.16 The 'From Rome to Roman' department, focuses on three regions of the Roman Empire: the Mediterranean, Egypt and the Low Countries.

it. Sometimes the Romans rejected what they saw elsewhere and at other times they appropriated parts of the new, strange world. As in our time, there was a tension between being open to new ideas and cherishing one's own traditions. By looking at it from both a local and a global perspective, the museum rooms reveal the differences and similarities within the Roman world. The display covers three regions: the Mediterranean, Egypt, and the Low Countries.[30]

The Roman Cabinet
The Roman collection at the Allard Pierson consists mainly of objects from the Imperial period, from 27 BC to AD 476. The objects come from the entire Roman Empire, from England to North Africa and from Rome to far into the Eastern Mediterranean region. They comprise utensils such as oil lamps, jugs and bowls of earthenware and glass, and coins. The collection of portrait busts is typical for Roman sculpture from the late Roman and Imperial periods. As many objects as possible are presented, for the visitor who wants to see more, and for the specialist.

Hidden narratives: An unsightly intercultural gravestone

Quintus Cornelius erected a monument in memory of his late wife Louba in Neuss (today in Germany): 'Louba, daughter of Gastinasus, from Ubia lies buried here; Quintus Cornelius, son of Quintus, of the Galeria tribe, for his wife.' Quintus mentions the Galeria tribe. It may be deduced from this that he came from the province Hispania or from Southern Gaul. He must have been stationed in Germania. He married Louba there, presumably shortly after completing his service, as soldiers were not allowed to marry. Louba came from Ubia, the region between Cologne and Bonn today. So, this gravestone bears witness to an intercultural marriage between a Roman soldier from the Mediterranean region and his German beloved.

This gravestone was once bought by Charles Guillon,* a collector from Roermond in the Netherlands, and through his collection ended up in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden (National Museum of Antiquities) in 1890. As the gravestone came from Germany and was severely damaged, it was never part of the museum display. Thanks to the publication of the inscription, the object gained meaning again.** The Allard Pierson has the gravestone on long-term loan, and so Quintus and his Louba have been given their place in the presentation From Rome to Roman.
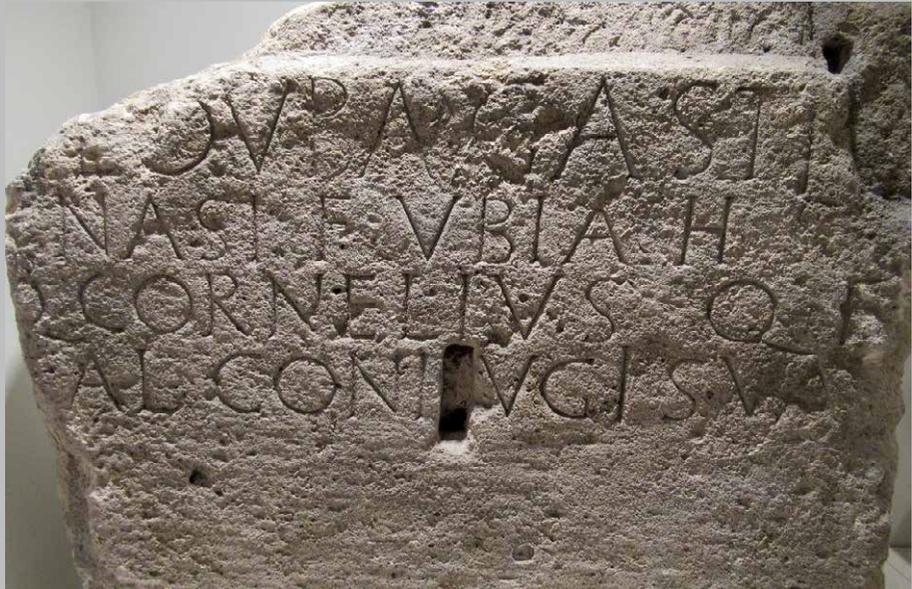
4.17 Roman gravestone in memory of Louba, wife of a Roman soldier from southern Gaul, found in Neuss (Germany). Limestone, *c*. AD 40, RMO GL 418.

* Verhart (2018).
** Derks (2009).

Hidden narratives: A secret from Saba

Everyone knows the ecstatic feeling of opening drawers in a depot, randomly going through shelves of books, exploring the attics or cellars of monumental buildings, and dusting down and rereading archive documents. You come across pieces that arouse curiosity and astonishment. They belong to the reservoir of objects and collections mentioned earlier, and are rarely consulted. The provenance of this object explains why the piece was acquired and has since then remained unknown.

4.18 A plaquette with inscription from Southern Arabia in the Allard Pierson depot. Alabaster, width 43.5 cm, AD 100–300. APM 10843.

In 1984, when the Allard Pierson Museum marked its 50th anniversary, three Arabian objects were donated anonymously through an art dealer, including this rectangular and smooth stone slab with signs that I am unable to read.

In 1981, the museum organized an exhibition on arabic alabaster objects with support of this art dealer, which we would now characterize as a sales exhbition. And this is probably how these objects ended up in the collection. The plaquette originates from the Kingdom of Saba (today in Yemen) at the extreme end of the Arabian peninsula and dates from the Roman era, 2nd or 3rd century AD. Saba was crucial to the incense trade between India and the Roman Empire.* The text in Ancient South Arabian script may be translated as 'Amakin son of Ba'alum 'Asab', and 'contracted' or 'by order of'.** It is an intriguing piece, but it does not fit well into the current narrative of the Roman department. For this reason, it will remain lying in the dark for the present, waiting for someone with a new perspective or a particular research question.

* McLaughlin (2014).
** With thanks to my Groningen colleague, Ahmad Al-Jallad, for the translation of the inscription.

Hidden narratives: The peregrinations of the 'Caesar manuscript'

All modern copies of the manuscript of Julius Caesar's *De Bello Gallico* derive from two Carolingian copies from the 9th century that were both made in French monasteries. One of them is currently held in the Allard Pierson collection and is thus Amsterdam's oldest handwritten book.

In the first half of the 9th century, monks at the Benedictine Abbey of Fleury near Orléans copied Caesar's report of his conquest of Gaul (modern-day France) from fragile and perishable papyrus rolls onto virtually indestructible parchment made of sheep's hide. The manuscript kept in the Allard Pierson numbers 99 pages, equivalent to a flock of approximately 100 sheep. The manuscript's peregrinations read like an adventure story. The 'Amsterdam Caesar manuscript' was coveted by scholars and a pope, was kept in the library of a Heidelberg professor and was stolen by an unscrupulous Amsterdam student. It then came via an auction into the hands of the Amsterdam merchant Jan Six. It was acquired in 1706 by the Athenaeum Illustre, the precursor of the University of Amsterdam.*

Due to the manuscript's vulnerability and sensitivity to light, it can only be displayed on rare occasions. Now that knowledge in the area of preservation has significantly increased in recent years and new techniques are being developed, a team of specialists is investigating the possibility of safely displaying the manuscript, taking into account the requirements in terms of light and climate.**
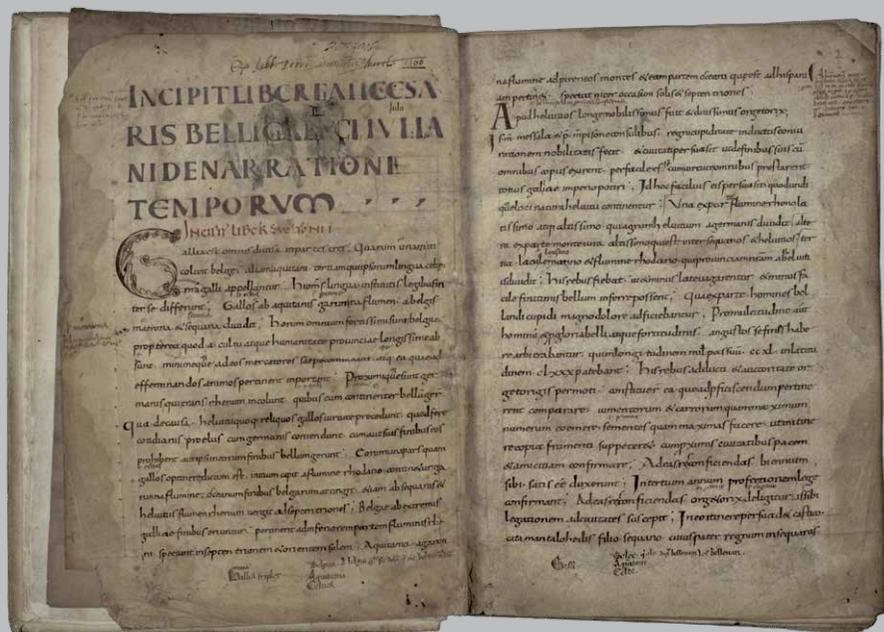
4.19 This manuscript, written in Carolingian minuscule, is one of the two oldest copies of Julius Caesar's *De bello Gallico*. Parchment, AD 850–900. AP hs. XV G 1.

* Burgersdijk (2002).
** https://www.auf.nl/en/projects/19-de-bello-gallico.html.

Holy Empires (Early Middle Ages, 500–1300)

After AD 476, a weakened Western Roman Empire disintegrated into Germanic kingdoms. Christianity spread here through missionaries and war. The pope in Rome crowned Charlemagne emperor of the Holy Roman Empire in AD 800. The eastern part of the Roman Empire continued as the Byzantine Empire, a powerful bulwark with at its head an emperor ruling as Christ's representative on earth. Early in the 7th century, the Arabs united under Islam and invaded the Byzantine Empire. Caliphs, successors to the prophet Mohammed, ruled from Persia to Spain.

From the 4th century onwards, a hermitic and monastic way of life arose in Egypt within the Coptic variant of Christianity – far away from urban life and at the edge of the desert. This concept was to play a crucial role in the later conversion of Europe to Christianity. Monasteries were the centres of the Carolingian Renaissance where libraries formed the intellectual bridge between Antiquity and the Middle Ages. These monasteries were often the target of Viking raids, forcing the Carolingians to decentralise their centres of authority. The rise of fairly autonomous local counties and duchies with their castles as militarily defensible centres was the result. Many modern territories can already be discerned by looking at the map of Europe shortly after 1000. We conclude this period from a historical perspective with the crusades that set out for Jerusalem between 1096 and 1271.

The objects in this room show that there was certainly diversity and cultural exchange during the Early Middle Ages. New cultures flowered from the crosspollination between classical heritage, and two new religions rose to superpower status: Christianity and Islam.[31]

The Coptic Cabinet

In the fourth century AD, Christianity became the dominant religion in the Roman Empire. The Egyptian offshoot that developed from AD 451 is known as the Coptic Orthodox Church. Arab warriors invaded Egypt in AD 641. The new rulers referred to the Christian inhabitants by the term *qibt*: a corruption of *aigyptios*, Greek for Egyptian. This later gave rise to the term 'Coptic', a designation for the Christian-Egyptian language and culture that researchers use for its heyday between the fourth and tenth centuries. As a result of persecution and the harsh desert climate, the Copts lived an isolated existence, which gave rise to their very own religious and artistic tradition.

From the Nile to the Amstel: the cultural paradox of Amsterdam

In museum presentations on the Dutch Republic and on Amsterdam in the 17th and 18th centuries, the term 'Dutch Masters' refers to the masters of the art of painting. However, the Dutch masters of the book production were at least as important as their colleagues in painting – and their work at the time was certainly as valuable and popular.

While painting production was the apex, book production was the iceberg on which Amsterdam's creative industry floated in the 17th and 18th centuries. The contacts between printers, publishers, paper merchants, typesetters, booksellers, engravers, cartographers, authors, translators, scientists, and painters were a major factor in the success of Dutch cultural production then. Under the influence of a competitive (sales) market, innovative techniques and wealthy investors, the close relationship between creative professions of all kinds led to an extraordinary expansion in book production. More books were published in Amsterdam in this period than anywhere else in Europe.[32]

Hidden narratives: An ancient theme on a modern stele?

In 1976, the Allard Pierson bought a Coptic stele from the art trade. It soon disappeared into the depot, as it was said to be a forgery. The stele was investigated again in 2015 as part of the CEMEC project. It could not be convincingly identified as an antique object and therefore doubts remain about its dating.* By investigating the logistical links in the provenance history and by following the descriptions of the specialists, Lindsay Morehouse identified a pattern of fraudulence in the art trade: this object belongs to a group of Coptic steles, all depicting a youth with grapes and a dove (see fig. 4.20). Though their iconography traces back to excavations in Egypt, the steles cannot be linked to excavation sites and were probably fabricated for the art trade during the 20th century.** Attributions were made that rely on the findings of a small group of specialists from the 1960s which were copied without checking by later scholars. Lindsay's investigation is not yet completed, but what is clear is that curators and archaeologists in the years 1960-1980 were happy to believe that a youth with grapes and a bird represented a Coptic iconographic tradition. This makes this stele only the more intriguing.

4.20 In the Coptic Cabinet, the Allard Pierson shows its Coptic collection, made up of Egyptian, Classical and Christian elements. In the middle the Coptic stele depicting a youth with grapes and a dove.

* Megens (2019).
** This research is being conducted by Lindsay Morehouse, PhD candidate at the University of Amsterdam in the Amsterdam School for Heritage and Memory studies (AHM) and the school of Archaeology (ACASA), and Historical Researcher for the CEMEC project. See also: https://www.academia.edu/32242253/From_Britain_to_Bahrain_Was_the_Boy_with_Grapes_a_global_phenomenon.

This incredibly successful and wide-ranging book production falls outside the narrative of virtually all Dutch museums. One reason that these works on paper find themselves in the shadows is that they cannot tolerate too much light and do not lend themselves readily to museum display. Another is that the Dutch masters of the book seem in our increasingly visual culture to have been replaced by the dominant and frequently one-dimensional narrative of the Dutch masters of painting. The result is that the paintings now draw the full attention of the public, whereas at the time they were remarkably enough not nearly as publicly visible as they are now. This is what I call the cultural paradox of Amsterdam.[33]

The Special Collections of the University Library provide a unique glimpse into Amsterdam book production from the 15th century onwards, with the emphasis on the 17th and 18th centuries. In the department 'Amsterdam, creative city', the Allard Pierson celebrates the masters of the book, who formed, if not the core, then certainly the basis for Amsterdam's cultural sector between 1600 and 1900. In three rooms we offer a glimpse into the creative city that Amsterdam was: an international hub and the global centre of the art of book printing and cartography. The fragility of books, atlases and other works on paper means that we will be changing this presentation every four months. This demands a lot from curators and conservators but at the same time also constantly provides us with the opportunity to show the visitor new creations and stories by well-known and unknown Amsterdammers from the Special Collections.[34]

Changing themes reveal Amsterdam as creative city

We have since its inauguration gone through several switches of the semi-permanent display, with new themes being shown in the existing showcases each time. Manuscripts from Holland, a monumental bible and Pompeius Occo (see below) were at the focus in the period 1350–1600. Colonial relations in the 17th century were depicted with the cartographic collection, and the visitor became acquainted with theatre as provocation on the basis of a selection from the theatre collection. Considerable attention was paid to the French-Flemish mystic and adventuress Antoinette Bourignon, and to the visit by Maria de' Medici to Amsterdam in 1638. Fascination with nature was accorded plenty of space, as was the pirate as a literary creation. We 'rediscovered' the major female playwrights and abolitionist theatre. Attention was also paid to Orientalism, the Stadsschouwburg (City Theatre) and to the fact that in the 18th century, a quarter of all the work printed in Amsterdam was in French. The 19th century hall showed the most popular cookery book, tropical fruits in Dutch cuisine, Multatuli, the founding of the University of Amsterdam, posters from the book trade and Amsterdam's Cabalt puppeteer family. This list is far from complete. It is intended purely to illuminate the range of themes that the all-but inexhaustible collection allows. The intention is that after a certain number of switches, the texts and illustrations of the objects displayed will be compiled and published.

Amsterdam on the Rise (Late Middle Ages, 1300–1600)

In the Late Middle Ages, when Holland was part of larger European counties and duchies, Amsterdam was little more than a fishing village in the shadow of the episcopal city of Utrecht, the political capital at The Hague and industrial centres like Leiden, Delft, and Haarlem. After 1500, Amsterdam starts to flourish culturally, with craftspeople, merchants and members of religious orders increasingly establishing themselves. Only from 1516 onwards, 60 years after the invention of the art of printing, are books printed in Amsterdam

Hidden narratives: 'This book belongs in Amsterdam'

The wealthy and influential merchant and banker Pompejus Occo was among those setting the tone in Amsterdam on the eve of the 17th century. His home on Kalverstraat, called Het Paradijs (Paradise) and located a stone's throw from the Allard Pierson today, turned into a place where artists and humanists would meet. Occo, a humanist, established a considerable library numbering more than a thousand volumes, according to a contemporary.* The Allard Pierson was able to purchase two manuscripts from this library in 2019. They contained their owner's inscriptions: 'This book belongs to poppius occo of paradise in amsterdam' in the book of hours, and 'This book belongs to (the house) Paradise in Amsterdam 1525' in the prayerbook. Until 2018, both books remained in the possession of Occo's descendants.** They were then kept in the family and ultimately sold through the art trade.***

4.21 The ownership inscription of one of the earliest owners – perhaps the very first owner – in the book of hours of Pompeius Occo. Illuminated manuscript, parchment, *c.* 1500–1520. AP hs XXX 118.

Little is known about private libraries in Amsterdam before the 17th century – the period in which Amsterdam became Europe's most important book city. The purchase of these two manuscripts with the owner's inscription by a former neighbour from across the street means that the Allard Pierson is now in a better position to identify and study private libraries in Amsterdam.

* https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/collectie/SK-A-3924/catalogus-entry; the library of the humanist Rudolph Agricola could also be found here.
** Inscriptions dating from 1877 in both manuscripts provide evidence of this: by Baron Alexander Gillès de Pélichy (1844–1926) of Sint Andries, near Bruges, a direct descendant of Occo. Both manuscripts were inherited by his son, Baron Raphael Gillès de Pélichy (1875–1967) in 1927.
*** Van der Hoek (2020).

4.22 The manuscripts and printed books in the department 'Amsterdam on the rise' tell the story of Amsterdam on the threshold from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, when the city grew to become a major trading centre.

as well. Just as across all of Europe, printed matter becomes the means of disseminating new knowledge and divergent views. At the same time, commerce and industry start to flourish in the city, as Amsterdam was favourably located and became an important port for transhipment. Immigrants, including artists and printers, from the Southern Netherlands, Germany and elsewhere make a major contribution. The new era is accompanied by a great deal of political and religious unrest. The Alteration of 1578, when the Catholic city administration is deposed, makes for a caesura. From now on, Calvinist Protestants are in charge. Amsterdam rapidly gains in influence within the County of Holland and well beyond. For this period, the Allard Pierson is displaying manuscripts and printed books from its own collection that bear witness to Amsterdam in this period of transition: from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, from provincial town to major metropolis.[35]

Cosmopolitan city (1600–1700)

During the 17th century, Amsterdam turned into Europe's richest city. The Dutch East India Company (VOC) and the Dutch West India Company (WIC) were established. The VOC controls traded in the Indian Ocean and established trading posts by brute force. The WIC was engaged in privateering and the Transatlantic slave trade. Enslaved Africans were put to work in wretched conditions on plantations in Brazil and Suriname. Relative freedom of worship, security and legal certainty turned Amsterdam into a financial and cultural centre, attractive to many. Among the immigrants were religious refugees, including Protestants from Flanders, Jews from Spain and Portugal, and also Germans seeking adventure who frequently seek work with the VOC. All brought with them their own traditions and knowledge, and in this way contributed to the cosmopolitan atmosphere. The theatre, and the book as well, occupied a central position in this.

Hidden narratives: Mapping power

Maps and cartography tell a story about borders and quickly take the viewer back through time. Maps have a purpose. For the mapmaker, for the user and the buyer, for the collector or for the visitor. During the 17th century, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) developed an innovative system for collecting and compiling cartographic information. On their voyages to the East, ship's captains made accurate records of the coastlines and newly discovered places. On their return, the existing maps were updated and were then sent out with the next voyage. Cartographers naturally also made use of this information for commercial products like atlases. These atlases reveal a blend of exoticism, escapism and colonial power.*

At the Allard Pierson we organised a student project based among other things on this map of the Indonesian archipelago by Willem Lodewijcksz, which depicts the local population in the upper right corner. The project used a postcolonial lens to analyse the interconnections of Dutch colonial practice in the then East Indies. The project revealed how a fresh critical view leads to new narratives and can moreover be the stimulus for a constructive discussion and dialogue between curators and students.**
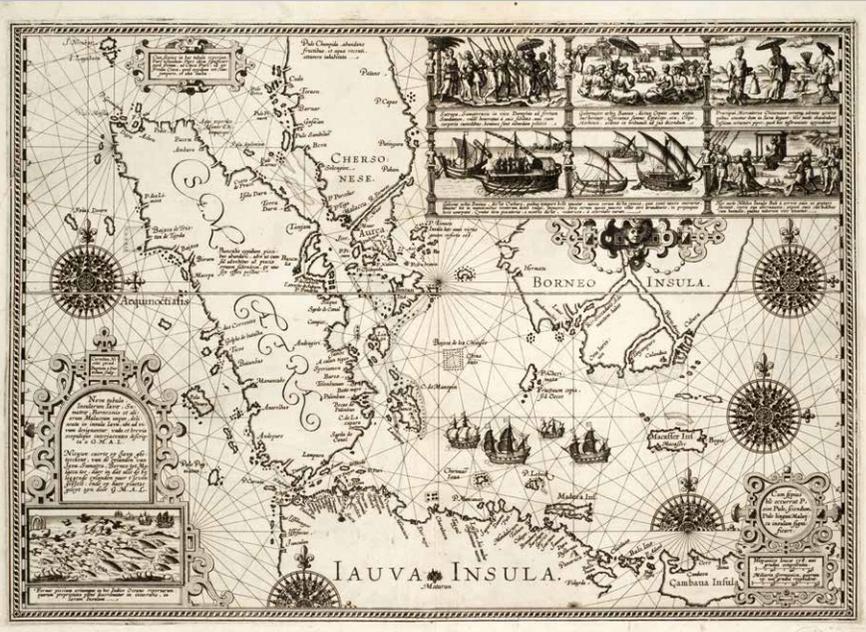
4.23 Willem Lodewijcksz. was a member of one the first Dutch expeditions to the then East Indies. During his travels he chronicled the lives and customs of native populations. *Nova tabula insularum Iavae* (New map of Borneo, Java, Sumatra, and Malacca), 1604. AP HB-KZL O.K. 130.

* Segal & Vannieuwenhuyze (2020).
** https://www.fromcartographytocookbooks.com/menu/introduction.

More books were then published in Amsterdam than anywhere else in Europe. Atlases, maps, illustrated books and pictures sold like hot cakes; according to estimates, 70% of the Amsterdam population could read. The impact of Amsterdam book production during the 17th and 18th centuries was immense, with the printed word reaching a large group. Increasing interest in the sciences, travelogues and the theatre boosted the market for printed matter. The quality achieved by Amsterdam's printers was unequalled.

City life (1700–1800)

By around 1700, Amsterdam had grown to become Europe's richest city. We see a metropolis making use of the capital and networks of the previous generation – the merchant had given way to the financier who invests his capital. This prosperity comes along with exploitation. Amsterdam patricians invested not only in the international slave trade, but also own shares in the plantations in the colony Suriname. Little of this was to be seen in Amsterdam itself. Despite economic decline, culture and the sciences flourished as never before. Freedom ruled here, and writers and philosophers from all over Europe brought their work to the Amsterdam publishers. The wealthy elite met for pleasure in dozens of societies and institutes for literature, theatre, the arts and the sciences, which held gatherings in monumental canal-side buildings, both in the city theatre and in the many country houses in the city's environs. The quality of the printed matter and the cartography was high, and books printed in Amsterdam were read across Europe. The output can be viewed in this room of the museum.[36]

The rise of the modern city (1800–1900)

At the start of the 19th century Amsterdam was ruined. The bankrupt Dutch East India Company (VOC) had saddled the nation with a national debt of hundreds of millions. The trading empire was a heap of rubble. Following the demise of the Emperor Napoleon in 1815, life in the Netherlands got going again. Railway lines were laid, and canals dug. Industrialisation boosted the production of goods and employment, and from 1850 large groups of workers fled the countryside for Amsterdam, where living conditions were poor. And although the Netherlands officially abolished slavery in 1863, exploitation of the colonies actually increased.

Different social groups became involved in alleviating the conditions endured by the workers and the poor. This was also the period when various groups are emancipated: Amsterdam's Jews, for example, gained civil rights for the first time in 1796. After 1850, the city experienced a fresh economic boom. This was the era of soirees, where 'friends' books' (*alba amicorum*), anatomic atlases and illustrations were passed round, and the time of magnificent theatrical productions. The arts and sciences revived. From the University of Amsterdam, emerging from the Athenaeum Illustre in 1877, came a relatively large number of Nobel laureates. Writers, publishers, printers, graphic and architectural designers and artists collaborated. Expansion of the city and construction projects stimulated architecture. Museums were founded, the theatre and musical life flourished. All of this is reflected in the Allard Pierson collections presented in this gallery.

Hidden narratives: From painted herbarium to healing garden

Between 1664 and 1682 there was already a garden at the location of the present courtyard garden of the Allard Pierson (see fig. 6.3). This 'hortus medicus', where mainly medicinal plants grew, was the predecessor of the Hortus Botanicus of the University of Amsterdam. Together with his daughter Maria and several other artists, Jan Moninckx made 420 watercolours of plants from this garden on parchment, between 1686 and 1709. This painted herbarium, the *Moninckx Atlas*, which is kept at Allard Pierson, consists of five volumes and is of great importance from the viewpoint of taxonomy, historical botany and art history.*

4.24 Watercolour from the herbarium by Jan Moninckx, 1686–1709, a rich collection of illustrations of the often extremely rare plants in Amsterdam's Hortus Botanicus. AP hs. VI G 1-7.

The courtyard has long been approached in a sectoral way. We had a herbarium, a building complex and also a garden. Yet one can experience this historical place much more strongly when it is connected with its heritage, and so becomes a factor. By using this heritage as a source of inspiration (vector) you can create something new.** The herbarium will now provide inspiration for a new design of the historical courtyard garden, which fits the plans for communal tranquil courtyards in the new University Quarter. In the new 'healing garden', volunteers, students and researchers can experiment with growing herbs and medicinal plants, partly also for the benefit of the museum café of the Allard Pierson.

* Wijnands (1983).
** For the development from *sector* to *factor* to *vector*, see Chapter 6.

Hidden narratives: Allard Pierson (1831–1896)

Allard Pierson (1831–1896) was one of the pioneering thinkers of the 19th century. He was born into a prosperous Amsterdam family and had the benefit of a broad education. His first interest was theology. Following his studies, he was called to the ministry in Leuven (Louvain) and later with the Walloon community in Rotterdam. Allard Pierson had modern concepts regarding faith and rejected anything in the Bible that was inexplicable. After leaving the church, he was invited to take up the theology chair at Heidelberg University in Germany.

As a cultural historian too, Allard Pierson was averse to encrusted ideas. When the University of Amsterdam was established officially in 1877, he was chosen as professor of art history, aesthetics and modern languages. He was returning to the city of his birth. As a passionate observer of the arts and culture in the broadest sense of the words, he was an example to many students.
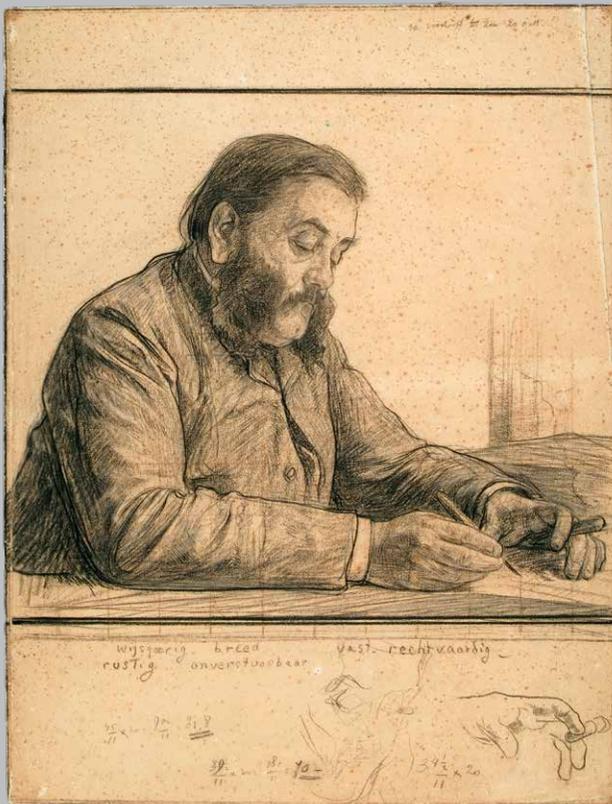
4.25 Jan Veth, study for a portrait of Allard Pierson, the first professor of Art History at the University of Amsterdam, 1889. Charcoal on paper, 59.4 × 45.4 cm. AP 022.107.

The Allard Pierson, the museum and research center for the heritage collections of the University of Amsterdam, bears his name with pride. We celebrate him as an independent thinker whose intellectual quest serves as a model for the inquiring mind. He was a researcher, who read, studied, reflected and published his entire life, at a time with many similarities to our own: a time of modernism, of unheard-of economic growth, of nationalism, of globalisation, and also of rising mass consumption and mass communication. His spirit is closely bound up with the collections that we compile, open up, manage and present.

Hidden Narratives: Looted art from the Second World War

I have never seen this painting by Martin Monnickendam on display, but it certainly has drawn a lot of attention on account of its provenance: it was once part of the Goudstikker collection. That name is synonymous with looted art, artworks of problematic provenance linked to the Second World War.*

Jacques Goudstikker (1897–1940) was a Jewish Dutch art dealer who fled the Netherlands when it was invaded by Nazi Germany during World War II, leaving his extensive and significant art collection behind. It was to become the largest claim for restitution of art looted by the Nazis. This painting was put on sale by the Amsterdam auction house Frederik Muller & Co on 8 October 1940 on the instruction of Alois Miedl, who had that

4.26 Martin Monnickendam, *Schouwburgloge* (A box at the Amsterdam city theatre), painting from the Allard Pierson's theatrical collection, 1912. Oil on canvas 187.5 x 151 cm. AP sch00105.000.

year taken over the Goudstikker art dealership after it had been confiscated by the Nazis. It may then have come into the hands of A.B.C. Dudok de Wit and subsequently, via the married couple Vrind-Dudok de Wit, into the possession, in 1969, of the Toneelmuseum te Amsterdam (Amsterdam Theater Museum).** Since 2013, when the theatre collections were transferred to the University of Amsterdam, it is kept by the Allard Pierson. In 2014, Marei von Saher's lawyers were provided with all relevant documentation. This painting represents the problems of dealing with art from the Second World War that we recognise today from the discussions about colonial heritage. We see increasingly that moral-ethical arguments have greater weight than strictly legal considerations. The recent return of a Kandinsky painting by Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum is a good example of this.***

* https://www.musealeverwervingen.nl/nl/1356/objecten/schilderijen/monnickendam,
  -schouwburgloge/.
** Van Helden (2009).
*** https://www.stedelijk.nl/en/collection/4540-wassily-kandinsky-bild-mit-hausern.

Cabinet for the 20th and 21st centuries' collections

From the Nile to the Amstel, a journey through 10,000 years of cultural history, terminates in the Amsterdam of the modern age. The Cabinet for the 20th and 21th centuries contains changing presentations of and with works from the Allard Pierson's own collections, which tell the story of Amsterdam as a serial – in books, prints, documents and artefacts, including the Dutch late-19th century ideal of collection and civilisation that has supplied us with all these archaeological and paper collections. A new presentation can be viewed here at least twice a year.[37]

A visitor in the 'Amsterdam, creative city' department at the Allard Pierson.

MUSEUMS, HERITAGE, AND DIGITAL CURATION

Dos and don'ts

Do
- Before a major refurbishment, draw up a master plan with all the departments involved.
- Be prepared for the process to take longer than at first thought.
- Create a physical and mental space in the museum for experiment, and involve external creative individuals.
- Organise meetings of experts and make a display for testing with staff, external experts and the public.
- When making the plan, involve as many outsiders as possible and arrange for a critical view; you will notice that you and your colleagues have lots of blind spots when it comes to your own institute and collection.
- Ahead of time, consider carefully the climate and light requirements of the collection that will be displayed, as these limiting conditions are a lot more important than you might believe.
- Museum renewal requires largescale investments. Pay attention in this case to a sustainable social impact and outreach, and try to monitor this through concrete indicators (weighing, not counting).
- A new display demands a new maintenance management. Involve the collection management team and the conservators in drawing up your plans, as well as the curators; do not underestimate the work and thus the cost of technical maintenance.
- Turn disadvantage – it takes a long time – to advantage, and build in a lot of intervening steps and evaluations; the outcome will not only be better but more sustainable.
- Trust you project leaders and give them room to manoeuvre.

Don't
- Don't bank on the new display to last for only a limited period. Experience shows that it always takes much longer before resources and opportunity are available for another refurbishment.
- Don't go for one dominant narrative, and don't focus on a single dominant target group.

5.1 A 'leap motion' installation in the Roman department of the Allard Pierson (2014): visitors could move the projection of the reconstructed colours on the architectural fragment by moving one's index finger.

5

Digital Curation

Digitisation generates astonishing potential for involving the public and researchers in widely differing ways in art and heritage. But we can also see that museum and curatorial practice have not kept up with the dynamism in digital image culture (for example multimedia, mixed and virtual reality, 3D). The origins of this divide are explained below on the basis of the *digital heritage paradox*. It is worthwhile to investigate the digital opportunities on offer and to apply them in heritage practice. It is also a matter of urgency to bridge this divide, and to develop contemporary curatorial practices and systems that go further than the traditional collection management ones that are internally focused. This demands a specific impulse in the field of the digital management of how collections can be enriched, also known as 'digital curation'.

Heritage institutions and professionals still rely, in their activities, on collection management systems that continue to be based on traditional and analogous practices of collection registration. Over the past decade we have seen many examples that demonstrate the great potential of advanced digitisation, although these were usually one-off, stand-alone applications that were not embedded in museum practice or linked to digital collection management systems. As will be explained below, by means of several specific examples, these initiatives were often rather experimental and of short duration, and coming to completion without making any lasting impact on how heritage is presented. But still they are important markers for a sea change in how we might engage with our collection information in the future.

Digital curation finds itself at the interface between digital collection management systems, the practice of heritage professionals/curators, and the creative sector (visualisations, 3D, multimedia). The practise of professionals in all three domains needs to link up much more than at present in order to arrive at full integration. To this end, there will have to be better and practicable support tools, and more courses and best practices will have to be developed in the field of visual storytelling. It will also be essential to provide existing collection registration systems with enriched metadata and personal stories and perspectives. It is crucial that more contextual information be added to the current factual object descriptions, so that the multiplicity of compelling stories that we might tell based on our collections do not remain locked away in the heads of curators and educators. In this way, significant stories perspectives surrounding heritage objects can not only be recorded, but also retained for use and reuse both within and outside the cultural heritage institutions and by the creative sector.

Enriching of Metadata & Repositories

Training on Digital & Visual Storytelling

Heritage Practice

Digital Curation

Collection Management Systems

Creative Industry

Development of Digital Curation Tools & Platforms
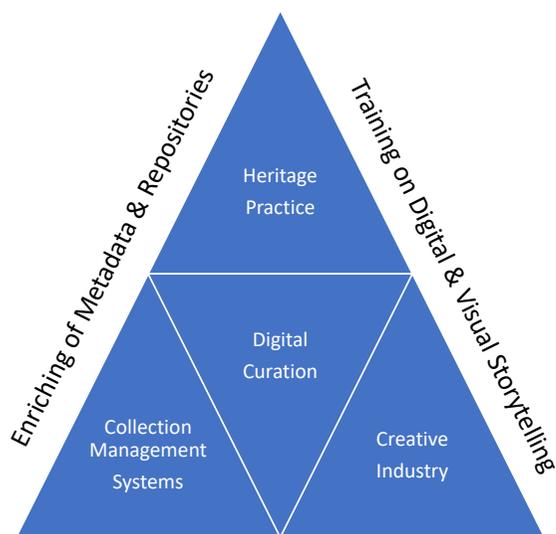
5.2 Digital curation is dependent on enriched repositories, training in the field of visual and digital storytelling, and developing digital curation tools and platforms.

Challenges of digital curation

To make progress, we will have to resolve major challenges at three different levels in the field of digital cultural heritage.

Heritage attitude

First of all, let us consider 'heritage attitude'. The changes needed to arrive at a broader understanding of the relevance of heritage objects and collections are to an equal extent changes in professional heritage practices, changes in organisational structure and professional attitude, and changes of a technical nature. The meanings attributed to cultural heritage are in themselves not of a descriptive nature but are digital contents and data associated with them. We see this in practice in a great need for more integrated and linked curatorial collection management systems. The current heritage practice needs to be expanded to provide professionals with new instruments (support tools) and *digital curation* methods. In digital libraries we are seeing a significant shift from metadata management to digital curation. This shift has been made possible in the first instance by the introduction of enhanced data models, including for example the Europeana Data Model (EDM).[1] Enhanced data makes it possible to simultaneously select annotations and presentation aspects with certain representations (images). In turn this allows new products and applications, for web and mobile apps, that then facilitate new services, such as advanced and dynamic, personal assistants as museum or tourist guides.

Multimedia applications

Secondly, visual storytelling merits our full attention, critically relying on multimedia and 3D experts. Both generic solutions, derived from 3D platforms like Sketchfab, and customised applications clearly demonstrate the added value of advanced digitisation. 3D models are integrated into the digital platforms and digital curation tools like the Cross Culture Timeline,[2] providing considerable visual added value. There is great demand, in

5.3 Four stages in the animated biography of a bronze ship's ram found on the sea floor near the Aegadian Islands to the north of Sicily.

the museum industry, for customisation in the form of digital tools that are easy to use. But all too often the multimedia applications used/developed are isolated and difficult to access, and not linked to the digital curatorial collection systems in the institution in question. Integrated systems, which for example blend multimedia/3D models into curatorial systems, or that annotate videoclips and 3D models with stories, exist virtually exclusively as proof of concept, presumably so because the research parties do not see any benefit in investing in the tedious and time-consuming phase in order to develop an application that can be relied upon to robustly work in practice. In addition, the integration of multimedia and 3D content makes new products and applications possible, powered by attractive visual content and strong, dynamic narratives. I shall return on this below, when discussing practical cases, but I would like here to point in advance to an extremely successful animation of an ancient ship's bronze battering ram that was part of the *Sicily and the Sea* exhibition at the Allard Pierson.[3] While this object is difficult to interpret, its biography, from production process and find location up to discovery, we were able to present in a linear visual presentation developed through a close collaboration between curator, 3D artist and animator (fig. 5.3).[4]

The previously mentioned programs and courses in the field of visual storytelling can lead to crossovers and cross-institutional reuse becoming possible in an open way, and to other stakeholders (such as researchers, the creative industry) being facilitated to use, reuse and enrich this information. In addition, the option arises of annotating and including external sources in a flexible way, whenever the new approaches that are becoming standard in the management of research data, such as dynamic tools for citing data, are reused and expanded.[5]

Enriching collection data

Thirdly, digital curation is about enriching the content of the digital collection registration and digital storage systems, which as a result will go far beyond functional collection management. The point is that we add digital support tools for heritage professionals to enhance stories, perspectives and presentational aspects. By using generic tools, it should also be possible to explore and providing access to cultural heritage information in much richer ways than ever before. The inclusion of a rich source of data in the curatorial systems facilitates new products and services, which stimulate new ways of co-curation in collaboration projects beyond the classical confines of the organisation. This will contribute to novel forms of engagement and result in the co-creation and co-curation of the complex, dynamic and multi-sided stories about (objects in) museum collections.

Digital collection registration systems, collection platforms, and digital curation tools have evolved considerably over recent decades. They have fulfilled the promise of storing all data, at every scale, with rich data models for semantic annotation and with powerful application programming interfaces (APIs) for integrating applications, data repositories, and programs. This development still stands in stark contrast to the greatest part of the heritage material at hand, furnished as it is with minimal metadata derived from only internal collection management systems. There is a need for more initiatives that show the possibilities of communicating the rich multivocality sometimes hidden in the various layers of meaning in heritage objects. In addition to integrated curatorial systems, many initiatives in the field of digital humanities demonstrate the potential, having already supplied annotated corpora and domain-specific portal sites on research collections such as historical literature, film collections, parliamentary procedures, and newspaper collections.[6]

Follow-up steps

What is missing in todays' curatorial systems? First of all, digital representations have come a long way since the traditional index card catalogues, which allowed hardly any metadata fields or access points but still form the core of today's curatorial systems. Digitised heritage can be just as rich as the original document or artefact, in fact even richer in the case of additional annotations, better or more legible, or more complete through reconstruction. In the heritage domain there is a need for advanced digitisation, including rich multimedia (audio, video, 3D, VR, AR, Mixed Reality). In this regard, the possibilities are worth considering for annotating multimedia and 3D content semantically, i.e. annotating specific components, with the object being reunited with contextual information and stories. This generates new design practices, products and services that are able to make use of additional information.

The internal collection registration systems in museums in general contain a treasure of administrative metadata, but very little descriptive metadata: rarely more than a title and a brief description, plus a few details on the maker or provenance, and physical appearance (possibly including a photo). In stark contrast to this, in modern exhibition rooms museums have gone much further than the cabinet of artefacts or of curiosities (e.g. *Wunderkammer* or *Kunstkammer*), and have placed the stories and how they are told at the focus. In particular, this offers the possibility of using simultaneous layers of annotation with powerful new options. Heritage stories can thus be separated from technical annotations made during the scanning or production of the model. Platforms for commu-

nity-driven multimedia and 3D can be created by opening up curatorial and authoring tools to external users. In this way, the work domain of heritage institutions can be considerably broadened, with new products and services offered. Storytelling is one of the core competencies of museum professionals, but these stories and the telling of them are nevertheless not yet embedded in any curatorial (collection management) systems. One of the causes lies in the abovementioned separation between the everyday practice of the curators and the managers of the digital collection registration systems. We will further analyse this separation in the next section.

The digital heritage paradox

The growth of new technologies is generating a major societal challenge for heritage institutions. As a result of the rise of digital options, a situation is gradually coming about where the tradition of heritage practice and the rapidly advancing digital technological opportunities no longer join up seamlessly. This may lead to frustration on two sides, which I refer to as the digital heritage paradox.

On the one hand there is the impotence, reluctance, and on occasion a certain degree of incompetence and lack of understanding on the part of the heritage institution to anticipate the new opportunities that information technology offers. On the other, online users and physical visitors and stakeholders increasingly expect heritage organisations, just as other public institutions, to make use of the advantages of new technologies. What is noticeable is that large and influential galleries see little cause for offering onsite digital content. They focus instead on mobile applications and frequently develop strong online

5.4 School poster by J.H. Isings (1884–1977) depicting life in a Roman army camp on the Rhine in the Netherlands. Generations of Dutch school children have learned their history by means of the Isings posters.

strategies.[7] I referred earlier to the postmodern view in which, on the basis of critical heritage theory, museum objects are seen as part of a complex, layered and dynamic historical context. Thus we no longer speak of a single storyline or master narrative, but of different perspectives, or angles of approach.

In addition to the growing gap between what museums can deliver and what audiences expect e also have to deal with an increasingly strong image culture that is driven by evermore powerful visualisations. It is becoming easier by the day to create technically advanced visual reconstructions, such as of lost buildings or of faces of historical figures. While the scientific basis for these reconstructions cannot by any means always be checked, their impact is often disproportionately large. The Dutch school illustrations by J.H. Isings are a classic example (from 1910–1970), and more recently we could consider successful feature films on historical topics, such as *Troy*.

These powerful visualisations are frequently at odds with the abovementioned postmodern, problematising heritage practice because they offer a static and generalised view of our heritage. We could also compare this with a generalist demand versus a specialist and differentiated supply, with frustration on both sides as a result. In the case of our clay seal impression (see Chapters 1 and 2) this could for example mean that the public is being served only with clichéd information on the person of Caesar and will miss stories about the diplomatic networks of the Hellenist period or the person of Freiherr Von Bissing.

As an example of digitally documenting narratives, we could start with annotating an entire exhibition (represented by the collection of the objects shown) in the form of an virtual exhibition catalogue. The many virtual tours through exhibitions, the way they were promoted during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, 2021 and onwards, also make this technically feasible. Virtual, annotated catalogues would represent a big step forward in terms of digital accessibility and would open up the possibility for reuse of content. This way of working covers annotations when sharing multimedia, such as film or audio clips and recordings, or in particular annotations to 3D objects, for example to detail a digital reconstruction drawing, or to support the storytelling through an object's particular characteristics.

As far as reuse is concerned, digital storage of an entire exhibition (catalogue, virtual tours, annotations) would be a step forward, but this already applies to saving separate components of it, such as annotated 3D objects or fragments of stories. Story fragments of this kind can be reused, recombined, or instantiated with various objects and content. Digital archiving of exhibitions and of a range of additional information from other digital sources (consider here anonymised information on visitor flows from monitoring cameras) could provide much additional information although privacy aspects may be problematic.[8]

But the question is how far we can go on the basis of what has been documented. Here we need to consider for example dissecting the layered stories and recombining them to generate new perspectives. Narrative information in this way would provide the raw materials for new perspectives that stimulate the use or reuse of objects or collections in a new setting. While museum objects are characterised by a high degree of uniqueness, the stories and narratives are often shared by many other objects, collections and institutions: the same story can be told with different objects, opening up the possibility of new ways of sharing, co-creation and co-curation in heritage institutions and outside. Configur-
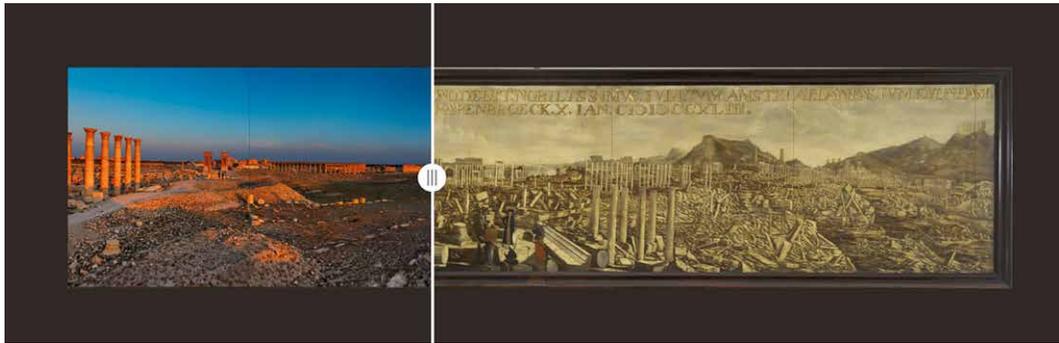
5.5 Still from the 'curtain viewer' animation in the Cross Culture Timeline: *Zicht op de ruïnes van Palmyra* (View of the ruins of Palmyra), painted in 1693 by Gerard Hofstede van Essen (AP 000.049) combined with a photo of the site today.

able story components are created in this way that correspond roughly to many different stories from the cultural heritage and which can be reused in many different contexts.

Earlier on, I presented the triangular relationship connecting digital registration systems, digital curation tools that can readily be used, and expertise in the field of visual storytelling.[9] If we wish to make progress in the field of digital curation, then these three domains must be more closely linked. Visual storytelling with digital content holds great promise for improving and deepening the experience and understanding of cultural heritage. I referred already to the successful animation of an ancient ship's bronze battering ram (see fig. 5.3). We see here that the complex biography of an object that is difficult to interpret can be displayed in an accessible, visual animation, from production process, through use, to find location and discovery. This can only be done provided that the metadata of the object are clear, a visual and correct storyline is developed by a curator, and the 3D artist and animator works it up into an attractive presentation. Other examples are the virtual reconstruction of an Etruscan grave[10] and the digital curtain viewer, by means of which a painted panorama of the ruins of Palmyra from 1693 can be compared with the site in Syria today (fig. 5.5).[11] In both cases, digital storytelling techniques are being used to expose one or more narratives.

But let us not lose sight of the ultimate objective. In the end the point is to employ digital instruments to assist in conveying complex stories. This aim should operate as a technological drawcard for the heritage sector. On the one hand, powerful visual storytelling tools can demonstrate clearly to heritage professionals the added value of bringing cultural stories into the digital world. On the other hand, in order to create impact we need to ensure that the narrative information (content) takes a form that meets the needs of the multimedia designers and can be reused by them effectively. This close linkage between the stories of the heritage professionals and the multimedia storytelling professionals will pay off in various ways, in particular through a more vivid visual experience of important cultural stories.

Support tools

The aim must be to make digital storytelling tools in museums as simple as possible. The need for support tools is clearly evident from the potential that digital collection platforms, such as Europeana, show by their extremely rich data models (e.g. EDM) containing much

more than can in practice be offered – and so are not used. It is noticeable that only limited metadata from a traditional collection management system are included in Europeana, as a result of a lack of infrastructure that would enable the heritage sector to curate richer information in a systematic way. Conversely, leading multimedia and 3D platforms depend for reliable and meaningful content to a great extent on the participation of heritage institutions and on making all the collections as accessible as possible. Leading platforms for the digital humanities also emphasise the need to develop of tools and methods that are seamlessly accessible and stimulate multidisciplinary research.[12]

Support from the heritage sector demands that attention is paid to pragmatic solutions within the range and capacities of smaller heritage institutions as well. I shall come back to this in the practical cases below. It is important to generate advanced tailormade solutions for a specific design, collection or artwork. But there is also a lot to be said for pragmatic and simple solutions that provide generic tools for mobile application, for example by adding stories as textual annotations to objects, so that VR/AR applications become possible, or by adding rich multimedia or 3D objects for illustrating digital stories in text form. So, we need to go to concepts where the historical divide between 'physical' curatorial heritage practices and digital curatorial practices is bridged within the same institutions. With the exception of libraries and archival registration systems, there has been strong resistance in the heritage sector to releasing (any) digital information that was available at scale in the internal access and documentation systems. Intellectual property rights does not make it easy sometimes. Curators in museums can be nervous or hesitant about releasing internal object descriptions on privacy grounds, or because they may be incomplete or inaccurate. But we also see specialist, natural history, art history, or archaeological terminology being used that cannot be interpreted by the wider public. There is equally concern about losing ownership or control. For example, certain registrars hesitate to publish their inventories, because their interpretation and use demands thoroughgoing familiarity with the terminology of the archive and the systems for keeping data up to date.

Shifts in digital heritage practice

The cultural heritage sector's potential for innovation derives from the ambitious objectives and new heritage concepts that were discussed in Chapter 1. The impact on digital curatorial practice will be discussed further here. What aims can we discern?[13] First of all we see a considerable expansion of current collection registration systems, providing new products and services that go much further than the current systems for collection management. As an example, I would like to point to spinoff applications, such as the Rijksmuseum's Rijksstudio[14] or to the links that can be set up through thematic network systems (maritime collections, natural history collections). Closely connected is the added value of cooperative management of collections, provided that not only the digital data but also physical management between institutions are linked. The opportunities are increasing all the time. We can for example see this in the aims of the Collectie Centrum Nederland (Netherlands Collection Centre), where a number of national collections have been accommodated in a single building with a view to arriving at optimal management and conservation, with additional room for research and exchange of expertise.

Secondly, there is the intention of coding stories and storytelling linked to heritage, based on concepts like the post-museum, and to stimulate discourse and discussion in this way. By this means, the range of curatorial practice in the heritage sector is greatly extended, exemplified by the many new ways of (re)using this information in specific products or services – on the web, on mobile phones and in the museum. In particular, initiatives in the field of oral traditions and intangible heritage, as we know them in the Netherlands in Rotterdam (Verhalenhuis Belvédère – Belvédère Storytelling House) and Amsterdam (Geheugen van Oost – Memories of East Amsterdam) present many opportunities.

But apart from concrete ground-breaking objectives, new concepts and approaches, and new products, services or commercial or organisational changes discussed here, there is a wider impact on the field of digital heritage resulting from a number of revolutionary changes in the heritage field, the heritage sector, and broader society. Let us illustrate these with six revolutionary changes that have been launched over the past decades and still fully underway.

Shift from physical to digital heritage

The physical exhibition hall is by definition restricted, and the visitor's capacity to take in is similarly limited. Mainly for these reasons, an average European museum has in general roughly 1–5% of its objects on display, and perhaps a further 1–5% have ever seen the light of day for a brief period while on loan or in a temporary exhibition. The overwhelming majority of collections remains hidden in the depository, locked away and inaccessible to the public. There is an urgent need for greater expertise among heritage professionals in arriving at improved digital unlocking of this astonishing, hidden potential. An incremental approach is needed to make this invisible heritage more readily available in digital form, by allowing the collections to be a part of 'strong stories'. This can also be done by

5.6 Visitors in the Allard Pierson's Hellenistic department.

providing attractive multimedia and 3D, so that the objects are contextualised in digital form. Moreover, the narrative approach helps to bring the multi-sided nature of museum objects to the fore.

From scanty metadata to rich digital descriptions

Traditional descriptions in the heritage sector are an extreme reduction of the original objects. A bibliographic description of the maker, title, publisher, year, and a handful of keywords and classifications can barely do justice to the content, the author, designer, printer, publisher, translator where applicable, illustrator, colour setter or collector of a book of 500 pages – let alone to its significance. As stated above, insufficient use has as yet been made by curators of the options presented by descriptive information fields in the existing collection management systems. And the situation is even more evident in archive inventories, with extensive collections that cover metres of material, but almost no description at a more specific level. Advanced digitisation, however, generates a digital representation that is almost as rich as the original object. In fact, it may even be richer than the physical object itself by incorporating visual reconstructions, informative content, supplementary context, etc. We need to include this more, and more comprehensively, in the curatorial systems of the heritage sector. In doing so we would create the raw materials for new ways of unlocking and reusing cultural heritage, whether online or in mobile or advanced digital museum applications.

Shift of back-office systems to front-office systems

In relation to the above, there is a shift underway from back-office systems (for collection registration) to front-office systems: digital presentations online and onsite. Where back-office systems are intended for use in the internal organisation of the heritage institution, the front-office systems make digital data accessible to end-users, visitors and researchers. This leads to the possibility of varying kinds of (re)use by different target groups for different purposes and so has consequences for the requirements set for metadata descriptions. In practice, linking back-office systems to front-office systems proves still to be very difficult. This has to do with securing (privacy-sensitive) collection data and with the fact that the applications vary so much. The front-office systems, like the Cross Culture Timeline that we shall discuss below, are also not yet linked to the collection registration systems.

Shift from 'access' to 'use' metadata

If we go a step further, we can draw important lessons from the digital humanities, where researchers have shown a preference for downloading the complete corpus, without making their own selections. Traditional forms of metadata have arisen from the need for access in a restricted context. There, object descriptions are surrogates for an indirect search command, because the metadata fields are all in fact access points or search fields. But now that everything is digital, metadata have lost much of their access function, and attention is shifting to semantic annotations that improve the use of the digital information.

Shift from object-focused thinking to narrative context in heritage studies

As discussed above, a transition is taking place from thinking focused on the object to thinking focused on the narrative. So, stories should not be linked in a secondary way to (single) objects; rather a story is placed at the centre as context, and then preferably from a multivocal perspective. These stories then automatically gain a much stronger emphasis, while the relationship to the collections is somewhat loosened. The biography of collections, the dynamic shift from interpretation directed at the content, and the layered nature of meanings can then all be offered to visitors via digital tools, and even be co-created by and with them.

Shift from single to layered and multivocal stories

A related point is the transition mentioned above from a single generic telling of a dominant narrative, such as a semi-permanent exhibition that emphasises one particular story or angle of approach, to more layered or multi-sided narratives. Curators may offer or select a host of stories, but visitors, online end-users and researchers can determine their own focus and preferences to explore these stories concerning collections, even creating their own interpretations and perspectives in a dynamic way. This is also the aspiration of the post-museum that was discussed earlier. All observations point to a need for further personalisation of the user experience, so that interactive experiences might be attuned to individual users that of course should be facilitated into a dialogue with other users.

In search of digital added value and sustainability

Until now, application of digitisation and information technology in heritage institutions has been mainly restricted to the digital storage and preservation of collection data and image files. The digital heritage experiences that are increasingly being offered online are the outcome of a great deal of work being done primarily behind the scenes. But what is the gain in knowledge and the concrete social impact? At exhibitions, digitisation can be seen in the form of screens showing digital information, interactive applications and serious games. Over recent decades we have seen a number of digital technologies supersede each other in rapid succession. Their existence to a large extent derives from the use of different sensor techniques and image recognition.

AR/VR

We have known about Augmented Reality since the mid-1990s – and it is linked to Virtual Reality.[15] In 2009, the Allard Pierson as one of the first Dutch museums presented a moveable screen with camera. An archaeological site could be viewed, and then the former building – a temple – appeared in 3D as *augmented* image.[16] This is one of those simple and powerful applications that was never followed up on, because the technical partners were not that interested in a practical application, probably because there was hardly any market. It was at this time too that 3D screens without glasses were launched.[17] Here too, it was too complicated to have the digital content made, and after a time the screens were no longer used.

5.7 A signet ring as a possible smart object: the clay seal impression from which Julius Caesar's likeness can be recognised, is used for the 3D reconstruction of his signet ring.

Smart objects

There was a great deal of experimentation in the *VMusT.net* project and the *meSch* project with so-called 'smart objects' in which new prototypes were also being made.[18] This offered opportunities for 'interactive smart replicas' that could be used to transmit information on an object to the exhibition visitor in a tactile or otherwise participative way. For our miniature clay seal impression of Julius Caesar, this would mean that we could scan and 3D-print the object and possibly enlarge it, or equip it with sensors and then link it with a screen and an animation.[19]

The Internet of things

The concept of the Internet of Things dates from the 1990s, but it became increasingly visible in our daily lives in around 2014, through domotics and a plethora of rfid chips and QR codes. The concept is about a network of devices linked through wifi (formerly: the internet). The impact of sensor technology or image recognition software is still relatively limited within the museum, if we compare it with other domains, such as retail, logistics and domotics. It is technically possible in museums as well for objects to be a component of the Internet of Things directly and to link them to information that is available online. But in practice this development has not yet become widely used, probably because a host of privacy-related problems have to be resolved and the related personalised data restricted. The time may be coming when an entire museum collection, much like our mobile phones, will be connected digitally and accessed using algorithms. But then the question arises whether it can be linked to the digital profiles of users and visitors. Socially and ethically there is a great deal of resistance to the onward march of this type of digital control.

Online user profiles

When museum visitors access the internet, a user profile is generated that can, when allowed, to a large extent predict their preferences and requirements. Searches by individual users and the linking of user profiles in this way generate 'big data' that can be used in all sorts of ways, in a museum as well. This leads to so-called 'recommendations'

that could for example be of commercial interest and used in many different ways. It is not hard to imagine visitors who have watched the series *Rome* on Netflix or HBO to be automatically directed to the clay seal impression of Caesar in our museum, and to be then sent details of a new series from this provider as viewing suggestions. Thus far user profiles and recommendations have primarily been used online. Given that museum visitors onsite, i.e. during their visit to a museum, are increasingly online, there are opportunities here that have as yet barely been explored.[20] But privacy considerations are increasingly determining the policy of cultural institutions, which are supposed to be sanctuaries safeguarding their visitors against the unwanted surveillance technology that we see enough of all round us. The question then is whether heritage institutions will want to link profiles of (online) users, their cultural preferences and the museum collections. If so, virtual curators could be created by means of algorithms, which would be able to make recommendations during a visit to a museum, the way Google and Amazon already do. But then we cross a commercial border that cannot be drawn as sharply, as cultural institutions are already gathering customer details for marketing purposes, naturally with the consent of the customer. Compare this with ordering a book or other product: your searches are saved and compared with other users who bought this product, and you then receive all kinds of product recommendations that they too have ordered.

AI

Over recent years, the digital transformations are increasingly tied up with the development of artificial intelligence (AI). Naturally this has major consequences for traditional museum practice, where the curator takes on the role of selecting the objects and informa-

5.8 Augmented Reality visualisation in the National Maritime Museum in Amsterdam, based on Artificial Intelligence. The voyages of Dutch East India Company ships are projected onto a large virtual globe, showing that the crews that embarked in Europe did not sail only to Batavia and back – there was extensive traffic in the region, e.g. to the Maluku Islands.

tion in the service of the museum visitor. This as yet uncertain impact of digitisation on the museum domain, and more specifically the influence of artificial intelligence on the day-to-day work of the curator, will be at the focus of future research into digital curation and the development of support tools. In all these discussions, curators remain often out of the picture, and back-office systems to support them very rare. So the primary focus is on acquiring a critical mass of digital museum data, and I miss the urgency on digital curation evident in cursory demos and applications for visitors. The new AI is even more data-driven, so getting the curator fully involved will not happen by itself.

Case studies

Seven case studies from the Allard Pierson in the field of digital heritage applications are described below. The thread running through them was the quest for added value in digital content in museum presentations as well as the need for sustainable digital practice and tools. An important challenge for heritage institutions that was mentioned previously is making operational the multivocality both in the collections and the presentations for the public. An increasing number of perspectives are coming available from theoretical reflections and research, while translating them into heritage practice is and will remain problematic. Digital content and digital presentations could well be the key in the quest for new solutions and concepts for giving multivocality a place in providing a service to visitors.

However, no platform was as yet available for museum curators and educators to be able to create or manage the content themselves. A number of examples of powerful interactive visualisation concepts have been described above, which have however been stranded in their beauty as a result of a lack of practicality over the longer term: the Augmented Reality application via the moveable screen and various smart objects. We shall list a few below. By practical, I mean that the applications could not be handled by museum staff and that they were unstable in maintenance. Another factor was that certain technical partners did not wish to open up control of the applications, either because it was of no interest to them or because they did not want to share the application with others.

We at the Allard Pierson have had a great deal of experience in developing and using digital tools over the past twelve years through a range of national and European projects. In general, it may be remarked that many of these projects focused on developing prototypes and applications based on new technological concepts. These projects led to the development of interactive programs and content that was presented through sensor technology. They are elaborated on as case studies below.

Etruscanning

Etruscanning was triggered by an exhibition plan: in 2011, the Allard Pierson Museum and the National Museum of Antiquities (Leiden) planned to host an exhibition on the ancient Etruscans. Together with some technical partners from the V-MusT.net project (see below) we came up with a project that would put objects from an Etruscan tomb in their original context. As this could not be done with the original objects in the original room, it had to be done in a virtual way. Using *Etruscanning*, we intended to explore new visualisation techniques through the virtual reconstruction of Etruscan tombs, focusing on the monumental Regolini-Galassi tomb from Cerveteri (7th cent. BC). The application created

around this tomb was the result of a joint effort by a multidisciplinary team. *Etruscanning* was a close collaboration between museum curators, archaeologists, software developers, interactive designers, exhibition designers, specialists in storytelling, consultants in digitisation and digital restoration, evaluation specialists, and many others who contributed their knowledge and expertise to the project.[21]

The long list of contributors shows how this project crossed many traditional borders and domains. We were able to establish international cooperation in the fields of digital acquisition (scanning), digital restoration, and 3D (re)presentation. By means of exhibitions, blogs, videos and publications, we were able to implement a new approach to the presentation of Etruscan tombs. The application was integrated into the *Etruscans* exhibition in Amsterdam and Leiden, and several evaluation studies were carried out. At the end of the project, the final application was installed for permanent use in the Vatican Museums,[22] the Villa Giulia (Rome, Italy) and Museum Formello (Veio, Italy).

The project showed that it is possible to enable and support cultural heritage institutions in designing, producing, and sharing digital 3D reconstructions. The latter aspect in particular was key in this cooperative project, as we were conducting research together as well as jointly developing applications. The interaction and cooperation expressly went beyond the traditional granting of loans, because the lenders received the *Etruscanning* application in return. The multidisciplinary nature of the project meant that the museum partners came into contact with technical researchers from other fields. This also resulted in an exchange of, and sometimes confrontation with, different perspectives. In this way, a sustainable and more fruitful relationship between the different cultural institutions was created.

3D reconstruction as a research tool

In this project we focused on two important Archaic tombs in Etruria: the Regolini-Galassi Tomb, the tomb of a princess in the Sorbo necropolis of Cerveteri, and Monte Michele Tomb 5, the tomb of a warrior in Veio. The finds from these kind of tombs are kept in museums and the (now empty) tombs are not always accessible to the public. By making 3D reconstructions of the tombs and of the objects that were found there, we aimed to re-create their archaeological contexts. We created a virtual reality application that enabled visitors to navigate the tomb on a large screen, which showed all archaeological finds in situ.

The 3D visualisations have not only proven to be an essential tool for obtaining more knowledge about the tombs and Etruscan funerary customs, they also provided an attractive way to present research results. In our multidisciplinary approach to the realisation of these 3D visualisations, we re-examined and reinterpreted earlier publications on the find contexts, and reached new conclusions regarding the locations of the objects in the tombs. This significantly contributed to their archaeological interpretations. The virtual reconstructions allowed us to place the objects virtually in the tombs, after identifying inconsistencies in the source material and determining their most plausible configurations. In short, by using 3D visualisation as a research tool, we were able to study the tombs literally from multiple dimensions.[23]

Digitisation and digital restoration

The project was developed through a complex methodological approach, from the collection of existing data to new topographical digital acquisition. Several ontologies of data have been acquired and elaborated upon, according to the typology and topology of the artefacts, and of the tombs' architecture.[24] Using advanced techniques for digital acquisition, including laser scanning and photogrammetry, the tombs and most objects were rendered and restored, and subsequently placed in their original locations within each virtual tomb.[25]

The application

The virtual reconstruction of the Regolini-Galassi Tomb, realised in the Netherlands, was presented using a large projection screen of 12 m² in a darkened room, with accompanying audio, creating an interactive and immersive experience. The public could navigate through the virtual tomb by means of a map with so-called hotspots, that was printed on the museum floor. By standing on one of the hotspots, they could enter a room of the tomb virtually, view the objects and listen to audio that used the voices of the prestigious Etruscan characters buried inside. In short, visitors could explore the tomb by moving in front of the projection screen.

During the project, we were able to use two navigation methods. The first, and basic, version of Kinect sensor software registered the movements of a person on a surface, in this case the floor map of the tomb. This was done in a very simple and natural way, without a mouse, keyboard, joystick or console. By walking around the map, one could, as it were, explore the tomb.

5.9 The interactive application *Etruscanning* during the *Etruscans* exhibition at the Allard Pierson (2011). The visitor navigates through the tomb using the map on the floor.

In an updated edition, with a new version of Kinect, the 'natural interaction' was extended with the possibility of navigating via arm movements and included more options for interaction. Kinect, however, is primarily intended for gamers, who are generally skilled users of sensor technology, and the updated edition proved to be too complicated for the average museum visitor. This was an important lesson: installing a new version with more (and often more complex) interaction options is not always the right thing to do. Keep it simple and do not take steps in navigation and sensor technology that are too big for the traditional visitor.[26]

Evaluation

The Virtual Reconstruction of the Regolini-Galassi Tomb offered the visitors additional value, which supplemented the content provided in the *Etruscans* exhibition. When participants were asked about their experience, the results showed that they were more certain of their answers after they had experienced both the installation and the exhibition than they were after completing only the installation or the exhibition. The content presented in both the installation and the exhibition served to reinforce each other, creating a more enriching experience for the museum visitor.[27]

The museological value of embedding the Virtual Reconstruction of the Regolini-Galassi Tomb in an exhibition is reflected in both the enhanced contextualisation of the collections presented and the reinforcing of educational content shared between the installation and the exhibition. More than this, however, the results show that the way museums are valued by visitors is evolving, including a more general acceptance of technology integrated into museum presentations, as well as a broader range of content dissemination styles. This acceptance of technology and virtual museum applications by visitors will undoubtedly impact the future study of museology, especially as more museums are starting to recognise the value of incorporating technology into exhibitions.

The Virtual Museum Network of Excellence (V-MusT.net)

From 2011 to 2015, the Allard Pierson Museum was one of eighteen partners in the EU-funded international cooperation project *The Virtual Museum Network* (*V-MusT.net*, 2011-2015), a Network of Excellence that aimed to provide the heritage sector with tools and support to develop virtual museums that are educational, enjoyable, long-lasting and easy to maintain.[28] For this project, the Allard Pierson Museum engaged a PhD student who focused on the evaluation of virtual museum applications.[29] In addition, a number of staff members were involved and a total of 15 local Meet-up meetings were organised as part of this project via the Virtual Museum Network Amsterdam.[30]

The final results of the research were presented in the *Keys to Rome* exhibition at the Allard Pierson (2014). Visitors were given a personal digital key card with which they could view the exhibition using new digital techniques and from various points of view: Egypt, Rome, or the Low Countries. The extensive display made it possible to fruitfully combine information interactions in the online and physical world for effective recommendation in smart environments, thereby effectively blending real-world and online behaviour.[31]

Smart objects were used: 3D printed scale models were equipped with sensors that reacted to touch, generating information on a screen. Another special application was the Revealing Flashlight, which uses a projector and a motion sensor to project the original colours onto the original object. A test setup made advanced 3D analysis and colour re-

5.10 Visitors in the virtual reconstruction of a Roman villa during the *Keys to Rome* exhibition at the Allard Pierson (2014).

construction accessible to the general public with an everyday gesture: finger pointing. Augmented reality was used to project colour information directly onto an object using a video projector. This was made possible by infrared sensing with the LeapMotion technology, which allowed the user to explore an object by means of the projection of a virtual layer. Unfortunately, the maker of this application had no interest in developing an open source application, which prevented us from applying this concept permanently. The projection on a piece of Roman architecture (*oscillum*) ran for about two years but was then dismantled (see fig. 5.1). In a later exhibition, the concept was applied again to an Egyptian relief, in which the colour was also reconstructed.[32]

Material Encounters with Digital Cultural Heritage (meSch)

From 2013 to 2018, the Allard Pierson Museum was one of twelve partners (from six European countries) in the international research project *meSch*: *Material Encounters with Digital Cultural Heritage.*[33] We aimed to develop a set of tools for museums that would allow curators and exhibitors to create digital exhibits, on the basis of co-creation.[34] The project actually had four types of partners. Firstly, designers partly from an academic context, who took the lead in the project. Secondly, there was a group of computer scientists who used the project to test and improve their computer interaction and Internet of Things software. The third group focused on evaluating co-design and collaborative learning, with a particular focus on assessing the process. The last group included

museums that would test the practice cases in exhibitions with public and staff. Together with the Museon in The Hague (NL) and the Museo Storico Italiano della Guerra (Trentino, Italy), the Allard Pierson Museum was one of the project's three museum partners. Several European universities and research institutes, including the University of Amsterdam, were also involved.[35]

The project had three concrete objectives. Firstly, *meSch* wanted to stimulate the (re) use and integration of digital collection information. That always sounds very good, but in practice it has not been successful because the information available in collection management systems is almost never reusable as such. This ties in with the challenge that more contextual heritage information should be added to the currently scarce object descriptions in metadata. The second objective was to increase the sensitivity to materiality in combination with the use of digital media, especially with (digital) designers. The third objective was to facilitate a layered and personalised museum experience. For this, it is again important that collection management systems pay attention to the multitude of stories that curators and educators can tell about the collections.

Desired results
The project actually failed to deliver desired results from a heritage professional's perspective. Because no effective content management system – in the project referred to as Authoring Tool – was developed, reuse and linking to existing content was simply not possible. The ambition to create all kinds of sensor technology applications from that Authoring Tool was never within reach. The prototypes of applications actually only worked during the demonstrations at the annual review sessions. Although the designers and specialists in the field of computer interaction became more aware of the possibilities of museum collections and heritage sites, the practice of the heritage professionals and the practical requirements of heritage institutions and visitors regarding the application of interactive sensor technology solutions in particular proved to be very recalcitrant. The personalised museum experience was only achieved to a limited extent.

Initially, the co-creation workshops were very useful in exploring the possibilities. During the MuseumCamp in 2016, no fewer than 17 different museum objects were examined and presented using this methodology. But here it was once again apparent that the prototype applications usually contained powerful concepts but that the hardware and software were not deployable in a practical and sustainable way.

In the end, the meSch project was seen as a stimulus to allow heritage professionals, designers and computer scientists to profit from each other's insights in a constructive manner. It provided insights into how openness can support the creative process of a variety of relevant end-users in different environments, and went beyond existing studies in several important ways.[36] The Allard Pierson Museum eventually purchased the *meSch* toolkit to build some applications, but it was not used in the long term because the platform to create digital content did not function in a practical way.

Connecting Early Medieval European Collections (CEMEC)
The *Connecting Early Medieval European Collections* (*CEMEC*) project originated from a partnership between a number of museums and technical partners across Europe, and stemmed from the idea of connecting museum collections from the early Middle Ages in a more meaningful way, focusing on digital content and the application of new technolo-

gies. By presenting digital applications in an exhibition, we wanted to harness the power of visualisation in many different ways. Several researchers and two PhD students were involved in the project at the Allard Pierson. The starting point was that a mix of digital applications would make exhibitions more attractive and informative, and would provoke thought or reflection, or even emotion. By experimenting with digital tools, we learned new ways of working and new scientific approaches.

One of the particularities of *CEMEC* was the close cooperation between museums and technical/creative companies. In previous projects, I had noticed that the balance in consortia often tipped towards the technical partners who sometimes had little eye for practical applications in heritage institutions. In the network of virtual museums (*V-MusT.net*) this was balanced by the creation of a large exhibition for which many practical applications were made – unfortunately with only a short lifespan. In the *meSch* project, the designers and computer scientists had been in the lead. As a result, the museum partners were perceived as being difficult because they made high demands on the practical applicability and user-friendliness towards staff and public. The *meSch* toolkit appeared not yet suitable for practical application in museums – prototype software development by engineers proved to be very different from managing stable museum applications by museum professionals. In short, this kind of collaborative project provides many inspiring and stimulating experiences, but it only gets really exciting when the partners actually try to develop a product or application together that will also withstand scrutiny during evaluation.

Because *CEMEC* was initiated and coordinated by the Allard Pierson, the situation in this project was different from *meSch*. When a heritage institution orders a digital application from a creative industry partner, there is usually a clear relationship between the client and the contractor: the client (the expert in the field of content/collections) determines the assignment, and the contractor (the expert in the field of technology/design) carries out the assignment. However, when museums and technical/creative companies enter into a partnership or larger network with others, such as CEMEC, this relationship changes. In this project, there was an opportunity to build a true cross-sector collaboration, bringing together the best of both worlds. There was no longer a traditional client-contractor relationship, and this collaboration started with an open dialogue about expectations, concerns, strategies, common practices and best practices, etc. Because the project partners acted as co-creators, central coordination and careful planning were of great importance.

In addition to application developers, *CEMEC* also involved 3D digitisation companies in the co-creation network. 3D scans are important building blocks for many digital applications. If you can have them made by one company for all network partners, then you can ensure consistency in processing, archiving, quality, and a fair price as well as. It does, however, require a lot of international transport of the all the scanning equipment. Alternatively, local companies could be involved who have to work closely together following the same standards.

The Cross Culture Timeline (CCT)

Business model innovation is a common feature of EU projects. As mentioned above, it is not often that the products and results of digital heritage projects are further developed in a sustainable or commercially successful way. Based on this experience, the partners

in the *CEMEC* project saw the great potential and need for a user-friendly support tool for digital curation. This eventually became the *Cross Culture Timeline* (CCT), an easy-to-use application for creating engaging interactive timelines for cultural heritage presentations. Curators and other heritage professionals can easily create content and stories, and link 3D objects, stories and events on an interactive timeline for a specific era. This timeline can then be used on the web, on a mobile, or as a touchscreen application within the museum.[37]

Initially, the CCT was intended and deployed as a visualisation tool for presentation purposes. The *CEMEC* exhibition *Crossroads. Travelling in the Early Middle Ages* served as a test environment for this application. It enabled visitors to explore the rich cultural history and diversity of Early Medieval Europe. The CCT mainly functioned as a joint instrument for creating the exhibition and visualising the connections between the collections in various museums. This needed to be developed into an effective and advantageous cooperation model for making exhibitions. In practice, this objective proved to be too ambitious. The differences in funding, organisation and planning of projects were too great to allow efficient cooperation. The joint approach in making the exhibition, the publication and the presentation tools was useful, but there were many aspects that stood in the way of 'real' cooperation and efficiency. The differences in exhibition spaces, technical staff and financial resources were huge.

The support tool had great potential and in the last phase of the project we decided to focus on the digital curation aspects. We would use the evaluations to improve this digital curation tool, its usability, practical application by curators, and its content. Moreover, it was important to prove that the tool was simple, easy to use, and powerful in presenting digital content visually. Enabling heritage curators to use, create and manage the digital content associated with collections was crucial; this was the final step before we could

5.11 The Cross Culture Timeline projection in the *Crossroads* exhibition at the Allard Pierson (2017).

start working on a practical application. The Allard Pierson was willing to invest in the tool by implementing it in the semi-permanent presentation 'From the Nile to the Amstel' and technical partner NoHo was willing to invest in the technical development. This led to the phase in which the Content Management System (CMS) of the *Cross Culture Timeline* was improved step by step.

Business Model

The original idea of the CCT arose from the need to connect collections, and this has been achieved.[38] NoHo now offers the CCT system on the basis of a licence on three levels. The CCT is used for heritage professionals as an online tool and as an onsite tool in museums. The systems comes with a tiered pricing model with subscription. The first level gives users access to a basic form of the CCT and the CCT Manager. The second tier provides unlimited hotspots and access to all functions of the CCT, while the third tier is for customisation and additional multimedia content, developed in cooperation with the user/museum. All subscribers have free access to an online demo to test the suitability of the application for their needs. The Allard Pierson and NoHo offer training seminars to other museums in order to implement the CCT for educational purposes. Meanwhile, the concept is still being improved and further developed and can be used for different target groups.

In the Allard Pierson, the CCT is now used as a digital information layer in all museum galleries.[39] For this purpose, touch tables were developed and designed on the basis of the modular display cases. A deliberate choice was made for a table unit for two reasons. Firstly, it makes the display accessible to several users at the same time, and also to visitors in wheelchairs. The other reason is that we wanted to prevent the screens from being too dominant in the galleries (fig. 4.1, 12, 16). Meanwhile, a separate application has been developed for the Story Cabinet whereby the museum's own staff can produce all digital content in the in-house Studio.

For schools and other educational groups, the CCT can also be used online. When a planned exhibition at the Allard Pierson was unable to open due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the CCT was used to provide online teaching materials.[40] It is also possible to open up heritage sites for education purposes. At Glasnevin Cemetery in Dublin, the CCT is used as a portal for schools to learn about the cemetery in their classrooms, including a button to download lesson plans for teachers. Furthermore, the CCT is also used by academic staff: students are given access to the system as users and create their own online content when working on assignments.[41] New generations of students now contribute to the program, which shows that the CCT can also be used as a learning tool for university collections.

In addition to collections, heritage sites can be unlocked. This is the case with the CCT used for the Lower German Limes – the Roman northern border running through Germany and the Netherlands.[42] Several museums along this Limes use and share it for their exhibitions. Another example is the CCT for the Carrowmore megalithic cemetery in Sligo (IR).[43] The CCT is a suitable way to explain the story of this place, because the location of the surrounding sites and how they are connected, are really important aspects. And another CCT was made for Castleconnell, a small town in Limerick (IR), that will be maintained by the local community by means of a touch screen in their local heritage centre. It is interesting to see how small heritage centres can profit from practical digital curation tools.[44]

All the practical user aspects were discussed with a multidisciplinary team, which has driven the choice of hardware and software, the interaction level, the touch screen tables, as well as the duration and the style of visualisation and storytelling. All these aspects must be taken into account when testing and evaluating the applications, which are of great value to the ongoing development of the tool.

Evaluation

All in all, CCT has proven to be really successful, and this tool has a lot of potential, but only if it is further developed. It is a great example of co-design: each new project adds new features that can then be applied to the next instalment or used to adapt and update existing versions. The most important thing during the development process was simply to start using it and to encourage people to use it, and not get caught up in complicated business plans. Future plans include the improvement of the design for mobile phones, and to find a way to export hotspots and stories from one timeline to another. We would also like to explore educational applications – the options are endless.

The Cross Culture Timeline is not tied to a specific time or region, or to use in exhibitions. The most important success is that the system is still being used and developed with each new application. This guarantees continuity and growth of the user-friendliness on the public side and at the back-end. The Allard Pierson will further develop CCT within the project Creative User Empowerment. This project also aims to develop a digital xCurator, which facilitates access to and the development of exhibitions. An important new challenge is to link the CCT to the collection management system.

The Holobox concept

In addition to the CCT, the visualisation concept of the Holobox was also developed in the CEMEC project. In the *Crossroads* exhibition, holographic animations were presented together with objects in one display case, with the original object and the virtual animation overlapping via projection.[45] In this way, the objects were brought 'back to life' by presenting more elaborate stories, while the viewer's attention remained focused on the objects. This overcame a major criticism of the use of screens in museum presentations, namely that they distract attention from the original object. The Holoboxes functioned as small theatres, equipped with controls for the direction and synchronisation of lights, audio (voices and soundscape), and projections of animations and video, even with real actors handling (replicas of) the objects at full size during filming.

The effect of mixed reality (seeing the object and the projections) surprised and engaged visitors to the CEMEC exhibitions. These 'story boxes' were best appreciated when the visitors had the opportunity to choose their preferred language, and spend more time when sitting down.[46]

5.12 Still from the Holobox application using an Early Medieval incense vessel from the Allard Pierson collection in the *Crossroads* exhibition (2017).
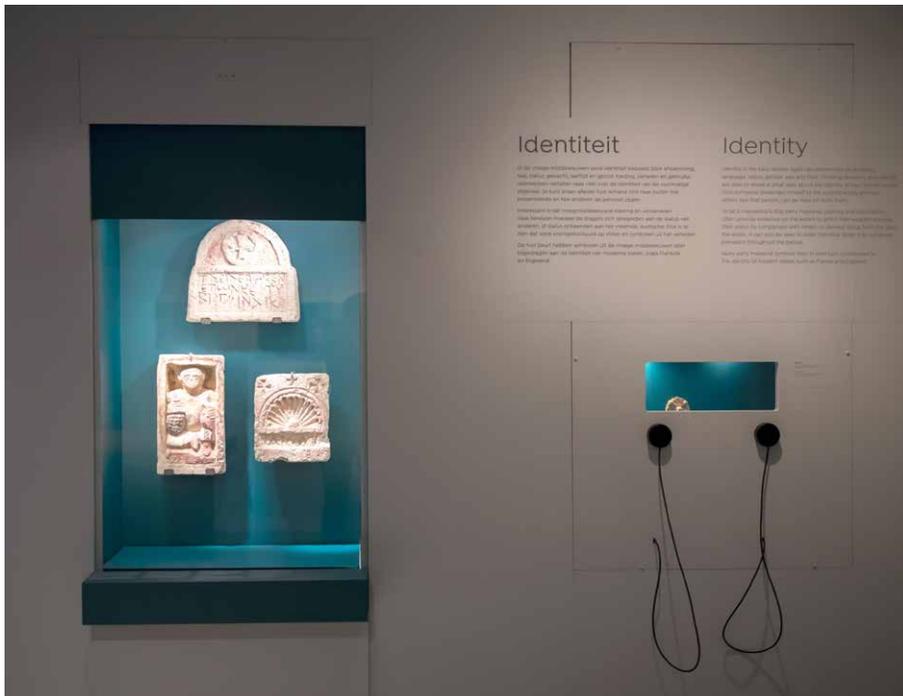
5.13 Left a traditional display case and right a Holobox display case containing an original object and a projection on a sheet of glass placed in front of the object.

Digital Museum Lab

The Digital Museum Lab provided the Allard Pierson Museum with a space for research on digital applications central to the heritage field between 2016 and 2019.[47] It is the 'digital' successor of the Heritage Lab (see Chapter 3). The Digital Museum Lab specifically connected up to the new developments that were taking place in the field of digitisation.

In the Digital Museum Lab, experts and pioneers were challenged to research digital innovations in collaboration with the public. The aim was to stimulate and facilitate experimentation, reflection and evaluation in the field of digital innovation within the museum walls. There is often little room for this type of research, but there is a large demand. The idea for the Digital Museum Lab arose from various observations. First of all, the stimulation of digital innovation has created a paradox. On the one hand, funds stimulate short-term projects that, however, never find their way into professional practice on account on their short life. On the other hand, no opportunity is created within most of these projects to test or evaluate them.[48] Museums run from one gadget to the next hype. As a result, little or no expertise can be built up, let alone shared with the field, and that is a missed opportunity. To counter this paradox, we have used the Digital Museum Lab extensively to test prototypes of the Cross Culture Timeline, which has certainly contributed to a better and more durable application.

The Digital Museum Lab had an eye for sustainability, as well as for the long-term impact of digital resources on the museum experience and within the museum field. Digital resources and possibilities were tested, analysed and evaluated in the Lab in an open atmosphere, with the results being discussed during Meet-ups.[49] Colleagues and people working in the heritage field were free to participate, and creators, innovators, and other interested parties were welcome too. These meetings put current projects, themes, applications, toolkits and prototypes on the agenda. Topics covered included data visualisation, maker tools, co-creation, and prototyping.

In my view, laboratory-like spaces like the Heritage Lab And the Digital Museum Lab are essential for heritage institutions. A lab stimulates innovation through experimentation and creative thinking. A physical space within a museum or heritage institution literally gives cooperation and co-creation a place in the organisation and provides a platform for staff, colleagues and visitors alike.

Dos and don'ts

In advocating learning by doing, failing and trying again, we have learnt quite a few lessons from our 'lab experiments' so far. Having taken a critical look at our methods and case studies, I would like to finish this chapter with a list of dos and don'ts.[50]

- Don't focus on your target group only, when organising an event. Do involve everyone from the start: the museum staff, the participants and the visitors. Communicate clearly your ambition with the larger organisation.
- Don't seek inspiration and collaboration in your own network and discipline only. Do enter unknown terrain, create interdisciplinary collaborations and find (lab) partners from complementary fields of expertise. Work as a team with shared goals and ambitions.
- Don't think that professionals can be senior people only. Do collaborate with students and PhD candidates.

- Don't regard evaluation as something for afterwards. Do experiment and integrate evaluation in your design process.
- Don't see innovation as something that comes from the newest technology or the fanciest design studios. Do see it as something that comes from your staff and from a change in the professional culture of your institute. Give your staff the opportunity to experiment with technology, to explore how they want to tell their stories and to be in command when collaborating with external agencies.
- Don't think that experiments should be quick or can be done without guidance. Do take time and ask for support. You need people who can help you when you are stuck and you also need enough time to fail, get stuck, figure out a solution, and continue.
- Don't expect visitors to understand if, how and when they are invited to respond to your test case. Do invite them explicitly, be clear about what they can expect, how they can respond to your setup and what you will use their feedback for.
- Don't think that sharing results or technologies is giving away resources and knowledge. Do share and learn from each other. This makes the professional community as a whole stronger.
- Don't focus on the end product of an experiment. Do focus on the process and guide the process: trying out a first idea – prototyping – testing your prototype with an audience – designing improvements. In this way, expertise about creating museum experiences makes a valuable connection to new knowledge about technologies. And do finish a prototype that works and perhaps even looks pretty.
- Don't think that opening a lab means to simply find a space, acquire the necessary technologies and allow it to be used for experiment. Do think of the lab as an experiment itself and prepare it well. Define a clear goal on where you want your lab to lead to: more expertise, improved internal skills, a more innovative image, learning with and from your peers.

Which tools for which purposes?

Not every tool is suited to every museum, exhibition, user group, type of story, etc. It is important to discuss which tool fits which purpose. A good user experience with digital applications can be achieved by carefully reflecting on:

- the context of use (in an exhibition or more standalone).
- longevity and possibilities for reuse (the application as well as the hardware and additional constructions).
- the concept, storyline, and design of the exhibition, as well as all the elements that will be included (objects, texts, audio, video, etc.).
- the environmental conditions (silent or noisy, dark or illuminated, secluded or crowded).
- the possibilities of the physical space hosting the installation (dimensions, location of other elements).
- the characteristics and behaviour of the visitor group(s) targeted (average group size, average age, average eye level, languages, the wish for subtitles, the need to sit down etc.).

- the accessibility of the contents (how much information and visual documentation is available to visualise a story around an object; this includes a lot of context information, such as architecture, clothing etc.).
- intellectual property rights on the contents to be used, and on the resulting application (can it be presented online as well?).
- security and conservation issues (if applications are presented in the same space or close to original objects, installation and de-installation and possible maintenance work of the applications' hardware need to be done safely).
- the availability of local IT support (the less support, the simpler it should be).
- the local situation regarding power supply (type of plugs, lengths of cables needed, etc.) and other supplies (materials that are easy to buy in one country might be very hard to get hold of in other countries).
- and last but not least: the presence and stability of an internet connection in the galleries (important for the installation process and possibly troubleshooting from another location).

If the use of digital applications is quite new to your institution, start by making a strategy, from the short to the longer term. Make sure to invest in:

- good internet connections, especially in the exhibition rooms.
- presence of IT resources (computers, interactive screens, mobile devices, etc.).
- availability of specialist personnel to control the IT resources.
- staff IT skills and mentality (willingness to accept new technologies).
- updating/replacing the museum's legacy, i.e. systems from the past.
- active control of websites and social media to engage with a digital audience.

6.1 MuseumCamp participants at a workshop in 2016.

A very great deal more truth can become known than can be proven.

Richard Feynman

6

Towards a participatory dialogue

The change and renewal in heritage institutions I am addressing in this publication are not ends in themselves but reflect society's search for greater inclusivity and multivocality. Many collections, often brought together and nurtured for generations, are now revealed to also contain uncomfortable, contested or controversial heritage. The search for museum practices that embrace these aspects has only just begun and requires directors, curators and educators to design perspectives. New curricula and less traditional approaches take time to be developed and implemented. At the same time, they offer ample opportunities for generations and do justice to the demands of an ever evolving society and new generations of heritage professionals in their search for relevance. Digitisation is done over several decades in the field of heritage institutions but only recently the importance of digital curation is highlighted. The new, dynamic field of digital curation offers opportunities that are still little exploited and deserve to be tested in heritage practice.

The mechanism of memory, recollection, and nostalgia leads to more and more layers of meaning that can be connected to collections, landscape, and buildings. From this reflection, the step towards the biography and genesis of collections was taken earlier. How we then achieve a heritage practice in heritage institutions depends on the extent to which we can organise openness. Many of the initiatives and projects I described in the case studies were aimed at stimulating participation and dialogue: internally, locally, nationally or internationally.

These are, in a nutshell, the topics and challenges that have been covered so far. I hope to have shown that heritage theory and heritage practice are sometimes far apart. A growing concern is the lack of reflection in heritage practice. I already touched upon this in the introductory chapter, and in my opinion it stems from a time-consuming and sometimes restless quest for more visitors, more visibility and more income, often the only parameters for success communicated in the public debate – even though we now also notice calls to 'weigh, not count' when it comes to the performance indicators of cultural institutions.[1]

Economisation touches on the core of cultural policy, and its demands are increasingly being applied to heritage institutions too. One of the solutions in the fight against this 'scoreboard mentality' and the one-sided focus on market transactions that results

from it is to share meaning making, enhance access and thus render heritage more inclusive. This may sounds simple but it requires a lot: new ways of thinking, speaking and acting with regard to heritage, new skills and expertise, new (digital) tools and new forms of collaboration and engagement. Traditionally, the reflex is to identify, new target groups, new digital applications and collaborative arrangements , which is what many policymakers and, in their wake, cultural funds have been working on for decades with all kinds of arrangements.

New approaches

The emphasis on inclusivity could well be a fundamental game changer in the heritage sector. The previously mentioned openness, self-criticism and empathy (see Chapter 1) are crucial in this respect. Moreover, a reflective practice is desirable with more connection to current academic discussions. The insights provided by reflective practitioners such as Clementine Deliss[2], Steven Ten Thije[3] and Margriet Schavemaker[4] into, respectively, an ethnographic museum and two modern art museums, show how recalcitrant, persistent and complex museum practice can be, but also how the tension between the 'Old Power' inward-looking museum and the 'New Power' confident, outward-looking museum is steadily mounting.[5] Such tensions to me herald a shift and a transition from static to dynamic heritage and from exclusive to inclusive heritage practices.

The case studies from the Allard Pierson mentioned in the previous chapters are without exception examples of the quest for a new heritage practice, and answers to the challenge of opening up the museum. A complete agenda of renewal could be engaged on based on many more of such multiple projects, and this already demanded a great deal of patience, perseverance and good timing to secure funding for the appropriate projects. Most of the projects we did ran for less than a year, sometimes a bit longer (two to three years), while complex international collaborations invariably took up three to four years. Our projects, running both sequentially and in parallel, at any rate generated considerable dynamism, and provided opportunities for many, often younger, heritage professionals. I saw it as the ideal way of cultivating talent, even if I could not always give each and every one of them the space that they may have needed. It also often meant saying farewell after a relatively short space of time – something one is unused to in museums, archives and libraries, as the tradition is that one spends years, and sometimes decades, in the same position.

The hectic project practice mentioned earlier may well be characterised as a continuous production line for new exhibitions with hard deadlines for applications for additional funds, deadlines for applications for loans, deadlines for submitting texts for publications, and deadlines for the designers, curators, educators, communication staff, builders and furnishers. This 'deadline cult' may be addictive. Only when you step out of it for a while do you experience the mental space for reflection that I think is incompatible with the deadline cult. Of course, cultural funds ask for a justification for the projects, big and small. In my opinion, it is important and desirable for heritage professionals and public funding bodies to exchange more information and engage with the desire to critically reflect together on heritage practice and the cultural policies being pursued. This would be beneficial to both sides. The cultural funds will ultimately receive more sustainable value and impact for their money and the heritage practice will share and exchange more experiences, insights, expertise, knowledge and formats. That too is inclusivity.

Heritage as a platform

We will now return to heritage practice where something very exciting but also very profound is happening. It is the previously mentioned transition from static to dynamic heritage. It means that the process of heritage construction becomes part of heritage itself. We could also call it a dual role. In any case, it is potentially confusing because we talk from different perspectives. For some, heritage is a monument, an inalienable object or a protected cultural landscape or an age-old folk tradition. But for others all heritage is intangible, because it concerns a process or a construction of cultural-social values and meanings.[6] I will now investigate further this new way of looking at heritage, and it should be said at the outset that, as a result, the concept of heritage will become much more dynamic, along with the risk of it slipping through our fingers. Close attention must also be paid to the practicality of the theoretical approach that was pointed out earlier in the discussion on postmodernism and sustainism.

The starting point of the transition from static to dynamic heritage is the fact that cultural (intangible) heritage is closely linked to individual and collective memory. The motives for labelling an object as heritage may vary widely, but it is certain that heritage can provide a sense of belonging. Intangible heritage in the form of traditions – invented or not – has a particularly strong impact through the interaction between individuals or groups who value a landscape, building, object and the practices connected with their appreciation. Think of the miller's craft where the built fabric of the mill, the mill landscape, the flour that is produced and the sense of community around the miller's work create a dense intangible heritage fabric that is based in deep time, but is at the same time dynamic and constantly evolving as new generations practice the craft and maintain that mill.[7]

The miller's example allows us to see the heritage concept as a platform that brings about social interaction. Reference has already been made to the transition from heritage as a sector or factor to heritage as a vector, i.e. as developmental.[8] Such a perspective confers a particular meaning to concepts like musealisation, archiving, restoration and reconstruction – when heritage is still seen as a sector, with the aim of creating a reservoir
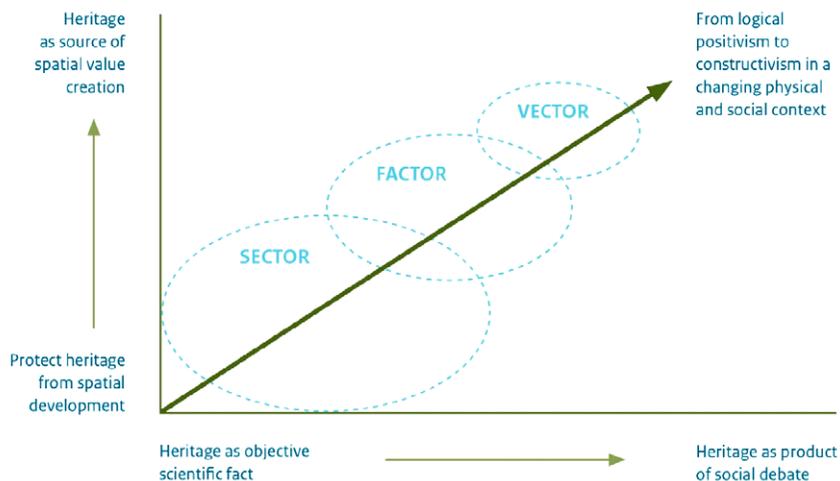
6.2 The sector – factor – vector approach to heritage in spatial context. Source: Janssen, Luiten, Renes and Stegmeijer (2017).
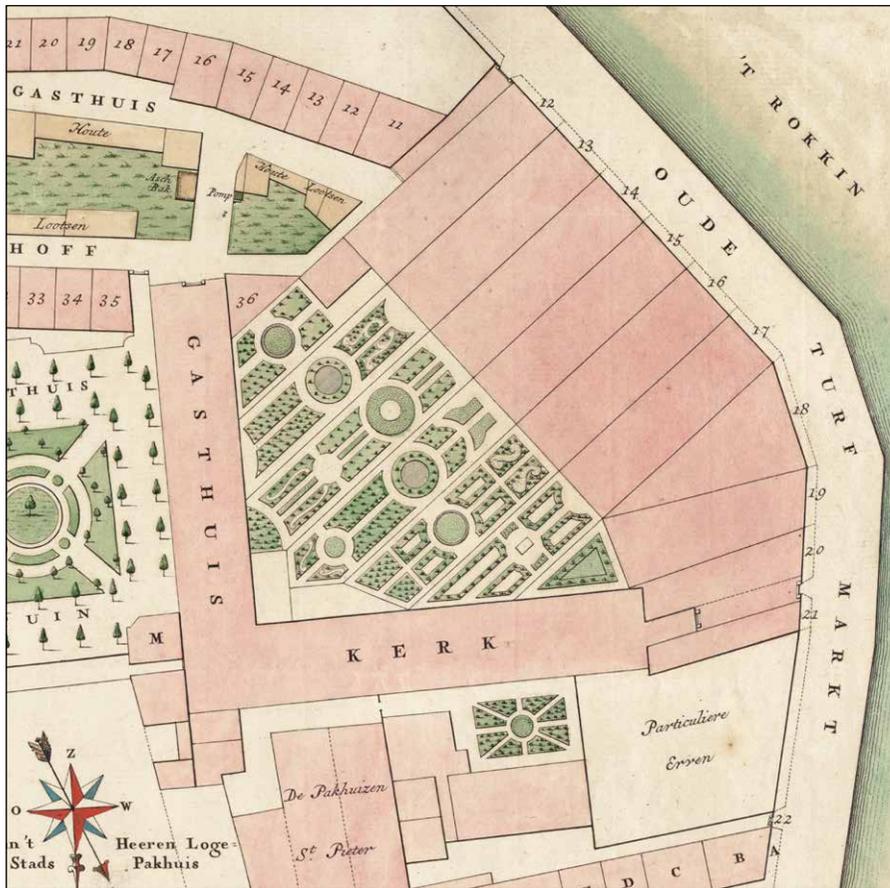
6.3 Map from 1777 depicting the Hortus Medicus that was located behind the former *Gasthuiskerk* (Hospital Church) in Amsterdam. The site is now the courtyard of the Allard Pierson, which is situated on plots 12–21.

of heritage objects. The next step is to reflect and focus on aspects like preservation, reconstruction and reusing, where we have to see heritage as a *factor*. Looking to the future, 'heritage' will be put increasingly to work in an increasingly development-oriented way – heritage as *vector*. We must then think of getting ahead, on the basis of innovation and multivocality. This would fit in with my earlier reflections on dynamic heritage. Moreover, the terms 'heritage planning' and 'heritage futures' are introduced from urban planning practice. They contain the promise of a dynamic practice, of repeated (re)construction, (re) interpretation and (re)presentation of an object, a building or a landscape.[9]

In the 'hidden narratives' of Chapter 4, I mentioned the painted herbarium by Moninckx, a magnificent historical source that takes us back to the courtyard of the Allard Pierson which was once home to a hortus medicus (see p. 109). In a sectoral approach, the conservation authorities would attempt to recreate a 17th century reconstruction of the herbarium in dialogue with a landscape architect, because they would see the past as an objective scientific fact, which can only be interpreted by specialists. The Snippendaal Garden in Amsterdam's Hortus Botanicus today is a good example of this. But the biography

6.4 Reconstruction of Albert Speer's model of Germania in an underground room of the Berliner Unterwelten in Berlin.

of the landscape has become increasingly popular since the late 1990s, and this courtyard could well be designed on the basis of the adage 'conservation through development'.[10] Since the last few decades the possibility has emerged to act at the crossovers between heritage creators and urban planners, seeking more sustainable designs for the living environment through participative practices, along with respect for a place's history. On this basis, the Allard Pierson plans to design a meaningful 'healing garden' in its courtyard, in which local residents, students and researchers will be as actively engaged as botanists, designers and architects. This is a good example of how heritage values are converted into values around heritage.[11]

Practice and process

The Allard Pierson courtyard may illustrate we can no longer see heritage as a purely static object. In heritage practice we can further distinguish between processes and practices. A heritage practice is more active and leads to a concrete impact. The often slow process of becoming aware until an object, landscape or building is seen as heritage is different from the practice of maintaining that heritage through conservation, restoration, presentation or reconstruction. A heritage process thus relates to descriptions that are connected as a network. [12]

An example of a heritage practice with the transition from sector to factor can be found in Berlin, a city with a burdened 20th century past. One might think that all monumental heritage here is described and protected down to the last detail. That certainly does not apply to the many underground, (semi-)finished bunkers, corridors and air-raid shelters from the years 1940-1945. Many of these underground structures are still being (re)discovered, documented and made accessible to the public by volunteers. This is done

by a private association, Berliner Unterwelten (Gesellschaft zur Erforschung und Dokumentation unterirdischer Bauten), which was founded in 1997. Initially a heritage that might have been considered unwanted, invisible and partly unknown, it is now a popular tourist attraction with more than 300,000 paying visitors a year. While above ground the 'Topographie des Terrors' of the Nazi era created a 'guilty cityscape', some of which will never be rebuilt, below ground we can still see the remnants of Albert Speer's visionary building plans for Berlin. The planned megalomaniac metropolis Germania was to serve as a representation space for Hitler's regime. The execution of the plans was inextricably linked to slave labour and deportations.[13] Meanwhile, remnants of escape tunnels dug under the Berlin Wall in the 1960s and 1970s are also being documented. It is fair to say that this heritage has emerged from 'below' as a grassroots initiative.

In Chapter 4, I described hidden narratives connected to various objects from the Allard Pierson that demonstrate that the meaning of an object is never neutral or univocal. All too often, heritage institutions continue to present fixed values of this kind. In this regard, consider the shifting opinions about many statues of nationalist symbols that were erected in the 19th or at the start of the 20th century and are now seen as glorifying colonialism, or the negative public reactions to the restoration of the Sistine Chapel frescos in the Vatican[14] and to the rebuilding of the Berlin Palace as the Humboldt Forum.

In today's 21th-century museums and heritage institutions, 19th-century cultural-historical concepts are often still maintained. I will give some random examples. Archaeologists still try to identify different groups or cultures on the basis of clothing pins, disk fibulae, coins, crockery or burial rites. But the archaeological evidence in this quest for identity is also part of a scientific debate, and the sharper and more refined our archaeological data become, the less remains of the mythologies of origin that, for example, have developed around nation building. We can therefore often speak of 'heritage framing' or a self-fulfilling prophecy. And then it often turns out that these are constructed or invented stories that are supposed to explain the origin of, for example, a people or tribe. A good example are the Saxons or the Germanic tribes, to which large exhibitions have recently been devoted.[15] These are mostly 19th-century constructions in a quest for nationalistic identities that can be labelled as 'invented identities'. It is therefore time to update the old identification methodology, which also applies to gender debates.[16] Often, archaeological presentations in national, provincial and municipal museum collections and other heritage institutions are still based on now obsolete historical concepts. Masterpieces from elite tombs and other treasures from regional cultures are displayed as markers of a regional identity, while the true dynamics and connections surrounding them are often given less attention. For example, a piece of cotton from India found in an 8th century tomb in Egypt exposes an important trade connection, while so-called Menas flasks, which were taken by pilgrims as a souvenir from Egypt, have been found throughout the Mediterranean and from England to Uzbekistan. Narratives of the connectivity and mobility of the ancient world appear to be embedded in such objects.[17] Through new paradigms and with the help of advanced natural science research methods and techniques in archaeology, we are increasingly getting to grips with such alternative narratives and will have to recognise complexity more often.[18]

Constant change

Responding to the aforementioned societal changes, heritage institutions are undergoing a constant transformation of their exhibition practice. They are transforming from traditional museums, landscapes or monuments into places of memory. Here we enter the complex world of storytelling and narrative that was the subject of Chapter 4. In the heritage institutions of the 21st century, we confront new developments such as the democratising of knowledge, the relinquishing of the difference between high and low culture, and contested heritage. In addition, there are increasing opportunities for crossovers, such as powerful combinations with theatre, film and literature.

I wanted primarily to make clear that for many heritage institutions it is a major step from the relatively simple and traditional presentation of collections, where the curator offers an 'authoritarian' or dominant perspective, to an exhibition where visitors are enabled to create their own personal narratives. Quite apart from the question whether the visitors really want all of this, putting the question about differing narratives is already a major step towards (self-)reflection on the authority ascribed to heritage institutions. However, I am convinced that a more inclusive heritage practice is unavoidable, and also essential for remaining relevant. It is the first step towards a more open and inclusive approach. Society expects of heritage institutions that they adapt their presentations to the community that nourishes and 'frames' them in the current sociocultural era. A major task lies before them here on the way to a participative dialogue.

There are many mechanisms within heritage practice that make it seemingly impossible to achieve a participatory dialogue. The impediments may well arise from recent professionalisation of heritage practice in the areas of presentation, collection management, conservation and restoration. Though beneficial for the preservation of heritage and thus stretching its lifespan sometimes the new, high-level collection care standards literally affect visibility, for example when it comes to light-sensitive works on paper that can only be loaned out to a limited extent. Professionalisation also raises barriers to lending because of the increased costs of transport and insurance that smaller heritage institutions find difficult to finance. But we also see it in the static and distant way of presenting collections in showcases

6.5 A visitor in one of the pavilions at Museum Insel Hombroich, near Cologne (Germany).

or, even worse, the many collections that are stored invisibly and are inaccessible to the public. New concepts in spectacular iconic museum architecture with 'open' depots in Antwerp (MAS) and Rotterdam (the Depot Boijmans van Beuningen) may not yet provide the ultimate solution to this problem but do give inspirational impulses.[19]

A recent visit to Insel Hombroich, near Cologne, provided me with a disarming insight into all the things that you could let go if you work on the basis of a self-imposed vision, do not have to conform to rules on loans, and enjoy long-term and independent funding.[20] Here there is no routing or signposting, no cloakroom, no marketing, no museum shop, no museum restaurant (although certainly free coffee and locally made cakes is included in the ticketprice), no captions or explanations to the artworks and archaeological collections, no artificial lighting in the pavilions, no climate control, no (visible) security or security cameras and also no supervisory staff. It was noted right from the start that this arises in fact from a refusal to conform as a museum.[21] Is this an omission of all the things that could irritate a visitor when they visit a museum? And is this then Hooper-Greenhill's post-museum or Scarff/Black's 'New Power outward facing museum'?[22] I really don't know. But it does stimulate the visitor into creating their own (artistic) viewing experience and perhaps even narrative. I certainly found it a big challenge to go and sing with my friends in a pavilion that was built purely for its audio echo effect. And I noticed that I engaged more with them in discussion about the artworks without captions. It was a clear incentive to engage in participative dialogues. The interaction between modern art and centuries-old archaeological objects from China or India set an artistic dialogue in motion. And in the landscaped park, it set off a dialogue between nature and culture.

Two–way traffic

This chapter is about the quest towards a participative dialogue in the context of museums and heritage. In heritage practice, this means that you are no longer satisfied with passive one-way traffic between museum object and visitor. That you want to go further than having visitors participate in a workshop. That you not only answer visitors' questions, but venture a step further by engaging in conversation and dialogue.[23]

Citizenship, cultural diversity and identity are strongly linked, especially in historical and ethnographic museums. But showing collections from other parts of the world is increasingly problematic in the context of a culturally diverse, postcolonial Europe.[24] The above shows that heritage does not exist without value attribution, appropriation and projection: especially in times of globalisation people seem to look for fixed values in a changing world. For them, heritage is seen as a stable value, but the paradox is that nothing could be further from the truth: as I have tried to show above, our very own heritage is also pre-eminently dynamic and in motion. Each time, a new forgotten chapter is added to our collective memory.

Case studies

The case studies in this chapter are examples of work in progress at the Allard Pierson. The concepts, ideas and practices exemplified in them form the basis and also the breeding ground in the quest for a more inclusive heritage practice in which participation, inclusivity, empathy and dialogue are key. They all share the same underlying theme: opening up a heritage institution, both physically and mentally. This may result in a low-threshold zone in the museum that is accessible free of charge, where working with collections

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and an invitation to engage in discussion about the collections are at the focus. Another example is setting up a successful grassroots project like *ArcheoHotspots,* which stands or falls depending on volunteers' input. *MuseumCamp* and the *Pop-Up Museum* initiative operate in fact as catalysts in this quest. This is the difficult transformation to the 'New Power' outward-facing museum referred to earlier. And sometimes we simply go back to the beginning: the Allard Pierson plaster cast collection was once used for model drawing, and now we are returning to it. This illustrates the simple but powerful principle that drawing is about 'learning to look', and here we touch on perhaps one of the most important objectives for a museum. These drawing workshops stimulate the participative dialogue between collection and visitor, and this in turn generates fresh images.

Open the depot

The works of art hidden in depots were the inspiration for artist Jasper Krabbé who, together with the popular Dutch daily television show *DWDD,* came up with the first Pop-Up Museum. In October 2014, the Allard Pierson Museum was asked if we could host it from January 2015 – our location in the heart of Amsterdam was decisive in this choice. However, at that time our exhibition rooms still housed the literally sealed Crimean exhibition with its disputed collection.[25] We did not know how long it would take to dismantle this hostage exhibition. Throughout the summer, the political tension surrounding Crimea had only increased and the case was now in the hands of lawyers. We felt for that reason relieved when, at the end of October, the decision was taken to remove the Crimean objects from the display cases and to store them pending a court ruling. Immediately afterwards, we could get to work on the *DWDD Pop-Up Museum.*

6.6 The Allard Pierson during the *DWDD Pop-Up Museum* in 2014.

The concept was brilliant in its simplicity. The theme was 'hidden works of art'. Ten guest curators (i.e. regular co-hosts on the TV programme) were each allocated one room, which they could decorate entirely to their own ideas and taste together with a curator from each time another Dutch museum, the condition being that only objects from the depots of that museum were chosen. This shows once again how heritage concepts can intersect in a bizarre way: on the one hand we had to deal with heritage that (as it turns out) had to go under lock and key for years, and on the other hand we had guest curators who pulled hidden works of art out of depots.

The visibility provided by this popular TV programme meant that all sorts of procedures could be pushed aside. Normally, handling a loan request to, for example, the Rijksmuseum takes at least a year. Now, all requests were immediately granted and, with the help of many colleagues, we were able to put on a major exhibition with top pieces from 10 important Dutch museums in less than 12 weeks. We were immensely proud that we were able to provide a home to this project by the most popular television programme in the Netherlands at the time. But our own organisation felt itself ambushed, in my view. It all went very quickly, and the project had scarcely any connection with the content or the projects that we were busy with. The power of the *Pop-Up Museum* meant for example that we had to temporarily dismantle the *Digital Museum Lab*. This generated debate and caused incomprehension among some colleagues.

The dynamics involved in putting on such an exceptional exposition twice (in 2014 and 2015) along with 23 sister museums were overwhelming. It really was 'doing things together' and it turned into a huge success in terms of classical parameters. The constant flow of media attention generated a great deal of name recognition for the Allard Pierson Museum, resulting in the two Pop-Up Museum exhibitions attracting a total of 120.000 visitors – more than doubling the numbers for our institution. The accompanying publication referred to the 'sleeping asset' of museums that was transformed into a 'hit'. At any rate, it provided unusual combinations and certainly brought heritage and art much closer to a larger public.[26] But we missed the opportunity to further build on the claim that we had now reached a new (museum) public.

Allard Pierson Live

Heritage and heritage collections are increasingly about participation and dialogue. To respond to this trend, the Allard Pierson opened Allard Pierson Live in 2020, a new zone at the front of the museum, clearly visible from the newly designed and now car-free Oude Turfmarkt. Whenever the museum is open, Allard Pierson Live is free and buzzing with activity.

Allard Pierson Live is meant as a 'second living room' for museum visitors, passers-by, students and researchers. The programme on offer is varied and diverse. My starting point was that visitors should be able to work with the collections in three rooms, together with our staff and volunteers. These volunteers have time, passion, attention and knowledge available for the individual visitor. They create a dialogue about our collections like our educators and tour guides are doing with groups, because here, in contrast to the 'musealised' collection in the galleries, we present the collection live. What normally happens behind the scenes, such as selecting and sorting the archaeological finds of the city archaeologist or digitising the music and theatre collections, now happens in a publicly accessible space that is free of charge. One can visit the museum shop or drink coffee in

6.7 Visitors in the Geozone in Allard Pierson Live during *Museumnacht* (Museum Night Amsterdam) in 2021.

the Espresso bar with the most beautiful view in Amsterdam. In the last room, under the name UvA Live, we give scientists of the University of Amsterdam a stage, in the form of films, presentations, lectures and workshops. In short, Allard Pierson Live serves as a bridge between academia and society.[27]

The Geozone

In the Geozone, part of the Allard Pierson Live section which is open to the public free of charge, a large number of historical maps are on display.[28] Amsterdam was the world's leading producer of maps in the 17th century – thousands were produced and traded. The Allard Pierson's collection of maps and atlases is now one of the largest in the Netherlands and in the world. On the touch table, visitors can browse through various centuries-old atlases, and old maps are beautifully enriched by means of interactive applications.[29] The results of current research and new applications are also presented here.

The Studio

The Studio introduces visitors to the great diversity of the Allard Pierson's audio collections.[30] Analogue sound recordings (such as tapes and cassettes) are converted into digital material here. Via a link on their smartphone, visitors can make their own listening choice from a selection of sound recordings. And if they have interesting audio material for our collections, it can be digitised in the Studio.[31]

ArcheoHotspots

The idea was actually quite simple. Create a space where, during regular opening hours, the public can walk in without making an appointment, and watch and participate in the work of archaeologists – a place for people to meet and help with sorting archaeological finds, restoring finds, and getting explanations about the materials. This can take place in a museum, but in fact in any easily accessible space at a municipal archaeological service or depot. By deploying a mix of volunteers, museum staff, employees of regional archaeological services and archaeologists of professional groups, archaeologists are always present and active here. It is also a place where different volunteer groups can meet, benefit from each other's knowledge and activities, and jointly start new activities.

In 2012, the Dutch Foundation on Archaeology and Public organised a symposium on the social relevance of archaeology. In the session 'What does the citizen want?', some important conclusions were drawn which we ultimately have put on the agenda through the ArcheoHotspots project.[32] First of all, we should not only show the results but also the whole working process that archaeological professionals go through. Secondly, it is important that we make archaeology tangible so that it becomes much more alive. Finally, it is about participation: let people participate ('see, hear, touch, smell, taste') in archaeology: connect to what appeals to people.

The public relevance of archaeology in the Netherlands is evidenced by the fact that there is regulation, constantly being refined to strike new balances),[33] that more than 100 million Euros are spent annually on archaeological research, and that public interest has increased in recent years.[34] Legislation requires that archaeological excavations be carried out prior to the start of any construction project. This generates a lot of data, information and many excavation finds, most of which end up in (regional) depots. However, at times of economic austerity, such as after 2008, we see that far fewer building projects are started, with fewer excavation projects being carried out and budgets for archaeological research being immediately under pressure. All the more reason to underline the social importance of archaeology.

Based on the above, in 2012 I came up with a plan to set up places where visitors could help with processing archaeological excavation finds. Prompted by the new participative remit for museums and on the basis of my own experience with an educational project that I had set up in 2003 at the Limburg Museum in Venlo,[35] I saw a lot of opportunities. In the Venlo project, school kids were given a role in processing finds from the excavation along the Maasboulevard.[36] In subsequent years, an educational programme was offered to primary school pupils, in which they were allowed to work with original pottery, most of which originated from cesspits and a castle moat. The delight that the pupils showed in working with original 17th- and 18th-century pottery convinced me that we should arrange this for adults as well.

I called the project that I envisaged *ArcheoHotspots*. The idea was to arrange a location that could be accessed free of charge where visitors could participate in the sorting and reassembling of archaeological finds without booking in advance. The intention was for the *ArcheoHotspot* to be staffed by volunteers with archaeological knowledge and passion. The project was launched with the Dutch Association of Archaeology Volunteers AWN.[37] Municipal archaeological services came on board to ensure a constant flow of archaeological material.[38] We also saw that archaeological services and depots at the provincial level were interested in greater visibility. We aimed through this initiative to broaden and strengthen the social basis for archaeology in the Netherlands in a simple and contemporary way.

In 2014, the first *ArcheoHotspot* was launched at the Allard Pierson Museum, and in retrospect this was the beginning of a true success story. Together with the project partners, a network of more than 25 *ArcheoHotspots* has since been realised. A website has been launched,[39] volunteer courses have been organised and blueprints, templates and best practice documents have been developed. In addition, a mobile hotspot has been developed and pop-up hotspots have appeared in many different locations. Attention was paid to volunteers in the form of new training courses, and investments were made in a network of (professional) site coordinators. In 2018, the national ArcheoHotspots Founda-

6.8 The ArcheoHotspot at the Allard Pierson.

tion was established to promote public engagement with archaeology and heritage and to make the project independently sustainable. In 2020, a strategic alliance was formed with the Portable Antiquities of the Netherlands (PAN).[40]

A particular highlight came in 2017, when this grassroots project won the Grote Archeologie Prijs (Great Archaeology Prize), which is awarded every year by the Archeologie en Publiek (Archeology and the Public) foundation with backing from the Maand van de Geschiedenis (History Month) to the project that most effectively interprets the stories and images of archaeology to the wider public.[41]

The *ArcheoHotspots* initiative is perhaps best understood within a cultural concept that thinker and essayist Michiel Schwarz has characterised as 'sustainist'. That is to say, non-modernist, but based on values such as localisation, scale, proportion, placemaking and connectedness.[42] The national network that originated from the Allard Pierson has developed into an independent network that has become sustainable through new alliances. The *ArcheoHotspots* are also increasingly seen as places to demonstrate related types of research or experimentation to a wider public.[43] And because of its great success, in 2020 the *ArcheoHotspot* of Allard Pierson has been moved to the Allard Pierson Live area, where even more visitors can get to know the collections and staff of Allard Pierson.

The plaster cast gallery

On the top floor of the Allard Pierson's new glass building a spectacular new plaster cast gallery is situated. This splendid and important collection of almost 300 large plaster casts offers an overview of ancient sculpture, by presenting copies of art works from antiquity, from the early archaic period through to exuberant Hellenism.[44] Not only complete sculptures are exhibited, but also busts, reliefs, and parts of temples and other architecture. The plaster cast gallery is the only place in the Netherlands where so many famous statues

6.9 Part of the Allard Pierson plaster cast gallery with people drawing the casts during *Museumnacht* (Museum Night Amsterdam) in 2021.

are permanently accessible to the public. Moreover, they are arranged in such a way that they are easy to draw – the Allard Pierson presents a 'drawing academy' here. Some of the plaster casts also lend themselves to a 'touch and feel' tour for the visually impaired.

Not only are the plaster sculptures displayed in a separate section, but we are also telling stories with them, presented at different levels, some for everyone and others with depth for the truly curious. To enable the plaster sculptures to serve, as they used to do over the centuries, as models for artists, the casts are now supplemented with books, prints and drawings from the Special Collections, which offer material for comparison, deepening and inspiration at the same time.[45]

Whiteness of antiquity

Our collection of plaster casts shows a an image of antiquity that is historically not entirely correct. It has been known for some decades that ancient statuary was actually quite colourful. The white marble statues that we see today are in fact white-washed remnants of a super-diverse Mediterranean society that existed in Antiquity. By reconstructing the many colours and emphasising ethnic diversity, the Allard Pierson wants to correct this misconception. In this way, this heritage is also a source of inspiration and education.[46]

MuseumCamp

I first experienced the *MuseumCamp* concept in 2015 when I participated in the Museum-Camp in Santa Cruz (CA), led by Nina Simon.[47] The challenge was to invite the public to appropriate a museum and to reinvent participation, to get to know each other in teams and to work in an open dialogue with colleagues.[48]

MuseumCamp is often referred to as an 'un-conference'. The difference with a conference is that the participants are challenged not to listen but to get to work themselves, with co-creation and cross-over being the source of inspiration. Heritage professionals are often used to hire external people for audience research, for creating an exhibition and

6.10 Reflecting on the 17th-century painting of the ruins of Palmyra in the Allard Pierson Roman department during MuseumCamp 2016.

for (re)design, but during MuseumCamp they get to work actively, in conversations with both colleagues and the public, making a museum product with their own hands.

MuseumCamp is comparable to a pressure-cooker: under pressure, and in a short period of time, people work on a joint product. The intensity of the process is important because it leads to connection and interaction. But it is also about co-creation: learning together and sharing experiences is the basis for an open and innovative attitude. Cross-overs lead to creative output based on a mix of talents and expertise.[49]

MuseumCamp in the Netherlands

My idea to bring the MuseumCamp form to the Netherlands arose from several observations. Firstly, there is a urgency for reflection and experimentation in the heritage domain. In 2010–2016, the Allard Pierson Museum connected with a large group of innovators through the Digital Museum Network Amsterdam (see Chapter 3). This group was a mix of museum colleagues, researchers and representatives of the creative industry. During more than 40 Meet-ups, the community was slowly built up and ready for the next step. With the MuseumCamp project, we wanted to provide it with a platform and more effectively to share and implement the knowledge gained with the heritage sector at large.

The social position of museums is more topical than ever. Nina Simon's publication *The Art of Relevance* (2016) clearly indicates that the meaning of museums is closely linked to social groups and communities. How do we connect collections to those communities? And conversely, how do we keep the meanings of heritage alive and relevant? These challenges call for experiments and new platforms, requiring openness, diversity and new connections. With MuseumCamp we aimed to address these topics.

6.11 Participants in MuseumCamp 2016 at the Allard Pierson during breakfast. The photograph was published in the popular documentary series 'Saturday Morning in Amsterdam' in the Amsterdam *Parool* newspaper.

Maker education has been on the rise in recent years. Maker education is learning (by) making. It is a creative way of enabling adults and children to become inventors and it stimulates the heads, hands and hearts of all. In recent years, modern technologies have become cheap and easily available. Think of 3D printers and all kinds of electronics, which allow almost everyone to design and to experiment in an accessible way. MuseumCamp focused on making the connection between creativity and technology. Our regular partners in MuseumCamp have been working on this for quite some time. WAAG Technology and Society set up a Maker Education platform[50] and NEMO Science Museum is currently working on a programme that ties in with 'maker education',[51] with the philosophy: as a museum employee you obviously have a lot of professional knowledge, but you do not have a monopoly on wisdom; you learn by working together with each other and with your public.

Together with its partners, the Allard Pierson organised four MuseumCamps in the Netherlands in the period 2016–2021. These were successful three-day, hackathon-style events in which makers from different backgrounds tried to solve a museum challenge together. They researched ways in which a museum can tell stories and present objects in an innovative way, with the visitor as the starting point. We enabled colleagues from museums and other heritage institutions to experience and stimulate innovation.[52]

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Dos and don'ts

Do
- Mark visitor participation as a basic and sustainable service of your institution; invest in structural funding for this new practice to make it permanent.
- Be aware that the daily routine of your institution can erode the results of successful participation (and the other way round).
- Share your results through various channels and via a joint digital forum.
- Ensure follow-up, in the form of questionnaires, refresher days, workshops or other meet-ups.
- Distinguish between aims and means. Be transparent during the execution about the 'why' of participation.
- Organise evaluation and assessment moments, both with your own staff and with the participants.
- Invest in evaluation methodology, which will provide arguments for continuation of participation projects and their funding.
- Look beyond your own institution: invest in building capacity in local communities and in inclusive heritage practice.

Don't
- Don't see visitor participation as something you just 'do on the side'; take it seriously, and involve and train your staff.
- Don't aim too high too fast, strive for a growth model and invest in evaluation and assessment.
- Don't consider participation as a sector-specific task. As a heritage institution, promote specific knowledge and skills from other field.

7.1 The 'gold trail' of the Allard Pierson in 1945, when the building still served as the head office of the Dutch central bank. Money and gold were brought in from the quay with trolleys on the railway track that ran through the monumental doors of the main entrance to the vaults of the bank.

7

Epilogue

I have attempted with this publication to be a reflective practitioner.[1] What has the quest via theory and practice yielded at the Allard Pierson over the past twelve years? I can answer this question in various ways. Firstly, it has revealed how a medium-sized heritage institution, working within a large university on modest budgets for innovative projects, went through a transformation during my tenure as director. I have managed this process with all my shortcomings and limitations, but also with a strong drive towards renewal, towards finding sustainable solutions and practices. This went along with the realisation that this has been coupled with the ongoing search for funding, the quest for new substantive programme lines, for new partners in collaboration, for internal spaces to experiment, for new heritage concepts, for new exhibition concepts, for digital tools and towards a participative dialogue. I have tried in this publication to document this process from a personal and professional perspective.

The University of Amsterdam's collections were the starting point of the transformation and of all projects that I have described in the previous chapters. They are an inexhaustible source that we at the Allard Pierson manage, expand, maintain, conserve, make available to students and researchers, and present to as wide a public as possible. This last goal in particular, giving meaning to these collections and presenting them, and the quest into organising curiosity and enhancing our visibility, has been given a lot of room in this publication. They comprise a balancing exercise between the three positions outlined in the Introduction (p.19): the heritage reservoir, reflection on heritage as contemporary shaper of identity, and heritage as a source of inspiration for innovation and future, yet unknown, uses.

The monumental main entrance of the Allard Pierson symbolizes in many ways the heritage practice I advocate. We were able to put the old monumental doors dating from 1867 back into use after they had been standing dormant for 60 years. This re-use not only is sustainable, this enlarged entrance now also symbolizes greater accessibility to the building and the collections kept there. For a period of almost one hundred years, when the building housed the Dutch National bank headquarters, money and gold bars were brought in through this entrance via trolleys on a railway line (see fig. 7.1). A future project could be to visualize this forgotten 'gold track' in an artistic way, thus exposing an important historical layer of the museum's entrance.

Given the academic setting of a university, which means working with academic heritage and being surrounded by a team of academics, it is scarcely surprising that the

way collections are handled is constantly reflected upon. And by 'handled' I mean that there is always debate, generated by curatorial tradition, by fresh generations of students, by international collaborative projects, by policy networks, by acquisition practice or by cultural funds. In my 12 years at the Allard Pierson, it was often a delight and sometimes an ordeal to jump from one bubble to the next; this was both the privilege and the virtually impossible task of my position as managing director.

Ambition, drive and purpose also compel you to make difficult choices that may affect colleagues, projects and collections. I want to state here that my ultimate mainspring for the transformation and renewal of the Allard Pierson has always been the loyalty, expertise, and passion for the collections that I have experienced from my team down the years. To be honest about my own position: I was not the boss, as is often the case with many of my colleagues at other museums. Though I could yield little power, I could certainly exercise considerable influence based on my position. The additional support that the many projects and partnerships created have turned the quest for transformation and our task for renewal into a success. I have already explained that at the start of my tenure there was no budget available. There was a small team that had long been in place. I was of course sometimes envious of fellow institutions that were able to implement major museum renewal projects on the basis of large budgets. In the end, it took 12 years to arrive at where we now are: a rejuvenated Allard Pierson in which two collections, two buildings and two organisations are now more closely linked, and which will, I hope, continue to shine a light on their magnificent collections in a sustainable way.

The discourse on heritage has shifted considerably over the past 12 years. The attention paid – in roughly chronological order – to digitisation, provenance history, participation, multivocality and inclusivity made my task not only more exciting but also more complex. We worked with the combination of these factors and the fact that you can of course not be a pioneer in all these fields simultaneously. Effecting sustainable change in a museum is heavily dependent on the nature of the collections, the flexibility of your colleagues and the expertise that you have in-house. But in sum I am convinced that at the Allard Pierson a number of programme lines have been sketched out which have laid a solid foundation for building on over the years ahead.

Digital transformation is currently a high priority on the academic and heritage agenda. My own theoretical starting points were sketched out in Chapter 5, while the case studies provide many concrete leads for colleagues in the field. The biography of collections will certainly become more important and relevant in gaining a grip on multivocality and diversity. In Chapter 3, the theoretical background to collaborative projects was linked to a number of examples which serve to illuminate successful international museum projects. Further research into the historical networks of art collectors and their contexts will lead to a clearer understanding of the fascinating personal, political and social motives, agendas and objectives which lie behind the choices which have led to the collections that are currently kept at museums and other heritage institutions – and which every collector, director and curator still makes. But this will also reveal more and more of what has been erased and stolen during coloniality. I can only repeat the words of Vazquez, that we must strive for a world in which many worlds fit.[2]

Participation goes both ways. The most obvious is participation by the visitor, but, unfortunately, too many heritage institutions – museums, monuments, archives and archaeological services – have now withdrawn behind display cases, closed doors and

depots. The material preservation activities has to a high degree been professionalised, but this leads to the quite undesirable effect of an even greater invisibility of many objects and collections. Another result is that transporting works of art, insurance and couriers have gradually become unaffordable for small and medium-sized museums, limiting their options of changing their display and attracting visitors. Preservation of monuments and the cultural landscape has for a number of years found itself in a more spatially driven transformation, from pure conservation to a policy that is developmental and more community focused. Archives have perhaps been in the best position to improve their services to the public by creating digital access and extending their outreach, but in terms of visibility they are increasingly in competition with museums. Archaeology is a relatively small but well organised sector that is battling the paradox of great popularity in the (local) media and at the same time relative obscurity, because the true archaeological reservoir often lies buried in the earth or in a depot. By contrast, the ArcheoHotspots have emerged as a successful grassroots concept that stimulates participative dialogue effectively. Intangible heritage is participative almost by definition and can be linked with all the above heritage categories.

Participation is also necessary internally. Initiatives like the Heritage Lab, Digital Museum Lab and MuseumCamp, along with various workshops in collaborative projects, were used at the Allard Pierson to encourage our own staff to allow themselves the confrontation with creative outsiders and with colleagues at other heritage institutions. But in practice, this happened only to an extremely limited extent. The reality is that renewal processes of this kind proceed very slowly and cannot be forced. Student projects on the other hand have proven to generate a feeling of greater urgency, but often reveal an uncomfortable generation gap between the young students and senior staff.

7.1 A visitor takes a photo of the plaster cast of the Winged Victory of Samothrace in the Allard Pierson.

This publication's title perhaps suggests that the emphasis from now on should lie on digital curation, but that is not entirely the case. Just as digitisation is not a goal in itself, handling digital content in a creative way is neither. In heritage practice we are after all, as in many other sectors of society, confronted with the impact of digitisation to an increasing extent. However, the ultimate question that we will increasingly have to pose going into the future is how digital curation will contribute to a more inclusive heritage practice. This publication is unfortunately unable to provide much of an answer. First, it seems to me, the right conditions for digital curation have to be created. I come back to the triangle mentioned earlier (see p. 116). First of all, collection management systems must be enriched with the diverse biographical information. In the second place, easy to use digital curation tools and platforms must become available. And third, there is a need for new expertise and practical experience in the field of visual storytelling. The shift to a more dynamic approach to heritage ultimately also automatically means paying heed to multivocality and inclusivity. This will be high up on the agendas of the heritage institutions. Partnered with digital curation, this will open up new possibilities in the quest for the all-important participative dialogue.

Looking back, I would like to draw the conclusion that the past 12 years at the Allard Pierson have been a time full of change, renewal, experiment and collaboration. Of course, not everything that we began has worked, plans have been changed, funding for projects that we wished with great enthusiasm to launch did not get off the ground, and the rebuilding and renewal of our museum galleries suffered more delays than feared. But now, at the end of the road, the Allard Pierson is an indispensable high-quality institution: *the* museum and *the* research institute for the University of Amsterdam's collections, at a prime location in the heart of the Dutch capital, and one that has secured for itself a prominent position in the city, in the Netherlands and in Europe. We are working with colleagues, partners, fellow-institutions and sponsors on a wide range of projects that will consolidate and enhance this position, and we will continue to move with the times to ensure that we are able to make use of opportunities and challenges. We are ready to face the future.

I would like to conclude with the Allard Pierson manifesto which we presented in 2019 and which still expresses quite well what we stand for.[3]

What is the essence of who I am? An existential question that we've all asked ourselves. It was also one of the key questions in the work of the 19th-century Amsterdam professor Allard Pierson. He looked for the answer by studying humankind from different perspectives: theology, art history, aesthetics, language.

We continue his quest to this very day at Oude Turfmarkt in Amsterdam. We do that with one of the most precious cultural-historical academic treasure troves in the world: the heritage collections of the University of Amsterdam. Celebrated collections in the fields of archaeology, book history, cartography, graphic design, literature, Jewish culture, zoology and the performing arts.

7.2 The introduction room of the new Allard Pierson.

The collections encompass an endless variety of objects and ideas. Each and every one with a unique soul. Made with so much love and care that you only have to look at it to bring the stories behind it to life. Stories about talent and craftsmanship. About the time they were created. About changing tastes, evolving norms, the influence of technology. About everything that we once deemed important.

Just one single object can tell us so much. But bringing these objects together adds a whole new dimension. A bigger picture emerges. We see who we are together. As a group, as humans. We see how we evolve over the course of generations.

To create and interpret all these different stories, we also like to bring together different perspectives. Our collections are therefore accessible to everybody. To scholars and students, and to the wider public.

We do more than preserve and restore the treasures held here. We examine and study them, discuss and publish them, and exhibit them to the full. In very brief presentations of objects so delicate and fragile that they cannot endure light for long periods. And in long-running exhibitions that offer greater insight into human development across many centuries and continents.

Together the creators, visitors and scholars paint a clearer picture of who we once were, who we have become, and what has changed in between. Bringing the answer to that one question a little bit closer every day. What aspects of humanity remain the same down the ages and across borders? Perhaps that is the essence of who we are. Of you. Of me. Of Allard Pierson. Of all of us.
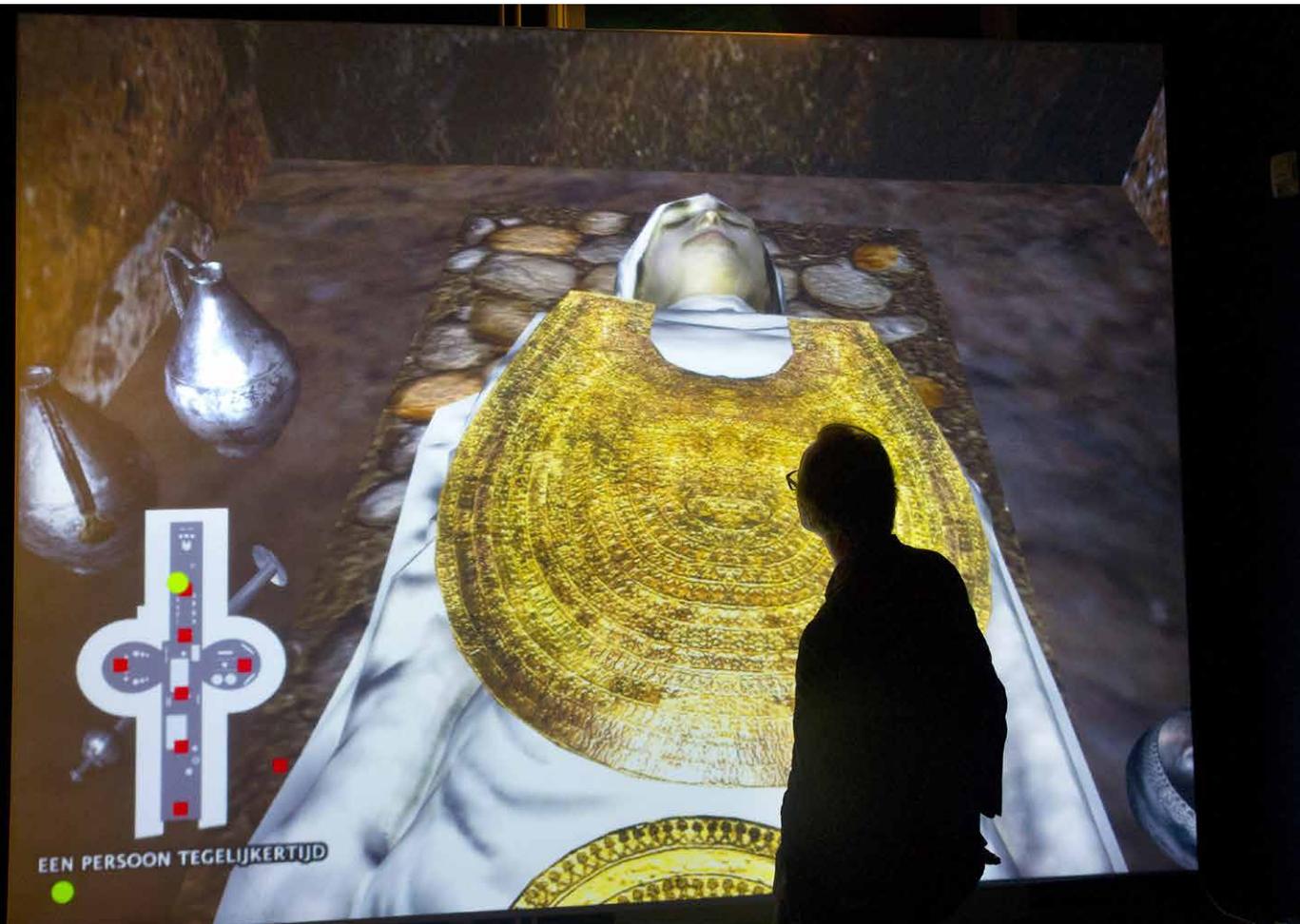
7.3 A visitor at the *Etruscanning* project in the Allard Pierson in 2011.

About the author

Wim Hupperetz is a heritage professional in the field of museology, archaeology, cultural landscapes and built heritage, focused on adding value through digital media and a multi-disciplinary approach.

Wim worked as a curator and head of public affairs at the Limburgs Museum in Venlo for sixteen years and was director at the Allard Pierson, the museum and research institute of the collections of the University of Amsterdam, from 2009 to 2021. He coordinated the refurbishment and expansion of the museum that was completed in 2020. At the time of writing this book, the new Allard Pierson was nominated for the European Museum of the Year Awards (EMYA) 2022. He initiated the Heritage Lab and ArchaeoHotspots, introduced MuseumCamp in the Netherlands, and coordinated several European Union projects on museums and digital heritage, working with international consortia of museums, research and commercial partners. He has published on Roman and medieval archaeology, castles, museology, and digital heritage.

Currently Wim is Chief Science Officer at the Dutch Cultural Heritage Agency (RCE) and part time professor of Museums, Heritage and Digital Curation at the University of Amsterdam.

Notes

Introduction

1. Collard (2016); see: https://assets.amsterdam.nl/publish/pages/867604/paul_collard_cultural_education_in_amsterdam.pdf.
2. See: Robbins, Thomas, Tuominen, Wessman (2021); I see Deliss (2020), which looks back on her directorship at the Weltkulturen Museum in Frankfurt (2010-15), as one of the few successful examples. While the 2014 documentary *The New Rijksmuseum* by Oeke Hoogendijk provides a fascinating view of and peek into this process, it makes no contribution to the discourse on museum renewal.
3. Poole et al (eds) (2010); Coleman et al (2021).
4. Borowiecki and Navarrete (2017).
5. See Chapter 6 in this publication.

Chapter 1

Identification by Branko van Oppen; see for a discussion: Spivey, Looking like Caesar see: https://youtu.be/-StkO9wCZ1I.

6. See also: Frijhoff (1992), Zacharias (1990).
7. Fyfe (2011), p. 39.
8. Hooper-Greenhill (2000).
9. Tlili (2008).
10. Simon (2010).
11. Odding (2011).
12. Ten Thije (2016), p. 69.
13. Deliss (2020).
14. Wittocx et al (2018).
15. *NRC,* 17 June 2020, *Nederlandse kunstmusea: diversiteit is beleid, maar de directeur is altijd wit – Onderzoek diversiteit musea* (Dutch art museums: diversity is the policy, but the director is always white – Investigation into museum diversity).
16. https://codedi.nl/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Code-Diversity-Inclusion.pdf; https://studio-inclusie.nl/en/.
17. Galla (2013).
18. Gokcigdem (2016).
19. Jennings, et. al. (2019).
20. Van Eijnatten, et al (2013).

21. Schwarz and Elffers (2010); Schwarz, Krabbendam with The Beach Network (2013).
22. Black (2020).
23. Huyssen (2003).
24. Van der Laarse (2005); see also: Van der Laarse (2013).
25. Prior (2011).
26. Hooper-Greenhill (2000).
27. Simon (2010).
28. Vázquez (2020), 136.
29. Arnold-de Simine (2013); Knoop (2020).
30. Nora (1989).
31. Braudel (1980), pp. 45-84.
32. Hupperetz (2015).
33. Roymans, Fernández-Götz (2015).
34. Schatorjé, Coppens, Derkx (ed.) (1990).
35. Munawar (2021).
36. Pamuk (2008).
37. In 2021 the documentary film *The Treasures of Crimea* by Oeke Hoogendijk was released: https://youtu.be/HWzuQR-o5yU.
38. Van der Laarse (2016).
39. Frijhoff (1992).
40. In fact we soon arrive in the area of critical heritage studies, where three types of theorisation are distinguished: theory in heritage, theory about heritage and theory of heritage. See: Waterton, Watson (2013).
41. Jameson (1991).
42. MacLeod, Hourston Hanks, and Hale (eds.) (2012).
43. Legêne (2006).
44. See the chapter 'Post-Nostalgia for the Museum? Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford' in Arnold-de Simine (2013).

Chapter 2

1. Van Beurden (2017).
2. https://www.musealeverwervingen.nl/en/10/home/; Hicks (2020).
3. The 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property and the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects.
4. Bärnreuther, Schuster (eds.) (2009).
5. https://museumvereniging.nl/media/lamo_2016_guidelines_for_the_deaccessioning_of_museum_objects_1.pdf.
6. Frijhoff (2007).
7. Smith (2011).
8. Nora (1989).
9. Radstone (2005).
10. Assmann (2008).
11. Landsberg (2004).
12. Roymans, Fernández-Götz (2015).
13. Hirsch (2008).

14. De Jong (2010).
15. https://skfb.ly/YTQG.
16. Burgersdijk et al (ed.) (2015).
17. Visser (1987), unpublished doctoral thesis under Prof. H. Brijder.
18. Lunsingh-Scheurleer (1995).
19. The Collectors' Cabinet was initiated by Wim Hupperetz, with further detailing by Laurien de Gelder, Stijn Vennik and René van Beek. Completed in 2015, revised in 2018.
20. See also: De Gelder, Vennik (2016). The first application was certainly very attractive visually but could not be realised. A decision was for that reason taken in 2020 to include this collection in the Cross Culture Timeline: https://allardpierson.crossculture.ie/provenance/.
21. Stevenson (2019).
22. The Petrie Perspective project was carried out with the following partners: Ashmolean Museum/Griffith Institute, University of Oxford; Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, University College London; Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen; Art & History Museum, Brussels; British School, Athens.
23. The research was conducted by Willem van Haarlem, curator of the Egyptian collection. See: Van Haarlem (2016).
24. http://egyptartefacts.griffith.ox.ac.uk/?q=objects-petrie-excavations-allard-pierson-museum-results-petrie-perspective-project.
25. http://www.ucl.ac.uk/museums/petrie/research/research-projects/AHRC_project.
26. The partners in this research project were: Museum August Kestner, Hannover; Staatliches Museum für Ägyptische Kunst, Munich; Egyptian Museum, Berlin; NIOD-Dutch Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Amsterdam.
27. Eickhoff, Smith (forthcoming).
28. Grimm (2010).
29. The papers of the concluding symposium in 2022 are to be published by Sidestone Press in Leiden.
30. Institutions where parts of the Von Bissing collection are kept include: Museum August Kestner, Hannover; Staatliches Museum für Ägyptische Kunst, Munich; Ägyptisches Museum, Berlin; National Museum of Antiquities, Leiden; Art & History Museum, Brussels; Antikenmuseum Basel, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (Skulpturen Sammlung) and the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen. This list is definitely not complete; moreover Von Bissing's collection of paintings is not included.
31. https://allardpierson.crossculture.ie/bissing/.
32. The project was carried out by guest curator Branko van Oppen between 2016 and 2018.
33. Van Oppen, Wallenfels (eds.) (2021).
34. https://www.ancientworldmagazine.com/articles/edfu-connection-ptolemaic-seal-impressions/=.
35. Songu (2021).
36. See: https://archives.uba.uva.nl/resources/ubainv551.
37. This project is being conducted in collaboration with the Monuments and Archaeology Bureau of the Municipality of Amsterdam with financing from the Mondriaan Fund, the Fund for Cultural Participation, the Amsterdam Fund for the Arts and the Sluyterman van Loo Fund. See: https://www.fondssluytermanvanloo.nl/project/archeologiestation-amsterdam/.
38. De Gelder (2017).
39. Macdonald, Sharon (2016).

Chapter 3

1. Modest, Thomas, Prlić and Augustat (eds.) (2019).
2. Bunnik (ed.) (2014), https://museumvereniging.nl/media/tried_and_tested_partner-ships_web.pdf.
3. Black (ed.) (2020).
4. Caluwé and Vermaak (2003).
5. See for a more general and elaborate reflection: Bienkowski, McGowan (2021).
6. The driving forces were Jan Bolten, who coordinated all the labs between 2010 and 2014, and Christie Ray who assisted as project leader.
7. https://www.meetup.com/Digital-Museum-Network-Amsterdam/.
8. The international (traveling) exhibition projects of the Allard Pierson: *Etruscans* (2011), *Horse and Horseman. From Homer to Genghis Khan* (2012) *Keys to Rome* (2014), *The Crimea. Gold and the Secrets of the Black Sea* (2014), *Sicily and the Sea* (2015), *Cross-roads. Travelling through the Early Middle Ages* (2017), *The World in Colour: Colour Photography before 1918* (2018), *Bes. Small God in Ancient Egypt* (2019) and *Goddesses of Art Nouveau* (2020).
9. https://museumcontact.nl/evenementen/kennisdag-internationale-samenwerk-ing-nederlandse-musea.
10. The COBBRA project ran from 2015 to 2018. Museum partners: Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek (Copenhagen), Ashmolean Museum (Oxford), LVR-LandesMuseum (Bonn), Art & History Museum (Brussels), Allard Pierson (Amsterdam), Soprintendenza del Mare, Regione Siciliana (Palermo), August Kestner Museum (Hanover); network partners: Digitaal Erfgoed Nederland, Koninklijk Nederlands Instituut (Rome), Nederlands Instituut Athene, Stichting Zenobia (Amsterdam); commercial partners: Labrys Reizen (Nijmegen), WBOOKS publishers (Zwolle), NoHo Ltd (Dublin), Vantilt publishers (Nijmegen), wbgTheiss Verlag (Darmstadt). The project was coordinated in succession by Marieke van den Doel (2015) and Paulien Retèl (2016–2018).
11. https://www.academia.edu/44819344/Het_COBBRA_Netwerk.
12. https://allardpierson.nl/bezoek/tentoonstellingen/archief/godinnenvandeartnouveau/
13. This paragraph is based on Donkersloot, Hupperetz and Retèl (red.) (2019), see https://cemec-eu.net/How%20the%20Middle%20Ages%20brought%20European%20institu-tions%20together.pdf.
14. I would like to thank Eva Pietroni, Jorrit Kelder, Paulien Retèl, Michael Schmauder, Lynda Mulvin and Niall O'hOisin in particular for their input. The Allard Pierson was coordinator of the project, with project coordinators Marieke van den Doel (2015–2016) and Wietske Donkersloot (2017–2018).

Chapter 4

1. Rana, Dibbits (2017).
2. 'Macht tussen hemel en aarde', 'Stadsleven in Limburg' and 'Kastelen in Limburg' ('Power between heaven and earth', 'City life in Limburg' and 'Castles in Limburg').
3. Hupperetz (1998).
4. The sessions took place in the summer of 2009 with: Marlies Kleiterp, Maikel Kuijpers, Theo Meereboer, Peter van Mensch, Maarten Raven, Paul Spies, and Leo Verhart.
5. The splendid archaeological collection of Van Papenbroek ended up in Leiden and is now in the National Museum of Antiquities; see Halbertsma (2018).

6. Den Oudsten (2020). One of the few exceptions to an archaeologically modernist museum is the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, where 53 galleries were merged into one in an ingenious way in 2010, but here too, geographical unity and an authoritarian tone of voice are indicative.

7. Lommen (ed.) (Zwolle 2007).

8. Three temporary exhibitions were held annually in these galleries between 2007 and 2016.

9. Den Oudsten (2020).

10. 'There is nothing more difficult to predict than the past.' See: Holtdorf (2010).

11. Compare Bernhardt (2020).

12. Fyfe (2011).

13. The modular showcase system was designed by Theo Braams and later developed and refined by Hans Frings.

14. The refurbishment has been coordinated over its various phases by project leaders Marian Schilder (From Rome to Roman), Caroline Verweij (Greeks and Major Powers, Greek Cabinet, Etruscan Cabinet, From Alexander to Cleopatra, Hellenistic Cabinet, From Rome to Roman, Amsterdam Creative City, Collectors' Cabinet), Martine Kilburn (Hunters become Farmers, City and Script, Egyptian Cabinet, Holy Empires, Amsterdam on the Rise, Plaster cast gallery); Charlotte Lammers and Stijn van Rossem (Amsterdam Creative City).

15. Cunliffe (2008).

16. Created in 2020. Curated by Willem van Haarlem and Ben van den Bercken.

17. https://egymonuments.gov.eg/news/launching-the-european-union-funding-project-transforming-the-egyptian-museum-of-cairo/.

18. Deliss (2020), 99.

19. Created in 2020 by guest curators Marie-France van Oorsouw and Leo Verhart.

20. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317416494_On_the_Lions_Gate_at_Mycenae_its_Geometry_and_Roots.

21. Created in 2020 by Laurien de Gelder, Willem van Haarlem, and guest curators Gert Jan van Wijngaarden and Diederik Meijer.

22. Cline (2015).

23. Created in 2016 by Laurien de Gelder and guest curators Vladimir Stissi and Winfred van de Put.

24. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/02/magazine/classics-greece-rome-whiteness.html

25. Research by Laurien de Gelder; https://www.nwo.nl/onderzoeksprogrammas/creatieve-industrie/museumbeurzen/onderzoeksprojecten.

26. Created in 2017 by Laurien de Gelder and guest curators Vladimir Stissi and Winfred van de Put.

27. Created in 2017 by René van Beek.

28. Completed in 2016 by guest curator Branko van Oppen.

29. Completed in 2018.

30. Completed in three phases: pilot project in 2014, review on the basis of feedback from focus groups in 2015, and further alterations in 2019 by René van Beek, Wim Hupperetz and guest curator Branko van Oppen.

31. Curated by guest curator Tineke Rooijakkers. Completed in 2020.

32. Rasterhoff (2017).

33. Pettegree and Der Weduwen (2019).
34. Thematic presentations within the existing chronological frame have been curated by Astrid Balsem, Esther Boeles, Rachel Boertjens Paul Dijstelberge, Klaas van der Hoek, Hans van Keulen, Mathieu Lommen, Hans Mulder, Marike van Roon, Stijn van Rossem, Reinder Storm and Gwendolyn Verbraak.
35. Completed in 2020. The concept was developed by curator Klaas van der Hoek.
36. 'Amsterdam Creative City' was first completed in 2019.
37. Completed in 2019.

Chapter 5

1. https://pro.europeana.eu/page/edm-documentation.
2. See the case studies in this chapter.
3. The bronze battering ram was found on the seafloor off the western coast of Sicily in 2010, in the area of the battle near the Aegadian Islands, the last sea battle in the Punic Wars between Rome and Carthage (10 March 241 BC).
4. The animation was made by 3D artist Stan Verbeek in collaboration with curator Alexandra Sofroniew: https://youtu.be/NgMok035U7E. See also a powerful animation of components of Byzantine church architecture from the same project, made by Stan Verbeek and Paola Di Cuia: https://youtu.be/_UZ4d2kPPNE.
5. For annotated 3D models, see: https://skfb.ly/6TBIL; https://skfb.ly/ZOzZ; https://skfb.ly/UM9X.
6. Kamps (2017); Kamps (2019).
7. One example is the Rijksmuseum, which does not have any digital stations or applications in the museum displays, but has certainly developed a strong online presence through Rijksstudio.
8. This is done at the Kunstmuseum, The Hague: De Keijzer (1996); see also: Koolen, Kamps, De Keijzer, Vincent (2009).
9. See p. 19.
10. See p. 109.
11. https://allardpierson.crossculture.ie/palmyra/.
12. See e.g. The Pelagios Network: www.pelagios.org.
13. This paragraph is based on an EU project proposal the Jaap Kamps and I wrote in 2019.
14. Roling (2019).
15. Azuma (1997).
16. https://vizworld.com/2009/04/augmented-reality-at-the-allard-pierson-museum/.
17. https://youtu.be/5jMnp5W9wek.
18. Capurro, Nollet and Pletinckx (2015).
19. https://youtu.be/unY17NhYQ6I, animation by Moobels.
20. See: Hashemi, Kamps, Hupperetz (2017) and Hashemi, Kamps (2018).
21. Project Partners: Allard Pierson Museum, University of Amsterdam, Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Instituto per le Tecnologie, Applicate ai beni Culturali (CNR-ITABC), Rome, E.V.O.CA. Encoded Visions on Canvas, Rome, Visual Dimension bvba, Ename, National Museum of Antiquities, Leiden, Gallo-Roman Museum, Tongeren, Museo Gregoriano Etrusco, Musei Vaticani, Vatican City, Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia, Rome, Museo dell'Agro Veientano, Formello, LVR-LandesMuseum, Bonn, With the support of the Culture Unit of EACEA of the European Union and V-MusT.net.

22. In an email of 8 February 2021, Maurizio Sannibale (curator for the Etruscan Collections in the Vatican Museums) wrote that the Regolini Galassi application had worked for eight years since the opening on 4 April 2013, but that the room where it was set up had to be restored.

23. Hupperetz, Pletinckx, Pietroni, Sannibale (2011).

24. Pletinckx, Pietroni, Hupperetz, Ray, Palombini, Carlani (2012).

25. https://regolinigalassi.wordpress.com /, blog by Daniel Pletinckx with background information on the documentation and reconstruction process.

26. Ray, Van der Vaart (2013).

27. https://youtu.be/iiW4dbfo5yU.

28. www.v-must.net. The project was funded by the European FP7 Network of Excellence (Grant Agreement 270404), directed at Virtual Museums.

29. Ray (2020).

30. www.meetup.com/Virtual-Museum-Network-Amsterdam.

31. Hashemi (2021), chapter 2; he was able to use 21,000 log data from visitors using the *Keys to Rome* system.

32. https://youtu.be/tmM1MzVvMp0.

33. http://mesch-project.eu.

34. Two PhD students of the Mediastudies department at the UvA conducted research within the students meSch project over four years; see Hashemi (2021).

35. Project partners: Sheffield Hallam University, University of Limerick, University of Stuttgart, WAAG Society, DEN Foundation, University of Strathclyde, Allard Pierson Museum, Museon, eCTRL Solutions, University Carlos III Madrid, Museo Storico Italiano della Guerra, Fondazione Bruno Kessler.

36. Petrelli, Ciolfi, Avram (2021).

37. The Cross Culture Timeline was developed by Noho Creative knowhow (Dublin), Allard Pierson (Amsterdam), University College Dublin, with 3D scans made by Moobels (Hilversum) and input from all the CEMEC museum partners.

38. https://ucdcrossroads.crossculture.ie/ and https://allardpierson.crossculture.ie/medieval/.

39. https://allardpierson.crossculture.ie/.

40. https://allardpierson.crossculture.ie/nouveau/.

41. https://ucdcrossroads.crossculture.ie/timeline/.

42. https://lvr.crossculture.ie/.

43. https://carrowmore.crossculture.ie/timeline.php.

44. https://castleconnell.crossculture.ie/.

45. Development and evaluation of the Holoboxes: CNR (Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche) and EVOCA (Encoded Visions on Canvas, Rome), Allard Pierson (Amsterdam), Hungarian National Museum (Budapest), Byzantine & Christian Museum (Athens), LVR-LandesMuseum (Bonn).

46. https://youtu.be/EcT6Lft_sQQ.

47. The Digital Museum Lab was coordinated by Caroline Verweij and financed by the Mondriaan Fund. The Allard Pierson collaborated with three partners on the DML: DEN (www.den. nl), WAAG society (www.waag.org) and Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences / Crossmedia Associate Professorship (www.hva.nl). The project group comprised Caroline Verweij and Dorien Theuns (APM), Robin van Westen (WAAG), Wietske van den Heuvel (DEN), Bernadette Schrandt (HvA).

48. Van der Vaart and Ray (2014).

49. From 2016 to 2019, a total of 28 meetups took place.

50. Theuns, Verweij, Schrandt, Van Westen and Van den Heuvel (2018).

Chapter 6

1. Bunnik, Van Huis (2011).

2. Deliss (2019).

3. Ten Thije (2019).

4. Schavemaker (2018).

5. Black (2020).

6. Smith (2011).

7. Bazelmans (2012).

8. De Waal (2017); Janssen, Luiten, Renes and Stegmeijer (2017).

9. Veldpaus, Kisić, Stegmeijer and Janssen (2021), 202.

10. Kolen, Renes, Hermans (eds) (2015).

11. Knoop, Michiel Schwartz (eds) (2019).

12. Harrison (2020).

13. Thorau, Schaulinski (eds.) (2018).

14. MacNeil, Mak (2007).

15. Lodowici (2019), and Schmauder and Wemhoff (2020).

16. Coltofean-Arizancu, Gaydarska, Matić (eds.) (2021).

17. See the discussion of the presentation 'From the Nile to the Amstel' in the Allard Pierson in Chapter 4.

18. Hupperetz (2017).

19. Montanari (2013).

20. Kemr (2002).

21. *Museumsverweigerung* in: Swiss (ed.) (1994).

22. Black (ed.) (2021).

23. Runnel, Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt eds. (2014); Crooke (2021).

24. Macdonald (2016).

25. See Chapter 1 page 36: Transnational memory war.

26. Wynia and Eckhardt (eds.) (2016).

27. Allard Pierson Live was completed in 2020 by project leader Lidewij van Valkenhoef, Studio Ingeborg Scheffers, Tim Piët Architect.

28. Completed in 2020 by project leader Lidewij van Valkenhoef, Marike van Roon, Reinder Storm, Erik Bastiaanse, Bram Vannieuwenhuyzen, The Fiction Factory, NoHo, Sandór Schouten, Pieter Kuiper, RI Sign & Print.

29. See also https://allardpierson.crossculture.ie/geozone/.

30. The Allard Pierson audio collections originate from the Netherlands Music Centre (Netherlands Jazz Archive, Netherlands Pop Institute, Donemus and Gaudeamus) and the Netherlands Theatrical Institute.

31. Completed in 2020 by project leader Lidewij van Valkenhoef, Studio Ingeborg Scheffers, Tim Piët Architect, Hans van Keulen, Ditmer Weertman, Gonneke Janssen, The Fiction Factory, Sandór Schouten.

32. https://erfgoedstem.nl/community-archeologie-als-essentieel-onderdeel-publieks-archeologie/.

33. Knoop, Van Londen, Van den Dries, Landskroon (2021).
34. The national 'heritage review' of 2009 reveals that public interest in archaeology increased over the period 1996-2004. More than a quarter of the population of the Netherlands visited an excavation or archaeological presentation in 2004.
35. The project went by the name 'Spitten zien wij wel zitten' (We dig digging).
36. Van der Velde, Ostkamp, Veldman and Wyns (eds.) (2009).
37. The late AWN chair Tonnie van de Rijdt and I acted in concert from the outset, finding sympathetic partners in the municipal archaeological services in Den Bosch, Eindhoven and Amsterdam.
38. The same year we were able to conduct experiments in Heritage Lab #12 with finds from Amsterdam's North/South metro line, which were processed by volunteers from the archaeological service at a location open to the public.
39. https://archeohotspots.nl/archeohotspots-in-english/.
40. https://portable-antiquities.nl/pan/#/public.
41. By London et al (2021).
42. Schwarz (2016).
43. Opgenhaffen, Lami, Revello and Kisjes (2018).
44. Van Rheeden (2001).
45. Created in 2020; curated by René van Beek, project management by Martine Kilburn.
46. https://www.ancientworldmagazine.com/articles/diversity-education-museums-antiquity/.
47. https://camp.santacruzmah.org/museumcamp-2015-2/; Nina Simon was at the time director of the Museum of Art & History in Santa Cruz.
48. The idea of the MuseumCamp was developed by Mar Dixon in 2012 and subsequently organised in the UK for several years. From MuseumCamp Dixon developed the MuseoMix concept. The MuseoMix network is very active on four continents and in seven countries, particularly in the French-speaking world. https://www.museomix.org/.
49. MuseumCamp is currently no longer active in the UK and the US because Nina Simon is fully focused on OF/BY/FOR ALL.
50. https://waag.org/en/lab/maker-education-lab.
51. Rosenfeld-Halverson, Erica and Kimberly Sheridan (2014).
52. The themes were: interactive technology, the museum as laboratory, inside and outside and contested histories. Aftermovie 2016: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITN-M67afdvA; aftermovie 2019: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u49z61wPM9U.

Chapter 7

1. Basso Peressut (2014). See also: Halbertsma, Marlite and Kuipers (2014).
2. Vazquez (2020), 136.
3. https://youtu.be/JX6eI9mtX-4.

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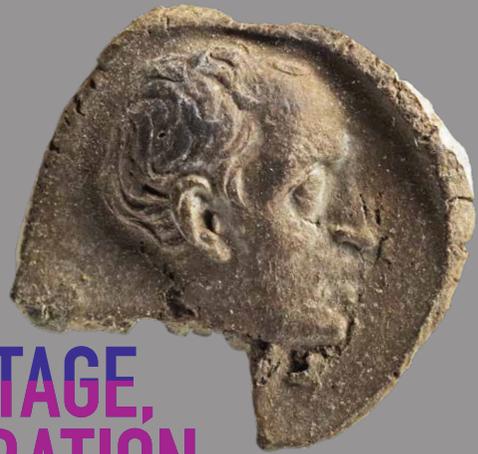
MUSEUMS, HERITAGE, AND DIGITAL CURATION

Heritage institutions face major changes in the areas of digitisation, narrative, inclusivity, and participation. In this groundbreaking book Wim Hupperetz, an expert in the field of museums, heritage and digital curation, reflects on the challenge of change. How does a museum move from an object or a collection to storytelling, and what is the impact of digitisation on curatorship? How to assess the biography of a collection when you think of museums as a medium of memory? And in striving to achieve a participatory dialogue, what is the difference between collaborating and doing things together?

In six chapters, theory and practice are juxtaposed. Each chapter concludes with practical dos and don'ts. This book is also meant as a tribute to everyone who has contributed to the renovation of the Allard Pierson, the museum and knowledge institute where the collections of the University of Amsterdam are preserved and presented.

Museums, Heritage and Digital Curation is intended for heritage professionals and students who want to gain insight into the debate in a rapidly changing field.

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