CERS

The heritage of wars

The roots of museums

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On 26 February of 2015, IS was subject of news when disseminated a video destroying pieces dated almost 9th century B.C. This attack to the World heritage corresponds with a great variety of techniques and tactics to cause fear in the international audience. This radical cell is being fomented an "anti-western sentiment". The ransacking of pieces of art and museums exhibits a mean of demonstrating their hate against West. In other terms, this represents a new way of interpelating our obsession for "heritage" (Harris, 1988; Korstanje, 2012). In the mid of XXth century, French philosopher, Gilles Deleuze evinced that our current civilization rests on contradictory cultural values. Everything what on one hand we value, as heritage, on another, is associated to what we spurn (as terrorism) and in consequence is repressed (Deleuze & Guattari 1988). Society, alluding to its disciplinary mechanisms, mobilizes its resources to mitigate the effects of threats. No need to go so far to find in history clear examples of Guattari´s theory. During XIXth century, the first ethnographers who arrived to colonies not only concerned on the effects of war, the arbitrariness of colonial powers to exploit aborigines or to pillage their wealth, in in what they considered would be the disappearance of their cultures and traditions. At time, anthropologists involuntarily documented the aboriginal life the resulted information was passed to colonial officials to strengthen the colonization process.

1

This type of new paternalism, which accompanied anthropology from its outset, was conducive to the European imaginary of the "Otherness" that inspired literature, travel-writings and other literary genre. In parallel, it is important not to lose the sight that one of the missions of colonial order was not only to pacify the colonized regions, but also imposing restrictions over aborigines to make the war with their neighbors. Thought in terms of control, pacification alluded to a necessary instrument to avoid the inter-tribal wars in the colonized overseas territories. As a result of this, the colonial-law accelerated the development of extractive institutions to ship the precious materials to Europe, returning elaborated goods in exchange. In doing so, the war among neighbors should be prohibited. With the advent of decolonization process, this romantic view about heritage and war took opposite channels. Anthropology witnessed how the pacification imposed by European overseas Leviathans in Americas and Africa disarticulated one of tenets of human organization, the capacity to conduct the war (Said 1989; Asad 1991; Harrison, 1997; Kelly & Kaplan, 2001). Paradoxically, aboriginal cultures were absorbed by the western imaginary, not by the superiority of their cultural values, but by the lack of supposition of conflict that would help in forming stronger political units. Undoubtedly, this reveals how heritage and warfare are inextricably intertwined, even in our modern times. Theorstein Veblen figured the persistence of "leisure class" as a sublimated form of a barbarian violence. The roots of ownership and emulation guiding the life of leisure class are given by an old custom, the seizure of female captures. By appropriating women as trophies was the epicenter for the extension of slavery and the late custom of ownership. This happens because,

> "The Motive that lies at the root of ownership is emulation; and the same motive of emulation continues active in the further development of the institution to which it has given rise and in the development of all those features of the social structure which this institution of ownership touches. The possession of wealth confers honor; it is an invidious distinction. Nothing equally cogent can be said for the consumption of goods, nor for

any other conceivable incentive to acquisition, and especially not for any
incentive to the accumulation of wealth (Veblen, 1993: 11)

As the previous argument given, some interesting questions surface, to what an extent
social institutions are not derived from wars?, does war play a vital role by fixing the
authorities, economies and politics of societies?, what is the importance of museums for
West?, are museums reminders of controlled conflicts?

The Hobbesian Leviathan derived from two contrasting feelings, the preservation vs.
submission. Although, citizens confer in a third party the monopoly of force in order for the
security to be enhanced, no less true is that fear of death in the daily life endures (Hobbes,
1990). As Miguel Angel Centeno puts it, the success of nation-states to develop efficient
mechanisms to produce wealth in USA and Europe was related to their capacities to control
their fiscal deficit. The supremacy of Europe over the world can be explained not only by
the technological breakthroughs developed in the interwar period but in the fact they have
participated actively in two "total wars". The influence of total wars in the social
institutions can be abridged as follows,

a) The capacity to extract financial and human resources moving them to achieve a
collective goal
b) The centralization of financial capital to enhance the loyalties of diverse sectors of
society
c) A common identity
d) Total wars produce more richer and powerful states. The fiscal capacity of nations is
strengthened by the total wars (Centeno, 2002).

Centeno goes on to say,

"The destructive capacity of war is self-evident. Less so is the manner in
which war, or more accurately, the process of going to war, can be

3

constructive. War is rejuvenating. The demands of war create opportunities for innovation and adaptation. Wars help build the institutional basis of modern states by requiring a degree of organization and efficiency that only new political structures could provide..” (Centeno, 2002: 101)

In this vein, the present essay-review explores the effects of wars in shaping the "ethno-genesis" of nation-states as well as the role played by museums as ideological dispositiffs to achieve successfully a process of homogenization in the citizenship. We discuss to what an extent museums build "an imagined myth" resulted from a previous state of war, which not only paved the ways for the unification of community, but also coined a sense of "sovereignty", shared by all members of nation-state. Following Michel Foucault places and his notion of "economy of truth", one might speculate that states employ numerous disciplinary mechanisms so that elite gains further legitimacy. Looking for how societies build their regime of truth is vital to understand the structuration of values and beliefs that cement the scientific doctrine. Beyond what the populace parlance thinks, history neglects the voices of defeated actors. By means of disciplinary mechanisms, Foucault adds, external threats are transformed in internal risks. Placing the metaphor of vaccine and virus, he explains that society uses "Biopolitics", which means the technology of power, to grant its security. Since the threat can be equaled to the virus, the risk serves as a vaccine to protect the body (Foucault, 1977; 2003). At some extent, museums contain a great variety of national symbols and stories which are narrated from generation to generation. These national discourses are strongly associated to war-fare reminding that history advances by means of conflict. Most certainly, nation-states conferred to museums the right by classifying those objects which are significant for society, no matter than the real reasons of facts.

Following Foucault´s insight, Nicole Guidotti-Hernandez (2011) has written a pungent diagnosis of the pervasive role played by nation states in stimulating and restricting violence at their discretion. Her thesis is that violence resulted from earlier stereotypes

enrooted in the language. These stereotypes are employed to make a selective memory of colonization. Museums remind us while some events are over-valorized others are neglected. This represents a type of new violence. By focusing on the US-Mexico border Guidotti-Hernández draws out attention to the space where two different patterns of colonization collide [England in North America and Spain to the South]. Nation states are formed under process of differentiation and its economic re-organization of territory. Far from being a site of frank dialogue, stability, and understanding, the US-Mexico border shows a legacy of territorial disputes and conflict. Heritage, as it has been formulated by the founding parents of nationhood, not only hides a bloody past, but also exerts a type of "unspeakable" violence over bodies. At the time, nation-states administrate racism and sexism to keep the control of society, an ideological discourse, which is encouraged by heritage and tourism, justifies the derived practices of submission. In parallel, the process of homogenization brought by nation-state defied the previous medieval conditions of work and production imposing a new system of class hierarchy. Any past is selectively imagined according to the ruling class's interests. A much broader selective memory exaggerates certain aspects of history while others are silenced. Following this argument, it is important not to lose the sight of the idea that borders are spaces of multiple identities that need violence to exist; in so doing, when multi-racial communities enact violence on each other they serve to perpetuate both their own cultural values and amnesia. The aesthetic of biology was accentuated after the advance of modernity. In perspective, this ushers us to believe that heritage, where the process of museification rests, is the war by other means. Because we feel pieces exhibited at museums are authentic or belonged to the founding parents, or heroic warriors, seems to be one of the reasons why we embrace the official history as well as the national symbols as something unquestionable. What is the role played by authenticity in this national-being?

Modern states adopted culture as a valid form to deal with violence, as a form to conceptualize death. This conception of what share commonalities, delineating the boundaries of us, not only is oriented to regulate the internal revolts or riots, but also projecting an external struggle with strangers, them (Cameron, 2010). The society disposes

of diverse instrument to mitigate the social conflict. As Coser puts it, since neighbors are prone to rival in daily disputes, indifference is one of the most efficient ways of solving conflicts. The history of Europe witnessed how the war against their neighbors not only enhanced the legitimacy of states, but formed a sentiment of us (Coser, 1961). The British anthropologist E. Evans Pritchard observed that the social conflict is proportional to the needs of gaining further loyalty by leaders. In non-western cultures, clans are divided in two halves. The conflicts among clans of the same half is suspended when other clans (corresponding to the other half) perpetrate any act of violence (Evans-Pritchard, 1985). This explains how in and out-groups loyalties are managed by means of the imposition of wars and conflicts.

Norbert Elias, in a seminal work, discussed to what an extent the evolution of circular civilization alternated period of wars and peace. The efficiency to draw the borders is proportionate to nation-state's power, its capacity to dissuade others to attack. The politics and the circles of authorities are based on the possibilities of ruling class to produce a shared identity. However, if the borderland is not strong enough, the heritage and identity would not suffice to keep the society united. The security plays a crucial role in the configuration of nationhood. As a result of this, Elias notes, the dialectics between peace and war are determined by the ideological apparatuses of state (Elias 1988).

To put this in bluntly, museums are based on an aesthetic of war.   According to this, this allegory of violence fomented by museums was based on the production of knowledge, the advance of science as a rational discourse enrooted in the ideal of progress and civilization. The concept of authenticity corresponds with medical gaze. Doctors revise their patients to find a problem, a pathology which should firstly be diagnosed, secondly corrected. The medical eye needs to find a lack so that its proposition of cure to be widely accepted. Not surprisingly, western societies have developed a prone to vision to control the environment, as an external object. The same ocular-centrism, which has created the capitalist logic, exerted the control of epidemics and illness. Whenever we travel to other landscapes, the other is controlled by mans of our gaze (Jay, 1988; Carspecken, 2003). From this moment

onwards, the needs of finding something more authentic became in an obsession for Western travelers. The curiosity for the "Other", ignited by botanic, anthropology and western science sets the pace to the quest of new sensations, and emotions which are characterized by "the tourist experience". As John Urry observed, the inception of gaze created a new industry of sensations, that delineated a global experience towards a new branding system,

> "Various objects and mundane technologies facilitate this kinaesthetic sense as they sensuously extend human capacities into and across the external world. There are thus various assemblages of humans, objects, technologies and scripts that contingently produce durability and stability of mobility. Such hybrid assemblages can roam country-sides and cities, remaking landscapes and townscapes through their movement" (Urry, 2001: 4).

In this debate, one of the trailblazing books that explore the issue of authenticity is The Tourist, a classic book written by Dean Maccannell. Per his view, modern societies are united by means of its capacity to create authenticity in the same way, non-western societies are prone to develop religion. The figure of totem in aboriginals centralizes not only the authority of clan leaders, but also gives sense to the daily life and surrounding events. The same happens with authenticity and museums, which are orchestrated to instill a message in visitors. Delineating the relevant cultural values, the nation states want to transmit museums are sacred spaces of staged-authentication. This is the reason why authenticity and gaze are inextricably intertwined. In one of his latest projects, The Ethic of Sightseeing, Maccannell explores the connection of modernity, mobility and tourism. Prompted to reveal the construction of a more ethic tourist, this interesting book enumerates all changes has suffered the ethics today. Not systematically ordered to be read, Maccannell reminds how important is transcending the existent epistemological view. What is important is not discovering a new technique, or conducting an experiment, but giving a sense to human acts. If the laboratory experiment has their limits, he adds, beyond remains a fertile ground for imagination. Scholars should question also where the root of identity

ends. The boundaries of selfhood and otherness are carefully examined under the question who are the sightseers?

Surely, we see others at the same time others see us. It is important not to loose the sight that interpretations are not chaotic; they are subject to a one-sided discourse. To what extent the message is correctly deciphered or not seems to be the key-issue of any social scientist. Unlike other texts, in the Ethics of sightseeing, the debate is posed to the direction of philosophy. The history witnessed how the sacred-life has set the pace to more secular forms. If totemism, as a system of beliefs, is enrooted in primitive mind, tourism plays an analogous role in modern societies. In Maccannell´s conception, West has advanced in the trace of technology imposing to the world a new secular view about relation. The sacred-space that characterized the gaze of aborigines, today, has been replaced by a new one more elaborated, secular and fictional sightseeing: tourism. What is important to discuss here, seems to be the connection of tourists with social symbolism that mediates between self and consumption. It may be marked that money serves a mediator connecting all dispersed consumers. In late modernity, consumption and mobility pave the ways for the advance of alienation and depersonalization.

Unlike aborigines, the ubiquitous tourists travel to remote destinations in quest of authenticity. The discovery of what is covert in their life is of paramount importance to understand the tourist experience. In this vein, psychoanalysis has much to say. The social unconsciousness is repressed by the rational order of rules. Tourists need to see in others what they are unable to find inside them. This belief was originally forged in 1976 when Maccannell wrote the Tourist, toward a sociological theory of leisure class. From that day onwards, the argument of primitive vs. modern accompanied his prolific academic career. In The Ethic of Sightseeing, Maccannell acknowledges that tourism has serious problems to recognize the otherness, their rights, needs and expectations. The illusory landscapes created by tourism do not allow a genuine contact between guests and hosts. The staged-authenticity fulfils the gap opened by late modernity and the lack of trust in institutions (Maccannell 1973; 1976).

As the previous backdrop, the spectacle of suffering exhibits a fertile ground for the reproduction of capitalism. By means of a false paternalism, western sightseers are looking for consuming allegories, which reinforce their own sentiment of superiority over other human organizations. It is unfortunate that tourism exploits the suffering to draw the attention of consumers. This process only may be reverted if a real concept of ethics is adopted in a much wider discussion. For Maccannell, sensibility serves as a bridge for the self to put itself in the place of others. This provides an exchange between actors that gives origin to solidarity. Nonetheless, the problem seems to be that the human sensibility has been transformed in a commodity. As a result of this, spaces are being substantially altered, commoditized according to an international demand. The same logic that cemented the power of centre in respect to its periphery in former centuries, today persists in tourism and leisure industries (Maccannell 2011).

Although Maccannnell´s examination sheds the light on the role played by authenticity at the process of consumption, less attention is given to the war as an organizer of nation-hood, whereby museums have sense to visitors. In response to Maccannell, Korstanje & George have found contradictory evidence that place the role of sacredness and conflicts as it has been formulated by Maccannell. While sacredness rests on utopia, conflict leads us to the real world. In this vein, the utopia plays a pervasive role simply because it works together with ideology to transform the history of territories but at the same time creates a bubble of sacredness in order to maintain a symbolic distance with profane realm. The greater the psychological distance is, stronger the process of sacredness. Maccannell also took the wrong turn when he considered the process of touristification-museification appealed to sacredness as primary element for progress. Our main thesis here is that sacredness is based on primary criteria of exclusivity and farness. One of the aspects that characterize the paradise (heaven) from other profane sites is the life of sacrifice one should live to enter. That way, sacrifice and pain (both figures are symbolized in the soldiers who fell in battle-fields) are two key factors in the process of sacralization (Korstanje & George, 2012). The meaning of sacredness resulted from the end of conflict as well as for the

9

mechanism of physical isolation, claimed by Jean Baudrillard. To place readers in context, Jean Baudrillard contemplated that the process of sacralization corresponds with two interconnected forces at stake: a) a territory wherein the founding myths take shape and b) a narrative that gives coherence and transcendence to the Golden Times and territories. The ideology as a mechanism of revitalization of history leads ordinary people to avoid the sacred-place at a certain distance in order for the same exerting considerable influence on their day-to-day lives. This tension between proximity/distance is inextricably interwoven with the politic structures of a society. The psychological and geographical distance operates bestowing the sacred object more solemnity. In recognition of this, sacred-places often keep tourists out to reinforce their own narrative (Baudrillard, 1975).

What are the elements we may find at any museum?

•   Objects or artifacts that belonged to the period of independence or any other significant battle.
•   The personal relics of founding parents.
•   A whole part of nature, or animals which are exhibited for pedagogical issues.
•   Weapons of all kinds such as shields, swords, rifles, which helped to enhance the pride of nation.
•   Stories of heroes who devoted their life in the battleground.
•   Inventions or machines which contributed to the expansion of science.

The conquest and the needs of classification were historically intertwined. Mary Louise Pratt discussed to what an extent, the gaze of western travellers forged a strong dependency between centre and periphery. The expansion of Europeans to colonize overseas territories, derived from the efforts of Carl Linneo, a well famous botanist, to classify herbaceous species worldwide, in a form of periodic table. By this scientific concern, the first colonizers embarked towards new destinations. Moreover, expeditions of this caliber were aimed to find new markets and channels to be used by the metropolis. Over decades, the

non-western "Other", discovered post conquest of Americas became in an object of curiosity, admiration and submission (Pratt 2007).

As earlier discussed, West in its colonial order, which was imposed in former centuries, dissected the war from knowledge. At time, it reserved the right to wield power in the periphery, science launched to expand the margins of the civilized-world. While its military supremacy paved the ways for the adoption of western style of life, science served as a mechanism of indoctrination in order for aborigines to internalize a much broader sentiment of inferiority in respect to Occident. This paternalism that accompanied science in the new world was conducive to the protection of weaker, but paradoxically it resulted in its cultural extermination. Museums today hold the function of disciplinary mechanism, by fomenting the official history and the pride for nationhood, with scientific interests. The goal of this essay review intended to discuss the intersection of war, heritage and museums. This is a point, which policy makers in heritage or tourism studies have forgotten, and the reason why ISIS fighters destroy ancient artifacts at Mosul Museum.

The advent of modernity posed conflict as the mediator between citizens and states. The aesthetics of biology alludes to the notion of purity framing a sense of exemplarity for those whose blood has not been coalesced. Not surprisingly, the manipulation of genetics, which is encouraged by the separation of ethnicities (under the cynicism of multi-culturalism), converges with the conceptualization of sovereignty where the state reserves not only the monopoly of violence but its right to kill. This reminds that museums often offer landscapes of death, or inorganic object which situates death as a primary attraction. Unlike the zoo, where the animals are alive, the pieces exhibited at showcases are dead.

In this respect, as S Conn clarifies, museums were created to classify objects, according to an economical logic of gift-exchange or circulation, but what most important is, these (sacred) spaces emulated symbolic battlegrounds that served as pedagogic goals. At some extent, the intellectual life was marked by the museums to stock and disseminate methodologies, conceptual frames, and knowledge to students. From its onset, museums

11

were monopolized by universities distributing an excess of trust in the western forms of knowledge-production. As Conn clarifies, we often observe in museums relics of war such as swords, shields, lances and others instruments used by warriors in their confrontations. The hegemony of west to control "the other" centered in its ability for expanding the classification to other cultures. The museum and heritage pivoted a central role in creating and disseminating in order for aboriginal minds to accept history as it was forged by West. As temples in Ancient Rome, Museums function to discipline the inner and outer violence in the society, not only preserving the peace but also keeping the community united. Understanding these spaces as instruments of classification, power and discipline, paradoxically, museums create an "emulation of warfare" that leads to "ethno-genesis". Thus, it is safe to say that bloody revolutions ended at the doorsteps of museums. This begs a more than interesting hypothesis, which merits further investigation. Starting from the premise that modernity makes the social ties weaker, not surprisingly, the museification of daily life (cultures, landscapes even peoples) will considerably be increased. This happens simply because we live in a world of violence contained into heritage.

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