ART AND IDENTITY:

INTERPRETATION AND

ETHNOGRAPHIC COLLECTIONS IN

REGIONAL MUSEUMS, BRITAIN,

1997-2010

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PHD   2011

Author's declaration

I declare that the research contained in this thesis, unless otherwise formally indicated within the text, is the original work of the author. The thesis has not been previously submitted to this or any other university for a degree, and does not incorporate any material already submitted for a degree.

Signed

Dated

Acknowledgements

Abstract

This doctorate examines the redevelopment of ethnographic collections between 1997 and 2010. The collection and interpretation of ethnographic objects has been the subject of much debate between, anthropologists, museum studies scholars and curators who have sought, on the one hand, to reveal and, on the other, to resist colonial representations in contemporary museums. These debates, as well as the longstanding concern about the purpose of the museum itself, informs this research, which focuses upon the period of the New Labour administration (1997-2010) and the impact of its cultural diversity agendas upon regional museums. It investigates how regional museums have responded to the shifting demands of cultural policies and, in particular, how specific ethnographic collections have been redisplayed and reinterpreted, and the use of art commissions and artists to do so.

A key method of this doctoral study is, therefore, the site specific case study. Two are presented here: "The James Green Gallery of World Art", Brighton Museum and Art Gallery, and "Living Cultures" gallery, Manchester Museum, University of Manchester. Both have developed the interpretation of their permanent ethnographic collections through community engagement projects involving artists; these projects are the subject of critical and visual analysis. The potential of art to alter the meanings of museum collections or re-position the visitor in relation to them is also explored through the creation of a series of artworks. Thus this doctoral research is conducted not only though the conventional methodological approaches of museum studies, including site visits, interviews with curators, analysis of documentation, but also through applied, engaged creative practice.

The doctorate therefore comprises both a written thesis and art practice. My submission includes six artworks exhibited in 2008 and 2009: *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008), *Postcards from Abroad?*, (2008), *Creating India and Israel* (2008), *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009), *Postcards from Around the World?* (2009), and *Our World in Colour, 1968*

(2009). These works manipulate museum methods of display and classification to question the idea of truth in the museum, the concept of a world collection and the relationship between museum visitors and museum collections and displays.

The role of the artist in the museum has expanded greatly to become a regular feature of many museums. My written thesis thus brings together an analysis of the intervention of artists in museums, the reinterpretation of ethnographic collections and the effect of a politics of diversity upon regional museums between 1997 and 2010.

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Chapter 1 : Introduction

Introduction

1 May 1997, the Labour Party won the overall parliamentary majority by 179 seats.[1] Tony Blair, who had reshaped politics for the Labour Party, had successfully campaigned with the slogan 'New Labour, New Britain.'[2] Part of this programme was the attempt to implement multiculturalism: it became a policy of a British government rather than a matter for advisory groups. New Labour envisaged a cultural policy; it created, for the first time, a Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and indicated, in particular, an important role for museums and galleries as points of access, "withdrawing admission charges at the national museums."[3]

This thesis considers the redevelopment of ethnographic collections in regional museums between 1997 and 2010, that is, over the period of the development of New Labour's 'cultural diversity' agenda and what has become known as 'community cohesion'. New Labour's promotion of 'cultural diversity', 'community cohesion', 'social inclusion', 'access', and 'social exclusion' has formed a politics of identity, which repackages race relations.[4] The previous government's imperative to promote 'cultural diversity', especially what is defined as "ethnically based cultural diversity,"[5] is analysed in this study. The question of what is actually meant by 'cultural

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[1] "1997: Labour landslide ends Tory rule," *BBC News*, BBC.co.uk, 15 April 2005, web, 21 Dec. 2010.

[2] The phrase New Labour, New Britain was firmly established in the Labour Party's manifesto publication *New Labour, New Life for Britain* (London: New Labour, 1996) PDF file.

[3] Maurice Davies, "A new Labour love in?," *Museums Journal,* Vol. 100, No. 5 (2000) 29, print; Sara Selwood and Maurice Davies, *Capital Costs: the impact of lottery funded capital developments, introduction of free admission and other factors on attendances at major London museums and galleries* (London: University of Westminster and Museums Association, 2004) PDF file.

[4] New Labour's multicultural politics is analysed in relation to the politics of race in Ben Pitcher's recent doctoral research, "Multicultural nationalism: New Labour and the politics of race and state," diss., U of East London, 2007, PDF file.

[5] Naseem Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity: Guidance for Museums and Galleries* (London: Museums and Galleries Commission, 2000) 1, PDF file.

diversity' is also addressed. But it is the manifestation of 'cultural diversity' policies through the redisplay and reinterpretation of regional museums' ethnographic collections that is the focus of this doctorate and particular consideration is given to what role artists play within any redisplays. However, the cause and effect of policy on what we see in a permanent exhibition is as a result only in part of government policy. Professional networks, that inform considered best practice along with the museum's own institutional practices and staff, profoundly affect displays from individual curatorial approaches to the out sourcing of the gallery design, to visitor research and community consultation. As we shall see, for example, in the redisplays at Manchester Museum there is a substantial set of negotiations that go on between the interpretation of policy, the role of the curator and the final design. Funding pre-requisites also have an influential role; proving the value may depend on statistics and therefore strategies are devoted towards that; these include for example things like blockbuster exhibitions such as "Banksy v Bristol Museum" (2009) as well as those that I discuss in detail.

In museums, concern with the representation of ethnicity in redisplay did not begin in 1997 or with New Labour but with a longer history of development of postcolonial curatorial strategies.[6] However, there is this important convergence between the museum sector's 'cultural diversity' policies, informed by New Labour's cultural diversity and community cohesion agenda, with museum ethnographers' existing work with communities influenced by the call for self representation. By 2003, this convergence could be seen in what Christina Kreps refers to as a concern "with people's living cultures and not just their past."[7] This concern is evident within the permanent ethnographic exhibitions that have been

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[6] For example, in 1986 the annual conference of the Museum Ethnographers Group at Bristol Museum and Art Gallery discussed the importance of multiculturalism, this is noted in, Annie E. Coombes, "Ethnography and the formation of national and cultural identities," *The Myth of Primitivism*, ed. Susan Hiller (London: Routledge, 1991) 189, print. The meaning of multiculturalism is also discussed in relation to museum ethnographic exhibitions in, Annie E. Coombes, "Inventing the 'Postcolonial': Hybridity and Constituency in Contemporary Curating," *New Formations*, No. 18 (1992) 44, print.

[7] Christina Kreps, *Liberating Culture* (London: Routledge, 2003) 149, print.

selected for close analysis in this study: the "James Green Gallery of World Art" at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery, and the "Living Cultures" gallery at the Manchester Museum, University of Manchester. For both galleries include permanent displays in which members of the local community, classified as ethnic minorities, were made visible. These case studies are in museums that have benefited from the Designation Scheme and Renaissance programme that applied only to non-national museums in England. As a consequence England has been the focus of this study and not Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

The collections in the Designation Scheme are intrinsically linked to an English cultural identity evident in this extract from the "Designation value statement":

> Designated collections are a vital component of England's cultural identity; they inform individuals and communities about our forebears and contribute to a sense of community and place; they build local, regional and national wealth through support for learning, skills development and tourism.[8]

This statement also highlights that a considered value of the collections in the Scheme is the impact upon the identity of the local area as a consequence of their contribution "to a sense of community and place."[9]

Ongoing tension and debate continues to surround the use of the term British with regards to heritage and the formation of national identity, and its

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[8] "Designation value statement," *Museums, Libraries, Archives*, Birmingham, Museums, Libraries, Archives, November 2009, web, 12 Jul. 2011.

[9] "Designation value statement" web.

predominant relationship to a white English population.[10] The Referendum on Devolution in 1997 and the subsequent formation of the National Assembly for Wales in 1999 [11] and the Scottish Government in 1999[12] have further contributed to the complexities of this debate. Colonialism as an English legacy, carried out under the British flag, also becomes pertinent within such extended discussions.

The reference to Britain in my doctoral title relates to the declared geographical remit of the government and the intended scope of its cultural policies. The idea of an inclusive multicultural society was promoted by New Labour as a visioning of Britain that has located cultural policies as 'duties' created for the benefit of Britain. Cultural policies are over arching and museum policies are a particular variant, but it is the variant where cultural diversity has come into play significantly pertaining to access, diversity, identity, and community cohesion. The museum priorities detailed in the report *Understanding the Future: Priorities for England's Museums* is a particular formulation of these cultural policies. This document created by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, published in October 2006, details the Government's priorities for museums in England for the next ten years. It can usefully be considered as the culmination of nine years of policy activity, between 1997 and 2006, which has endeavoured to

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[10] For a discussion on the debate surrounding the meaning of 'British' in relation to national identity and museums please see, Arts Council England, *Whose Heritage Conference Report*, (London: Arts Council England, 1999) print; Zelda Baveystock and Rhiannon Mason, "What role can Digital Heritage Play in the Re-imagining of National Identities?: England and its Icons," *Heritage and Identity*, eds. Elsa Peralta and Marta Anico (Oxford: Routledge, 2009) 15-28, print; Philip Dodd, "Englishness and the national culture," *Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880-1920* eds. R. Colls and P. Dodd (London: Routledge, 1986) 1-28, print; Stuart Hall, "Whose heritage? Unsettling 'the heritage', re-imagining the post-nation," Littler and Naidoo 23-35; Sharon Heal, "The other within," *Museums Journal*, Vol. 108, No. 4 (2008) 22-27, print; Neil MacGregor, "The best of Britishness," *Museums Journal*, Vol. 106, No. 3 (2006) 14-15, print; Rhiannon Mason, *Museums, Nations, Identities: Wales and its national Museum* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007) print; Simon Stephens, "Identity crisis," *Museums Journal*, Vol. 109, No. 5 (2009) 20-23, print.

[11] "The National Assembly for Wales," *National Assembly For Wales*, Cardiff, National Assembly For Wales, web, 12 Jul. 2011.

[12] The title of Scottish Government has been in place since August 2007 prior to this it was known as the Scottish Executive: "History of devolution," *The Scottish Government*, Edinburgh, The Scottish Government, 31 August 1997, web, 12 Jul. 2011.

articulate the role of museums in this period of New Labour administration. The table that follows provides an overview of the policy context in this period by highlighting some of the pertinent publications by research agencies; government bodies; and museum sector organisations incorporating: the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and its' predecessors, the Museums and Galleries Commission (MGC) and Resource; the Museums Association (MA); and the Group for Large Local Authority Museums (GLLAM).

Year of publication	Author and commissioner	Title
1997	Asian Leisure and Arts Planners MGC	*Cultural Diversity in Museums and Galleries*
1998	British Market Research Bureau MGC	*Cultural Diversity: Attitudes of Ethnic Minority Populations towards Museums and Galleries*
1998	Jocelyn Dodd and Richard Sandell MGC	*Building Bridges: Guidance for Museums Galleries on Developing Audiences*
1999	DCMS	*Museums for the Many: Standards for Museums and Galleries to Use When Developing Access Policies*
2000	Arts Council of England	*Whose Heritage? The impact of Cultural Diversity on Britain's Living Heritage*
2000	DCMS	*Centres for Social Change: Museums, Galleries and Archives for All*
2000	Research Centre for Museums and Galleries, University of Leicester GLLAM	*Museums and Social Inclusion: the GLLAM report*
2001	DCMS	*Building Cohesive Communities*
2001	DCMS	*Libraries, Museums, Galleries and Archives for All: Co-operating across the sectors to tackle social exclusion*

Year of publication	Author and commissioner	Title
2001	Resource	*Using Museums, Archives and Libraries to Develop a Learning Community*
2002	DCMS	*Making it Count: the Contribution of Culture and Sport to Social Inclusion*
2003	Helen Denniston Associates London Museum Agency	*Holding up the Mirror: Addressing Cultural Diversity in London's Museums,*
2004	Tracey Hylton MLA	*New Directions in Social Policy: Cultural Diversity for museums, libraries and archives*
2005	DCMS	*Understanding the Future: Museums and 21st Century Life, the Value of Museums*
2005	MA	*Collections for the Future*
2006	DCMS	*Understanding the Future: Priorities for England's Museums*
2006	MA	*Making collections effective*

Table 1 1997 – 2006 pertinent publications by research agencies; government bodies; and museum sector organisations that contribute to the policy landscape, for full references of each report see Bibliography, Primary sources.

The publications listed have contributed to the policy landscape that predated the DCMS's document: *Understanding the Future: Priorities for England's Museums*. Within this 2006 report five priorities are laid out for England's Museums with a number of objectives stipulated for each. The priorities are detailed below; numbers two, three and four are of particular interest and embed in the role of the museum, practices of cultural diversity through community engagement, collecting and staffing:

> 1. Museums will fulfil their potential as learning resources […].
>
> 2. Museums will embrace their role in fostering, exploring, celebrating and questioning the identities of diverse communities […].
>
> 3. Museums' collections will be more dynamic and better used […].

4. Museums' workforces will be dynamic, highly skilled and representative […].

5. Museums will work more closely with each other and partners outside the sector.[13]

In the second priority it is made clear that a key focus of the museum is to actively support and develop the "identities of diverse communities" through community engagement.[14] This is articulated in objective 2. e.: "The museum sector must continue to develop improved practical techniques for engaging communities of all sorts."[15] Museums' community engagement work is a key subject discussed in this thesis through the two case study institutions' commissioning practices of artists. The third priority addresses museums' collecting activity and notably in objective 3.f. the focus is placed on the importance of collecting "contemporary society": "Government and the sector will find new ways to encourage museums to collect actively and strategically, especially the record of contemporary society."[16] The practices that have evolved around the collection of living cultures are an important theme investigated in this doctoral study. The fourth priority relates to museum staffing and the importance of the workforce to be "representative;" this is stipulated specifically in 4. h. "Museums' governing bodies and workforces will be representative of the communities they serve."[17] The steps made by the case study museums to be representative, detailed in this thesis, are explored, for example, in relation to Manchester Museum's creation of the Community Advisory Board discussed in Chapter 4.

It is possible to consider museum policy and funding in terms of tiers in which each organisation has some relationship to the other. The non-departmental public body: Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) is sponsored by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).[18]

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[13] DCMS, *Understanding the Future: Priorities for England's Museums* (London: DCMS, 2006) 27-28, PDF file.

[14] DCMS, *Understanding the Future* 27.

[15] DCMS, *Understanding the Future* 27.

[16] DCMS, *Understanding the Future* 27.

[17] DCMS, *Understanding the Future* 27.

[18] "Museums and Galleries," *DCMS,* London, DCMS, web, 1 Aug. 2011.

The DCMS are one of a number of departments responsible for Government policy. The MLA is also directly involved in developing policy for the museum sector.[19] The ten members of the MLA's board of trustees are in fact appointed by the DCMS.[20] The DCMS provides funds directly to two of the funding streams available to regional museums including: Renaissance and the DCMS / Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund.[21] Indirectly the DCMS is also linked to two other dominant sources of funds for regional museums through its sponsorship of MLA, which include the Designation Challenge Fund, managed by MLA, and the Heritage Lottery Fund, which DCMS controls the policy and financial framework for.[22] The Museum Ethnographers Group (MEG), a professional network with an annual journal and conference, is recognised as a Subject Specialist Network (SSN) a category promoted by the Renaissance Scheme.[23]

Through the different levels of the tier, policies are translated. This in part underpins the activity of the MLA, its predecessors, and the Museums Association (MA). The MA is a members' funded organisation for the museums, galleries and heritage sector and is an important component to this tier system reflecting its members' needs and requirements.[24] For example, the MA set up the Diversify scheme in 1998 with the financial backing of MLA to aid museums and galleries in their response to policy calls for 'access' and a 'representational' and 'diverse' workforce. The following description pertains to the overall aim of the scheme: "Diversify is about encouraging people from minority-ethnic backgrounds to take up a

[19] For further information on the responsibilities of MLA see: "What we do," *MLA,* London, MLA, web, 1 Aug. 2011.

[20] For further information about the MLA and DCMS see: "Who We Are," *MLA,* London, MLA, web, 1 Aug. 2011; "The MLA Board," *MLA,* London, MLA, web, 1 Aug. 2011 and "About Us," *DCMS,* London, DCMS, web, 1 Aug. 2011.

[21] For further information upon the DCMS's involvement in funding schemes for museums and galleries see: "Museums and Galleries" web

[22] For further information upon the DCMS's indirect involvement in funding schemes see: "The National Lottery," *DCMS,* London, DCMS, web, 1 Aug. 2011 and the "Designation Scheme," *MLA,* London, MLA, web, 1 Aug. 2011.

[23] "Subject Specialist Networks," *MLA,* London, MLA, web, 1 Aug. 2011.

[24] "About," *Museums Association*, London, Museums Association, web, 1 Aug. 2011.

career in museums and galleries."[25] Since this 2004 quote the scheme has adapted to shifting ideas of diversity and subsequently incorporates: "People from ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and people from less affluent backgrounds." [26] Workforce development, including diversity, was further addressed in 2004 in the MA's annual conference and featured as one of the four key themes of the conference that year.[27]

It is apparent that definitions of diversity change over time within schemes, such as Diversify, and can expand to encompass a wide range of elements. But definitions also differ between institutions, individuals and organisations. However the assumption that underpins this practice remains the same, regardless of the author, and that is it is acceptable to categorise people in line with a minority status, this notion is paradoxical and is discussed further in this thesis.

In addition to training schemes and conference themes, documents which provide practical guidance are generated, which further contributes to the translation of policy priorities for museum professionals. In 2001 the Museums and Galleries Commission (MGC), a precursor to MLA, funded the creation of a series of fact sheets, one of which focused on how to respond to cultural diversity specifically ethnic diversity. Naseem Khan of Asian Leisure and Arts Planners was commissioned to write the document. This process of outsourcing research is not unusual within the museum sector. This particular fact sheet is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2.

Museum institutions and professionals are, of course also, implicit in the process of the translation of policies and funding pre-requisites into museum practices. In one instance at Manchester Museum, a curator's simplistic interpretation of the Heritage Lottery Fund's emphasis on access was interpreted as a need to place more of the collection on permanent

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[25] Museums Association, *Diversify: improving access to museum careers* (London: Museums Association, 2004) 1, print.

[26] "Diversify," *Museums Association*, London, Museums Association, web, 1 Aug. 2011.

[27] "Conference themes for 2004," *Museums Association*, London, Museums Association, web, 9 Jun. 2004.

display. In the case histories focused upon in Chapters 3 and 4 both institutional and individual interpretations of policies' and funders' requirements are considered within the discussion.

The government, regional museums, and art commissions

The redevelopment of ethnographic collections in regional museums through this period of New Labour administration is an example of a wider relationship between the state and culture more generally. This relationship has been the subject of various critiques. Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy*,[28] first published in 1869, presents an impassioned account of culture and its ability to prevent anarchy, and form the salvation from political disintegration. Arnold's text is still referenced in critiques of government and culture developed in the 21st century and used to discuss both museum policy[29] and arts policy.[30] While there is interplay between museum and arts policy for the purpose of this thesis the emphasis will be on museum policy and literature.

Kate Hill, Tony Bennett, and Eilean Hooper-Greenhill each describe a relationship between the state and the people and where the museum fits within this relationship. They all attend to the museums role in 'civilising' the public. These authors have all critiqued the correlation between the state and the formation of the modern museum from a Foucauldian perspective, ensuring this connection is not considered neutral.[31] Hill, Bennett, Hooper-Greenhill and Peers and Brown all in part contribute to an ongoing process of analysing the terms under which museum visitors are understood.

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[28] Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* [1869], ed. J. Dover Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1969) print.

[29] Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* is referenced in, Josie Appleton, *Museums for 'The People'?* (London: Academy of Ideas, 2001) 14, print.

[30] Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* is referenced in, Brian Sedgemore, "Politics and Culture: The State and The Artist," Mark Wallinger and Mary Warnock, eds. *Art For All? Their Policies and Our Culture* (London: PEER, 2000) 24-25, print.

[31] Kate Hill, *Culture and Class in English Public Museums, 1850-1914* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005) print; Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: history, theory, politics* (London: Routledge, 1995) print; Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 1992) print.

In museums policy and practice in the late 20th and 21st century, an emphasis is placed on ethnicity when describing and categorising people. 'BME' (Black, Minority, Ethnic) is a prevalent acronym, alongside the phrase 'ethnic minorities,' and 'culturally diverse,' used to classify people within cultural policies who are not white and who may or may not be British. The emphasis placed on identity-based categories in cultural policies has not gone uncriticised.[32]

'Source communities' is one of the most recent phrases used to describe people from which objects were colonised. It is considered a neutral way of describing former colonies. Laura Peers and Alison K. Brown explain that the phrase refers to: "groups in the past when artefacts were collected, as well as to their descendants today [...]. [Incorporating] every cultural group from whom museums have collected: local people, diaspora and immigrant communities, religious groups, settlers, and indigenous peoples."[33] I draw upon their definition in this thesis. The term 'source communities' actively groups a complex range of people together. The phrase is used within anthropology and museum studies and expands upon the expression 'originating communities;' it does not privilege ethnicity or colour but instead suggests a relationship with a geographical place which is more important.

I am interested in the relationship between museums and source communities. Peers and Brown amongst others[34] point out that reports on museum and source community collaboration:

> [H]ave focused on the positive benefits for both partners and have
> tended to skim over the problems encountered and how they were

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[32] For critical discussion on identity based cultural policies see: Sonya Dyer, ed., *Research papers: Boxed in, How cultural diversity policies constrict black artists* (Newcastle upon Tyne: a-n The Artists Information Company, 2007) print; The Institute of Ideas, "Cultural Diversity: A Straitjacket for the Arts?," *Battle of Ideas* (London: Institute of Ideas, 2007) 27, print; Andy Morris, "The geographies of multiculturalism: Britishness, normalisation and the spaces of the Tate Gallery," diss., Open U, 2002, PDF file.

[33] Laura Peers and Alison K. Brown, "Introduction," Peers and Brown 2.

[34] See for example the following texts that highlight the lack of critical analysis on museum and source communities collaborative practice, Jo Littler, "Heritage and 'Race," Graham and Howard 99; Roshi Naidoo, "Never Mind the Buzzwords," Littler and Naidoo 36.

> over come […]. However, this has led to serious omissions in the literature; methodological, institutional and cross-cultural difficulties have been glossed over, despite the fact that such challenges are inherent in this kind of work.[35]

This thesis attempts to address difficulties in museum practice that engages source communities and which is a reflection upon the limitations of 'cultural diversity' policies and related practices.[36] It does so through an analysis of the "James Green Gallery of World Art" at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery, the "Living Cultures" gallery at Manchester Museum, University of Manchester and the critique of works of art commissioned by the Museums that incorporate people from local source communities into the permanent ethnographic galleries. The role of the artist in the Museums is questioned: is the artist mediating between the communities and the Museum? Does the artist contribute towards a new collecting practice from the sons and daughters of the colonised? Should artwork directly address the problems of a colonial past? Is the artist creating work that reinterprets the collections critically?

The artworks I have produced and which form part of this doctoral submission look at the colonial legacy of the museum and do not circumnavigate the debates. Strategies of museum display, including the curatorial voice, are addressed in order to analyse the creation of meaning pertaining to the control of the representation of cultures.

Museums and colonialism

Postcolonial critiques have identified the representations of culture as articulations of past and present power relations between those constructing the representation (colonisers) and the people being represented (colonised). Edward W. Said's *Orientalism*: *Western*

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[35] Peers and Brown, "Introduction" 10.

[36] Texts which do critically reflect upon museum and source communities working practice include, James Clifford, *Routes: Travel and translation in the late twentieth century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997) print; C. Dunstan, "Fostering symbiosis: a collaborative exhibit at the California State University Sacramento Museum of Anthropology," *Museum Anthropology*, 22 (3) (1999): 52-58, print; C. Kreps, "Museum-making and indigenous curation in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia," *Museum Anthropology*, 22 (1) (1998) 5-17, print.

Conceptions of the Orient and his *Culture and Imperialism* rendered the control of representation a critical point of discussion. [37] Said states: "[t]he power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging, is very important to culture and imperialism, and constitutes one of the main connections between them."[38] In the years following the publication of *Orientalism,* especially from the 1990s*,* the concept of the 'other' has been a key feature in museum studies. Another very influential notion, also drawn from Said's writings, is that all knowledge is shaped through the power relations of colonialism. The relationship between culture and imperialism has been subsequently extensively analysed and museums feature in the debate as a form of knowledge production and a manifestation of residual imperial power relations. Annie E. Coombes, Amira Henacre, Nicky Levell and Anthony Alan Shelton are amongst the many who have contributed to the analysis of the museum within a colonial culture.[39] For example, Coombes critiques "temples of empire," whilst Shelton discusses "museum ethnography [as] an imperial science". [40]

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[37] Edward Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (London and New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1978) print; Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Chatto & Windus Ltd, 1993) print.

[38] Said, *Culture and Imperialism* xiii.

[39] See, for example discussions of collections and colonialism: Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn eds., *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, Material Culture and the Museum* (Oxford: Routledge, 1998) print; Tony Bennett, *Past Beyond Memory: Evolution, Museums, Colonialism* (London: Routledge, 2004) print; Annie E. Coombes, *Reinventing Africa: Museums, Material Culture and Popular Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994) print; Amira J. M. Henare, *Museums, Anthropology and Imperial Exchange* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) print; Nicky Levell, *Oriental Visions: Exhibitions, Travel, and Collecting in the Victorian Age* (London: The Horniman Museum and Gardens, 2000) print; Fred R. Myers ed., *The Empire of Things: Regimes of Value and Material Culture* (Oxford: James Currey, 2001) print; Susan M. Pearce *On Collecting: An Investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition* (Oxford: Routledge, 1995) print; George W. Stocking ed., *Objects and Others: Essays on Museums and Material Culture* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985) print; Anthony Alan Shelton, "Museum Ethnography: An Imperial Science," Hallam and Street 155-193; Anthony Alan Shelton ed., *Collectors: Expressions of Self and Other* (London: The Horniman Museum and Gardens, 2001a) print; Anthony Alan Shelton ed., *Collectors: Individuals and Institutions (London: The Horniman Museum and Gardens,* 2001b) print.

[40] Coombes, *Reinventing Africa* 109; Shelton, "Museum Ethnography" 155-193.

Museums, the representation of cultures and communities

The representation of cultures is at the centre of postcolonial analysis.
Coombes' text, *Reinventing Africa,* presents an in depth analysis of the
colonial construction of "Africa, as a concept as much as a geographical
designation."[41] Through a series of case studies Coombes discusses the
"idea of Africa"[42] presented in exhibitions in Britain during "the last decade
of Victoria's reign and the first decade of the twentieth century."[43] Coombes
highlights the construction of cultural identity through the narrative of an
exhibition in *Reinventing Africa.* [44] She "considers the ways in which
degeneration and other racialised assumptions underpinned the categories
and descriptive processes for classifying ethnographic collections, and thus
their consumption by the museum-going public."[45] Coombes, before anyone
else, really shows you can read a national stereotype through the display of
an object. She demonstrates that the object is not just there, neutral, but as
a sign of a person "symptomatic of vested political interests."[46]

It is the control and production of cultural identities through exhibition and
display practices that has dominated discussions of how people are shown
through objects and things in museums. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine's
1991 publication *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum
Display* draws attention to the debate present in the United States over the
control of representation in museums. "In the United States at this historical
moment, especially given the heightened worldwide interest in multicultural
and intercultural issues, the inherent contestability of museum exhibitions is
bound to open the choices made in those exhibitions to heated debate."[47]
The "inherent contestability of museum exhibitions" is linked by Karp and
Lavine to the assertion that "[e]very museum, exhibition, whatever its overt

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[41] Coombes, *Reinventing Africa* 2.

[42] Barringer and Flynn 4.

[43] Coombes, *Reinventing Africa* 2.

[44] See Coombes, *Reinventing Africa* 65-214.

[45] Coombes, *Reinventing Africa* 43.

[46] Coombes, *Reinventing Africa* 43.

[47] Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine, "Introduction: Museums and Multiculturalism,"
Karp and Lavine *Exhibiting Cultures* 1.

subject, inevitably draws on the cultural assumptions and resources of the people who make it. Decisions are made to emphasize one element and to downplay others, to assert some truths and to ignore others."[48] This idea is developed in the case studies. The influence of museum staff, commissioned artists, external design companies and community spokes people are all considered in the redisplay case histories.

In *Exhibiting Cultures* various contributors consider museums as producers of a particular way of seeing, a product of their staff, and a consequence of subject speciality that generates precise meanings through distinct display techniques. Michael Baxandall's contribution to Karp and Lavine's collection argues that museum staff inscribed cultural assumptions on to interpretations of collections; it established the necessity for further integration of 'communities' in to the interpretative process.[49] This necessity is responded to in Karp and Lavine's second edited publication, alongside Christine Mullen Kreamer, *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*.[50] As a precursor to this debate authors in Karp and Lavine's *Exhibiting Cultures* pose a critical discussion on the status of minority cultures in museums, which incorporates folk life festivals. The focus of *Museums and Communities* is on the developing museum practice of community integration and addresses the contentious issue of control over cultural representation established in *Exhibiting Cultures*. It is important to note that this museological area of scholarship, on the complexities of culture and representation, has been influenced by anthropological debates. Notably, James Clifford's critique, published in 1988, of the "invention rather than the representation of cultures"[51] is evident through the analysis of 'making' meanings in museums. All the redisplays that I discuss, as the thesis unfolds, reflects upon to what extent cultures are being

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[48] Karp and Lavine, "Introduction" 1.

[49] See Michael Baxandall, "Exhibiting Intention: Some Preconditions of the Visual Display of Culturally Purposeful Objects," Karp and Lavine, *Exhibiting Cultures* 33-41.

[50] Ivan Karp, Christine Mullen Kreamer, and Steven D. Lavine eds., *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press Ltd, 1992) print.

[51] James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988) 9, print.

remade. Clifford's critique of museums also relates to the reinterpretation of race as a category so important to debates on cultural diversity that I discuss. Additionally Michael Ames' work on "opening up anthropology through collaboration"[52] presented in 1989, is apparent through the museological dialogue on the development of the connection between museums and communities.

Museums and identity politics

There is an intersection between postcolonial museum critique and theories of race.[53] The analysis of representations of culture within museums, and museums' relationships to communities is influenced by these theories, which consider the implicit historic and current power relations and politics involved in the control of representation. In Sharon Macdonald and Gordon

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[52] Michael M. Ames, "Cultural Empowerment and Museums: Opening Up Anthropology Through Collaboration," *Objects of Knowledge,* ed., Susan Pearce (London: Athlone Press, 1990) 158, print. First presented in April 1989 at the *Annual Meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology*.

[53] Claire Alexander, Richard Dyer, and Stuart Hall, respectively, all significantly respond in their writing to contemporary perspectives and practices that enforce cultural and societal divisions on the grounds of race influenced by the work of Frantz Fanon and Paul Gilroy. Race orientated labels (people as colours of black or white) stereotypes and representations are all analysed in the context of ongoing power relations. Gilroy clearly and succinctly refers to these debates through the title of his seminal text: '*There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack': The cultural politics of race and nation* (1987). Fanon, a significant theorist on race and racism first published in the 1960s, introduces the complex power relations implicit in the label 'black': "[f]or not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man." (Frantz Fanon, "The Fact of Blackness," Back and Solomos 326). This highlights that race is a relational category that importantly emphasizes that black as a form of classification exists in direct relation to white as a category; one label would be void of meaning without the other, they are interrelated but inherently not equal. Richard Dyer highlights the gap in theories of race on the manifestation of 'white' in Western visual culture. His text *White* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997) addresses the point that "[i]n Western media, whites take up the position of ordinariness, not a particular race, just the human race" (iv). Questions are consequently raised by Dyer regarding the status of people who are not white. His study attends to the fact that "white people have had so very much more control over the definition of themselves and indeed of others than have those others." (Dyer xiii). See, Claire Alexander, "Beyond Black," Back and Solomos eds., 209-225; Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove, 1967) print; Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987) print; Stuart Hall, "Old and new Identities, Old and New Ethnicities," Back and Solomos 209-225; Stuart Hall, "Subjects in History: Making Diasporic Identities," *The House that Race Built*, ed., Wahneema Lubiano (New York: Vintage, 1998) 289-299; Chris Weedon, *Identity and Culture: Narratives of Difference and Belonging* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2004) print.

Fyfe's 1996 collection *Theorizing Museums: Representing Identity and Diversity in a Changing World* issues of race and representation are analysed in relation to cultural politics.[54] Macdonald states, "[t]he emphasis upon museums as projections of identity, together with the idea of museums as 'contested terrains' has become increasingly salient over the past decade as museum orthodoxies have been challenged by, or on behalf of, many minorities which have previously been ignored or marginalized by museums."[55] The ideas and challenges Macdonald refers to that developed between the mid 1980s and 1990s are significant to this thesis. They highlight the active address from the ground up of museum orthodoxies surrounding the construction of representation that predated the period of study. Vera Zolberg, Henrietta Riegel and Eric Gable all address issues of race and representation in their contributions to the Macdonald and Fyfe collection.[56] Zolberg brings together debates on American national identity and the politics of remembrance in her examination of the Smithsonian Institution exhibition of the Enola Gay aircraft that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Riegal focuses on attempts by two museums in Canada to address the museum's own role in colonialism and the construction of otherness. One case study involves an anthropologist and Africa and the other study Native Americans analysing their representation in museums. She presents an insightful analysis of each set of exhibitionary aims in contrast with the actual outcomes. Gable examines what he phrases as "'mainstreaming' black history in a white museum."[57] He produces an analysis of Colonial Williamsburg museum that addresses the issues surrounding the paradoxical notion of 'facts' when working with distinct groups of people.

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[54] Sharon Macdonald and Gordon Fyfe, eds., *Theorizing Museums: Representing Identity and Diversity in a Changing World* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996) print.

[55] Sharon Macdonald, "Theorizing museums: an introduction," Macdonald and Fyfe 9.

[56] Eric Gable, "Maintaining Boundaries, or 'Mainstreaming' Black History in a White Museum," 177-202; Henrietta Riegel, "Into the Heart of Irony: Ethnographic Exhibitions and the Politics of Difference," 83-104; Vera L. Zolberg, "Museums as Contested Sites of Remembrance: the Enola Gay Affair," 69-82. In Macdonald and Fyfe.

[57] This phrase is used in the title of Gable's essay "Maintaining Boundaries, or 'Mainstreaming' Black History in a White Museum," in Macdonald and Fyfe.

The theories of race can be found more recently in the contributions to the 2005 anthology *The Politics of Heritage: the Legacies of 'Race'* and the 2008 Ashgate Research Companion titled *Heritage and Identity,* which include significant chapters on museums and representation by Jo Littler, Roshi Naidoo, and Naseem Khan, which are discussed in Chapter 2.[58]

The notion of the 'other,' underpinned by Said's writing,[59] is particularly prevalent in museum literature when examining the construction of cultural identity through the display of ethnographic collections.[60] The 'other' is used to describe a "politics of polarity",[61] of dominance and subordination preoccupied with difference.[62] Jonathan Rutherford points out that "[d]ifference in this context is always perceived as the effect of the other."[63] The notion of the 'other' recognizes the presentation of cultural identities as fixed and as such has informed an interesting range of museological literature. For example Spencer R. Crew and James E. Sims' critique, in which the "locating [of] authenticity,"[64] in ethnographic exhibitions as a

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[58] Naseem Khan, "Taking Root in Britain," Littler and Naidoo eds.,133-143; Littler, "Heritage and 'Race" 89-103; Naidoo, "Never Mind the Buzzwords" 36-48.

[59] For examples of postcolonial critiques of 'othering' see, Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (Oxford: Routledge, 1994) print; Stuart Hall, ed., *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 1997) print; Jonathan Rutherford, "A Place Called Home: Identity and the Cultural Politics of Difference," *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart Ltd, 1990) 9-27, print; Said, *Culture and Imperialism;* Said, *Orientalism.*

[60] See, for example critical discussion of 'other' in museums, James Clifford, "Objects and Selves – An Afterword," Stocking 236-246; Brian Durrans, "The future of the other: changing cultures on display in ethnographic museum," *The Museum Time Machine*, ed. Robert Lumley (London: Routledge, 1988) 144-169; Johannes Faban, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Objects* (New York: np, 1983) print; Elizabeth Hallam "Texts, objects and 'otherness': problems of historical process in writing and displaying cultures," Hallam and Street 260-283; Jordanova, "History, 'Otherness' and Display," Hallam and Street 245-259; Elizabeth Hallam and Brian Street, "Introduction: Cultural Encounters – representing 'Otherness'," Hallam and Street 1-10; Henrietta Lidchi, "The Poetics and the Politics of Exhibiting Other Cultures," Hall 151-222; Stocking, *Objects and Others*; Pearce, *On Collecting* 308-351; Shelton, "Museum Ethnography: an Imperial Science".

[61] Rutherford 26.

[62] Rutherford 10.

[63] Rutherford 10.

[64] Spencer R. Crew and James E. Sims, "Locating Authenticity: Fragments of a Dialogue," Karp and Lavine, *Exhibiting Cultures* 159-175.

mechanism reinforces the idea of a fixed authentic cultural identity. Kenneth Hudson criticizes the focus in ethnographic galleries on the traditional, which therefore represents unchanging cultures and creates the notion of fixed cultural identities.[65] These critiques highlight that exhibition practices perpetuate 'othering' within the museum. It is possible to draw upon these works to therefore attend more closely to the construction of identities, places and cultures in the museum.

Stuart Hall proposes an important shift in approach to cultural identity:

> Perhaps instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices then represent, we should think, instead, of identity as a 'production', which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation. This view problematises the very authority and authenticity to which the term, 'cultural identity', lays claim.[66]

Yet 'cultural identity' as an uncontested term, referring to fixed and certain identity, features in the multicultural politics of New Labour administration, 1997-2010, through their 'cultural diversity' agenda. Homi Bhabha's analysis of 'cultural diversity' in his essay "Commitment to Theory" also points to the limitations of multiculturalism.[67] In an interview, between Bhabha and Rutherford that debated Bhabha's article he locates 'cultural diversity' as a product of multiculturalism and indicates the active "containment"[68] of cultural difference through this idea:

> [A]lthough there is always an entertainment and encouragement of cultural diversity, there is always also corresponding containment of it. A transparent norm is constituted, a norm given by the host society or dominant culture, which says that 'these other cultures are fine, but we must be able to locate them within our own grid'.[69]

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[65] Kenneth Hudson, "How Misleading Does an Ethnographical Museum Have to Be?," Karp and Lavine, *Exhibiting Cultures* 457-464.

[66] Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," Rutherford 222-237.

[67] "Commitment to Theory" was first published in *New Formations*, No.5, Summer, (1988), print.

[68] Homi Bhabha and Jonathan Rutherford, "Interview with Homi Bhabha, The Third Space," Rutherford 208-209.

[69] Bhabha and Rutherford 208.

The possible limitations of cultural diversity are a point of departure for this study, which questions whether the 'cultural diversity' agenda shaped by the previous government's politics maintains practices of containment of cultural difference through its manifestation in museum practices and considers how policy is negotiated in practice. I am concerned with the overall context within which people work and the larger framework to which they belong. I wish to acknowledge the mediations of policy however the policy itself is important. I want to see if the core ideas of policy are ones, which are played out in exhibitions. And those core ideas are how difference is represented. It is the big ideas in policy and how they can be seen to remain in place no matter who is doing the writing and rewriting of those documents that is important here.

Artists, museums and politics

Artists have revealed the ways that museums function as political institutions.[70] Throughout the 1970s and 1980s the neutrality of the 'white cube' and the 'ethnographic exhibition' was contested.[71] As Jennifer A. Gonzalez stated, contemporary artists provided "a critical, activist role in drawing attention to museums as institutions that produce ideologies of cultural containment, cultural hierarchy, and cultural legitimacy."[72]

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[70] Artists whose works highlight how museums function as political institutions include: Michael Asher, Judith Barry, Andrea Fraser, Renee Green, Hans Haacke, Louise Lawler, James Luna, Amelia Mesa-Bains and Fred Wilson. These artists are discussed by Corrin in, "Artists Look at Museums, Museums Look at Themselves," Messias Carbonell 381- 402. For further discussion of the relationship between artists and museums see, Kynaston McShine, "From The Museum as Muse: Artists Reflect," Messias Carbonell 506- 520; Kynaston McShine, *The Museum as Muse* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1999) print; Roger Malbert, "Artists as curators," *Museums Journal*, No. 5 (1995): 25-26, print; Fred Wilson, "Silent messages," *Museums Journal*, No. 5 (1995): 27-29, print.

[71] See for example, Hans Haacke's installations: *On Social Grease* (1975) and *Metro Mobiltan* (1985) that highlight the political nature of the funding and management of major art museums and Fred Wilson's "Rooms with a View: The Struggle Between Culture, Content and the Context of Art" (1987) in which he creates three distinct gallery spaces: an ethnographic gallery, a salon, and a white cube and exhibits contemporary art in all of them.

[72] Jennifer A. Gonzalez, *Subject to Display: Reframing Race in Contemporary Installation Art* (Cambridge: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2008) 66, print.

By the late 1980s, a critical museology had emerged in museums, as well as in the academic field of museum studies. This is illustrated by Peter Vergo's 1989 edited collection *The New Museology*[73] in Charles Saumarez Smith's chapter, "Museums, Artefacts, and Meanings". Saumarez Smith, then Assistant Keeper at the Victoria and Albert Museum with responsibilities for the V&A/RCA MA course in the History of Design, analyses J.M. Rysbrack's sculpture*,* the *Saxon God Thuner,* in the V&A's collection. He argues that contrary to popular belief when artefacts are displayed in museums they are not on:

> [A] safe and neutral ground […]. [M]useums present all sorts of different territories for display, with the result that the complexities of epistemological reading continue […]. In fact, the museum itself frequently changes and adjusts the status of artefacts in its collections, by the way they are presented and displayed, and it is important to be aware that museums are not neutral.[74]

Increasingly critical museological debates on culture and representation were informing the development of international museums' practices, including restitution and community consultation, as discussed by Moira Simpson.[75] Nick Merriman and Nima Poovaya-Smith point out this community consultation activity was not however prevalent in Britain in the 1980s and early 1990s.[76] Peers and Brown also assert that museums in Britain and Europe have been "slower to adopt the new attitudes and processes associated with community–based research that museums in the Pacific and North America have become to assume are necessary."[77]

Fred Wilson's seminal piece of museum installation artwork, *Mining the Museum* (1991-1992), reflects a significant change within the international museum sector that had gathered momentum by the 1990s. This related to

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[73] Peter Vergo ed., *The New Museology* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 1989) print.

[74] Charles Saumarez Smith, "Museums, Artefacts, and Meanings," Vergo 12.

[75] Moira G. Simpson, *Making Representations: Museums in the Postcolonial Era* (London: Routledge, 1996) print.

[76] Nick Merriman and Nima Poovaya-Smith, "Making Culturally Diverse Histories," *Making Histories in Museums* ed., Gaynor Kavanagh (London: Leicester University Press, 1996) 177, print.

[77] Peers and Brown, "Introduction" 4.

museums engaging in a period of self-reflective institutional critique,[78]
responding to the demand for what Merriman and Poovaya-Smith refer to
as, "making culturally diverse histories."[79] Artists have increasingly been
involved by museums in this revisionary and diversifying process through a
variety of temporary exhibition practices and public programming, including
artist in residency posts[80], guest curatorships[81] and community
engagement.[82] The range of artist-museum practices in permanent
exhibitions incorporates site specific installation work and performances,
temporary re-hangs, discovery trails, art trails, and re-labelling. In
temporary exhibition programming, this involves the exhibition of artwork in
temporary exhibition gallery spaces and the curation of temporary shows.
Projects vary considerably in the level of involvement artists have in the
conception, creation, and installation processes; the amount of interactivity
is highly dependent on the museum's agenda.[83] This thesis asks what
impact New Labour's 'cultural diversity' agenda has had on the use of art
commissions and the role of artists in the redisplay and reinterpretation of
permanent ethnographic collections. To what extent does an artist and their

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[78] See, Simpson, *Making Representations* 1-70; Susan Vogel, "Always True to the Object, in Our Fashion," Karp and Lavine, *Exhibiting Cultures* 191-204; Corrin, "Artists Look at Museums" 381 402.

[79] Merriman and Poovaya-Smith 176.

[80] See, Rebecca Atkinson, "Co-creating displays with artists," *Museums Practice*, (15 July 2010) web, 17 Jul. 2010.

[81] See, Louise Grey, "Insider Knowledge: Louise Grey on how museums and galleries are using artists in residence programmes to gain new perspectives on their collections," *Museums Journal* Vol. 109, No. 6 (2009) 34-37, print; Sue Latimer, "Artistic Licence," *Museums Journal,* Vol. 101, No. 8 (2001) 29-31, print.

[82] See, Sylvia Arthur "Desperately seeking sanctuary," *Museums Journal,* Vol. 103, No 11 (2003) 29-31, print; Rebecca Atkinson, "Democratic displays," *Museums Practice*, (15 July 2010) web. 17 Jul. 2010; "Creating Engaging Displays," *Museums Practice*, (15 July 2010) web. 17 Jul. 2010; Toni Parker, "Running a primary school artist-in-residency project for under £1000," *Museums Journal*, Vol. 103, No. 7 (2003) 38-39, print.

[83] For further discussion on museums' agendas when working with artists see, Horia Bernea, "Return of a native force," *Museums Journal*, No. 5 (1995): 25-26, print; Corrin, "Artists Look at Museums"; Chris Dorsett, "Clues on an artistic trail," *Museums Journal*, No. 5 (1995) 25-26, print; Dyers, *Boxed In*; Juliana Gilling, *Growth Plan: Attracting New Audiences Through Contemporary Commissions*, *Museums Journal,* Vol. 109, No. 9 (2009) 26-29, print; Grey, "Insider Knowledge"; Latimer, "Artistic Licence"; Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2004) 117-137, print; James Putnam, *Art and Artifact: The Museum as Medium* (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2001) 132-183, print; Wilson, "Silent messages."

work become part of museum policy and practice? How is the relationship between artist and museum presented in the permanent display of the work? Is the artist's autonomy from the institution evident? Does the artist's work provide any institutional critique or reflections on what the museum constitutes as art or history or culture?

Art commission as 'contact zone'

This thesis focuses on art commissions displayed in permanent ethnographic exhibitions in Brighton Museum and Art Gallery and Manchester Museum, University of Manchester. Art commissions work as 'contact zones', and "as catalysts for new relationships,"[84] between the commissioning museum, the artist, and members of source communities living locally. The expression 'contact zone' derives from the writing of Mary Louise Pratt. Pratt articulates the complexities of the colonial encounter in terms of a "contact zone" in *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*.[85] Pratt's analysis enables a repositioning of the colonial encounter in terms of a cross-cultural, two-way relationship, whilst acknowledging implicit power imbalances and emphasizing the socio-cultural specificity of the contact.[86] Pratt's recognition of the complexities of the two-way relationship and the socio-cultural specificity of the contact, informs my use of the term. James Clifford in *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* "borrows"[87] Pratt's notion of the 'contact zone'. He applies it to late 20th century museums and the relationship between the museum and what, for Pratt, is the colonised, that is, those currently referred to as source communities. "When museums are seen as contact zones, their organizing structure as a *collection* becomes an ongoing historical, political, moral *relationship* – a power-charged set of exchanges, of push and pull."[88] Clifford uses the terms "contact history" and "contact relations" to describe an ongoing complex and contentious

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[84] Peers and Brown, "Introduction" 5.

[85] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992) 6-7, print.

[86] Pratt 7.

[87] Clifford, *Routes* 192.

[88] Italicised words Clifford's emphasis; Clifford, *Routes* 192.

relationship, with a past and a present, between source communities and the "collecting museum."[89] Peers and Brown have applied the principal of the 'contact zone' to the artefact:

> Artefacts function as 'contact zones' – as sources of knowledge and as catalysts for new relationships – both within and between these [source] communities. Artefacts in museums embody both the local knowledge and histories that produced them, and the global histories of Western expansion which have resulted in their collection, transfer to museums, and function as sources of new academic and popular knowledge.[90]

The analysis of the art commission as 'contact zone' can accommodate the complexities of the contact. Clifford acknowledges the 'contact relationships' as having a past and a present within which existing power relations can be negotiated. I would suggest that the 'cultural diversity' agenda of New Labour is now part of the history of 'contact relations'. The effectiveness of the commission to produce representations that empower and renegotiate historic and current power relationships is explored. The possibility that colonial practices are reinforced rather then undone once art commission objects enter a permanent collection is also considered here.

Methodology

This thesis presents five case studies focused on the redisplay of ethnographic objects. To redisplay involves the re-design, reinterpretation and re-hang of collections on public display, which can generate new exhibits, labels, text panels and walk throughs. It can also mean the removal of objects from the gallery and the introduction of recent acquisitions and the presentation of objects previously held in store. Redisplays provide an opportunity to incorporate advancements in technologies into the gallery space including improvements in environmental control, lighting and visitor interfaces. These changes in display can also allow for the implementation of current museum practices reflecting intellectual developments and recent policies that impact upon changes in collection and interpretative strategies. Using a particular exhibition, gallery or museum as a case study of a wider museum culture

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[89] Clifford, *Routes* 193.

[90] Peers and Brown, "Introduction" 5.

and politics of identity is a conventional museum studies' method employed by most publications cited so far.

The case studies generated in this thesis have focused upon the redisplay of two regional museums' ethnographic collections at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery and the Manchester Museum, University of Manchester. National museums have a larger proportion of tourist visitors then local museums and I am interested in particular in the relationship between regional museums and the local communities that live near or next to these museums. Non-national museums were selected because of their involvement in the promotion of cultural diversity linked to their local communities. This practice is encouraged through funding pre-requisites. Notably through local authority funds and Renaissance available just too regional museums. Particular value is attributed to the impact of Renaissance with regards to the increase in the diversity of both visitors and workforce. In 2008 Museums, Libraries and Archives published a booklet titled *What is Renaissance?* in which under a subtitle "Impressive early scores" it was detailed that: "The track record of regional museums shows Renaissance has made impressive strides in a short time. There are more encounters with more diverse audiences and the workforce is changing."[91] Statistical information is then provided to support this claim, which includes the following: "435,000 visits were from ethnic minority audiences living in the UK, a rise of 18 percent since 2002/03."[92] The focus in this thesis on regional museums is not meant to infer that national museums are not engaged in the promotion of cultural diversity.[93] But that regional museums maybe particularly important in terms of a relationship between the museum and local communities; people who live near the museum rather than travel to visit as is the case with many national museums. What is important, to this thesis, is where local communities

[91] Museums, Libraries and Archives, *What is Renaissance?* (London: Museums, Libraries and Archives, 2008) print.

[92] Museums, Libraries and Archives, *What is Renaissance?*.

[93] Notably in 2005 the Victoria & Albert Museum began a three year programme titled Capacity Building and Cultural Ownership. This project focused on cultural diversity, for which they received 978,000 pounds from the Heritage Lottery Fund, see the project report: *Capacity Building and Cultural Ownership: Working with Culturally Diverse Communities* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2010) print.

have been very directly involved in long standing relationships with the museum, which mean they actually have to live near by. The Hindu Shrine project at Brighton Museum and Rekindle at Manchester Museum are both examples of this, these projects are not very high profile but are equally deserving of research.

Both the case study museums have large ethnographic collections; Brighton's hold totals 13,000 objects[94] and Manchester's 16,000 objects.[95] The 'World Art' collection at Brighton Museum and the 'Living Cultures' collection at Manchester Museum have both received Designation and Heritage Lottery Funding. These Designated ethnographic collections were selected because they have both commissioned work for permanent display by artists from source communities involving people from the local ethnic minority communities. These commissions are significant, reflecting a shift from the engagement of artists and members of the local community from a temporary activity to a permanent feature of museum interpretation practice. Temporary exhibitions may be regarded as a platform to address potentially controversial topics whilst creating an opportunity to perhaps use more challenging curatorial approaches than permanent exhibitions because of the restricted length they will be displayed for. For example the temporary exhibition at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery "On the Pull"[96] presented courtship in an informal way that had not previously existed in the permanent exhibitions. However once a particular curatorial strategy becomes permanent it becomes part of the established repertoire and then part of the longer-term identity of the museum. The commissioning of artists to work with local communities by museums, in this period of study, can usefully be located as one such strategy.

The use of in depth case studies in this thesis considerably restricts the number of museums it is possible to incorporate. It is of course possible to

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[94] "World Art," *Royal Pavilion, Museums & Libraries*, Brighton, Royal Pavilion, Museums & Libraries, web, 21 Dec. 2010.

[95] "Living Cultures," *The Manchester Museum, University of Manchester*, Manchester, The Manchester Museum, University of Manchester, web, 21 Dec. 2010.

[96] "On the Pull," *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery,* Brighton, 2008, exhibition.

reproduce similar studies at other regional museums with Designated ethnographic collections that work with artists and local communities. It is however not possible in the space of a thesis to undergo such in depth studies for all applicable museums. The findings of this investigation can however be used to inform discussions on cultural diversity policy and practice in non-national museums with ethnographic collections that have received Designation, and funds in the period between 1997 and 2010.

The case study redisplays, which are examined are identified here by the year in which they opened to the public. These include Brighton Museum and Art Gallery's 'World Art' collection redisplays in 1994 and 2002 and Manchester Museum's 'Living Cultures' collection redisplays in 1995, 2003 and 2009. This series of case studies, over this fifteen year period, enables an examination of the museum sector's response to New Labour's 'cultural diversity' agenda. The 1994 and 1995 redisplays have been included as an important point of comparison with the changes in interpretation practice that occurred following New Labour's instatement in government in 1997. It is an important strategy to reflect upon changing redisplays because then you have a sense of how policy may also change and affect those displays. It is possible to reconstruct the debates about an exhibition from the past even though they cannot be re-experienced. Where I was not able to observe gallery changes first hand archival materials combined with curators' accounts of redisplay and independent exhibition reviews in museum studies literature contributed to the reconstruction of exhibitions long gone. However this process of reconstruction is limited through its reliance on others accounts informed by individuals' preoccupations. In the context of this thesis though, the curators' accounts actively enable the identification of their respective interests, which effectively informs the case histories.

I am interested in the curator's role in the development of the permanent collection and its visual impact. This investigation subsequently develops a critique of the exhibition space. I form a critical interpretation of the case study galleries, which incorporates detailed descriptions, photographic documentation, close analysis of displays, and visitor observation with

attention to the walk through, which can identify moments of particular engagement. I chose to look and observe what visitors do rather than employ a standard visitor survey because often they categorise people and are part of that process that I am trying to critique. Because this is a practice based thesis also focused on the creation of artwork my role as interpreter and artist comes through in this particular variant in methodology. I act as critical interpreter of the permanent exhibition space, a form of Art Historical analysis traditional in the critique of exhibitions to develop a sense of what the dominant meanings are embedded in any one exhibition as a visual form.[97]

I have sought understanding from those people most closely related to the redisplays.[98] At the Manchester Museum, University of Manchester this involved a series of semi-structured interviews with staff conducted over the duration of two research trips from 10 – 14 March 2005 and 6 - 9 July 2010. Due to the close proximity of Brighton Museum and Art Gallery my gallery research has been conducted over an extended period of time with regular visits from 2003 to 2010. Because of the frequency of visits, conversation, along-side semi structured interviews with members of staff have informed the Brighton Museum and Art Gallery study. Archival research conducted between 28 January and 11 February 2009 on the 'World Art' collection, at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery, provided a useful insight into the redisplay activity conducted by members of staff no longer at the Museum.

Exhibits are examined that feature artwork commissioned by the case study Museums present in the permanent ethnographic exhibitions. As noted in

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[97] Clifford Geertz writes about the importance of individual critical interpretation of cultures in his influential text: *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973) print. Margaret Lindauer writes about the 'critical museum visitor' to describe an informed visitor experience. This visitor is equipped with knowledge and understanding of the construction of meaning in exhibition display and can effectively connect this with the museums' intended ideal visitor to critique the significance of the exhibition and what is notably absent. Margaret Lindauer, " The Critical Museum Visitor," *New Museum Theory and Practice: An Introduction*, ed. Janet Marstine (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006) 204, print.

[98] Example interview questions and prompts posed to museum staff are detailed in Appendix II. Interviews were conducted in line with University of Brighton research ethics and governance good practice and conduct.

the previous section "Art commission as 'contact zone'," my study approaches these artworks as 'contact zones', and "as catalysts for new relationships,"[100] between the commissioning museum, the artist, and members of source communities living locally. These contacts are considered in relation to their respective legacies, relationships and power imbalances that predate the commissions. How these histories are translated into the permanent display of the artworks, for visitors, is examined.

The potential of new commissions to resist colonial power relations is explored through the production and exhibition of artworks. I have produced six artworks exhibited in 2008 and 2009: *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008), *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008), *Creating India and Israel* (2008), *Around the World in Colour 1960* (2009), *Our World in Colour 1968* (2009), and *Postcards from Around the World?* (2009) (Figure 1-1 to Figure 1-6). The artworks are a product of the scholarly observations I have made in the galleries; they take up the argument of the thesis but do not do this in a literal or illustrative way. Instead, the tools of museum practice, including: collection, classification, display, labels, order, proximity, cases, stands, and plinths, are mimicked as part of my doctoral art practice. This strategy of mimicry aims to enable visitors to question the construction of meaning in museums and reflect upon ways of looking in museums. According to Homi Bhabha, mimicry can provide a critique of colonialism, the very act of imitation contributes to the undoing of control of the dominant force. He refers specifically to the imbalanced power relationships of the coloniser and the colonised noting that the act of mimicry reveals the artifice, highlighting, the construction of "'normalised' knowledges and disciplinary powers."[101] Through the mimicking of museological forms of representation the visitor is asked to question the authority presented through the formal modes of display.

The act of collecting has become an integral part of my process of creating artworks that attempt to analyse the museum. Collecting within my art

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[100] Peers and Brown, "Introduction" 5.

[101] Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 123.

practice is an essential part of the process of understanding collecting itself and forms a strategy of critique. Collections of material culture, including picture postcards and world encyclopaedias, form evidence of the historical and cultural specificity of constructions of cultural identities, and illuminate ideas still in circulation and indebted to colonialism. Through the exhibition of these collections the visitor experiences familiar forms of material culture in an unfamiliar context. This is an artistic strategy of rendering the familiar strange.[102] The familiar objects can initially attract visitors whilst the process of making strange can encourage questioning and also produce a level of anxiety that highlights to the visitor the need to look again.

The two artistic strategies employed in this doctoral artwork mobilise techniques from the art gallery: mimicry and rendering the familiar strange. I assume that the difference in form from museum exhibits is quite possibly recognisable. Potentially these artistic strategies are part of the repertoire of the visitors' experience and awareness of a range of visual techniques. This ambiguity, between the different art gallery and museum forms, is however important to the practice to encourage the visitors to reflect further on the doctoral artworks. This is a technique utilised for example by Sophie Calle in "Absent" (1994), installed in Boymans-van Beunigen Museum, discussed in Chapter 5. There is a deliberate playfulness to her intervention in the Museum's collections that makes it unclear, at first glance, whether the work is part of the permanent museum display or not. Although not all visitors will recognise the combination of what is considered a museum strategy of display and one that is associated with an art gallery we cannot assume that all museum visitors are naïve.[103] Therefore, although the precise effect upon the visitor is unknown, what it is possible to see, is the

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[102] For example Sophie Calle's "Absent" (1994) integrates a red bucket and a coffee cup amongst a number of other familiar objects, which are made strange displayed in the permanent galleries of the Boymans-van Beuningen museum Rotterdam. See Chapter 5 "Mimicking methods of museum display" for further description of "Absent".

[103] For further discussion on the possible exclusion of some visitors as a consequence of such practices see: Tony Bennett, "Exhibition, Difference, and the Logic of Culture," *Museum Frictions*, eds., Ivan Karp, Corinne A. Kratz, Lynn Szwaja, and Tomas Ybarra-Frausto (London: Duke University Press, 2006) 46-69, print and Shelley Ruth Butler, "The Politics of Exhibiting Culture: Legacies and Possibilities," *Museum Anthropology*, No. 23 (3) (2000) 74-92, PDF.

way in which different ways of reading are available to the visitor. So rather than ask someone what they think of the work - the work itself can be read, as an art historian and an artist would do, for its possible effects including its dominant meanings as well as other alternative interpretations.

Summary of chapters

This thesis is organized around six chapters (including this Introduction and the Conclusion). There are four key areas to this investigation. These include the analysis of museum studies debates, used to address the ongoing effects of the museums' colonial legacy on the construction of representations of culture, people and place; the examination of the previous government's cultural diversity and community cohesion agendas and the museum sector's subsequent policy response; the study of permanent ethnographic galleries in regional museums; and the analysis of museums' art commissioning practices.

Chapter 2 considers both the meaning and manifestation of the cultural diversity and community cohesion agenda within the museum sector; it examines reports, conferences, guidance and artist commissioning practices. It is in the context of the need to promote regional cultural diversity that artists are commissioned in museums and this practice is introduced here. This chapter provides important political context to the exhibition redisplays and artist commissions featured in Chapters 3 and 4.

Chapters 3 and 4 present the case studies of the museum exhibition redisplays that include the removal of objects, and the introduction of recent acquisitions and new text panels between 1997 and 2010. The redisplay of Brighton Museum and Art Gallery's 'World Art' collection in 1994 and 2002 is the focus of Chapter 3 and the redisplay of Manchester Museum, University of Manchester's 'Living Cultures' collection in 1995, 2003 and 2009 is addressed in Chapter 4. The convergence of New Labour's 'community cohesion' agenda with museums' work with source communities is analysed. Particular attention is paid to the use of art commissions to integrate people from local source communities in the collection reinterpretation process. The Hindu Shrine Project, a commission

by the Brighton Museum and Art Gallery involving the sculptor Balavendra Elias and people from the local Gujarati community is examined in Chapter 3. The Rekindle video series commissioned by the Manchester Museum, University of Manchester involving Kuljit Chuhan, a digital media artist, and members of the Museum's Community Advisory Panel is addressed in Chapter 4. These art commissions are considered as I have stated as manifestations of a 'contact relationship' contributing to an existing 'contact history'.

Chapter 5 further investigates the changing role of the artist in museums raised in Chapters 3 and 4. There are three sections to this chapter. First, there is some consideration of the role of the artist in the museum before the period of study, that is the artistic interventions into museum spaces during the 1990s. In particular Fred Wilson's work is examined. Second, the relationship between 19th century practices of commissioning source community artists and current collecting activity of living cultures is discussed. Third, the six doctoral artworks exhibited in 2008 and 2009 are presented (see the following figures). This section demonstrates how the artworks themselves are forms of argument and analysis integral to the thesis. As a body of artwork they raise questions regarding the role of artists in museums and in existing power relationships in the museum.

Figure 1-1 *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008) and *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008). "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." *University of Brighton*. Brighton. 2008. Exhibition.

Figure 1-2 *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008). "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.
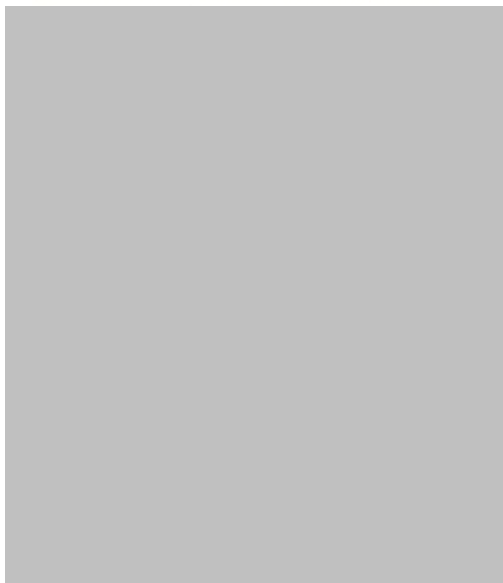
Figure 1-3 *Creating India and Israel* (2008). "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 1-4 *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009). "Indian Summer." *Hastings Museum and Art Gallery.* Hastings. 2009. Exhibition.

Figure 1-5 *Postcards from Around the World* (2009). "Indian Summer." Exhibition.
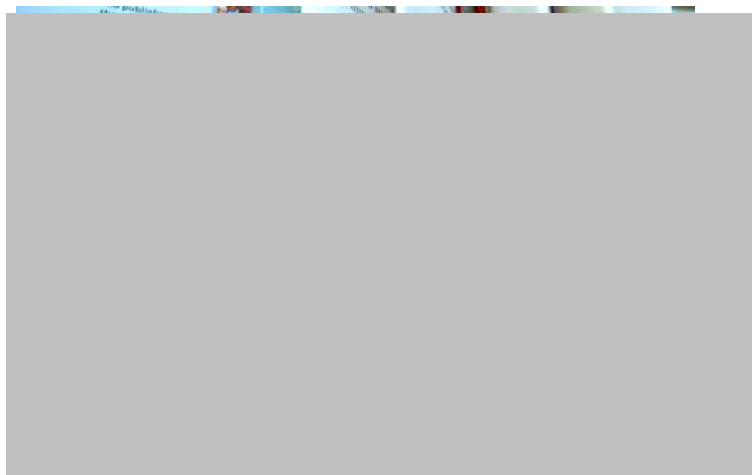
Figure 1-6 *Our World in Colour, 1968* (2009). "Indian Summer." Exhibition.

Chapter 2 'Cultural diversity' and museums

Introduction

The 'cultural diversity' agenda has influenced the museum's role and its practices. This chapter investigates the response to government demands through the policy, reports, conferences, guidance and online presence generated by the museum sector's strategic bodies. This chapter provides important context for the exhibition practices that incorporate 'living cultures', analysed in Chapters 3 and 4. Cultural diversity is a vague term and in an attempt to be more specific I explore its meanings in relation to "ethnically based cultural diversity."[1] Ethnicity forms one of the categories used to underpin an "interest group."[2] Distinct interest groups are considered part of the "complex composition of society"[3] to which cultural diversity pertains. Cultural diversity refers to a whole range of interest groups that "may be region-based, gender-based, generation-based, ability–based and so on."[4] Therefore the term could mean everybody really. Cultural diversity has been understood by curators, filtered into temporary and permanent exhibitions and I suggest ultimately effected the role of museums.[5]

'Cultural diversity' and museums

In 2000 the Museums and Galleries Commission defined ethnically based cultural diversity in Britain with reference to the 1991 Census population breakdown and mass immigration. Post-war migration from ex-colonies was particularly highlighted and the following Census figures presented for

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[1] Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 1.

[2] Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 1.

[3] Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 1.

[4] Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 1.

[5] As noted in Chapter 1 the use of identity based cultural diversity has not continued without receiving criticism. Please see the following references for further discussion on this paradoxical form of classification: Munira Mirza, *Culture Vultures: Is UK arts policy damaging the arts?* (Policy Exchange: London, 2006), print; "Tate Encounters: Britishness and Visual Culture," *Tate*, London, Tate, web, 3 Aug. 2011.

the population in England, Scotland and Wales with a separate paragraph on Northern Ireland:

> White 51,873,794
> Indian 840,255
> Black Caribbean 499,964
> Pakistani 476, 555
> Black African 212, 362
> Asian Other 197, 534
> Black Other 178, 401
> Bangladeshi 162, 835
> Chinese 156, 938
> Other 290, 206
> **Total** 54, 888, 844

> In Northern Ireland, it is estimated that there are between 3000 and 8000 Chinese people, 1500 African people, 1000 Indian people, 700 Pakistani people out of a total population of 1,663,305 (source: Multi-Cultural Resource Centre). [6]

Fundamentally, by 2000, the Museums and Galleries Commission associate ethnically based cultural diversity with the separation, grouping and classification of people by place and colour to infer geographical origin and or racial heritage.[7] Yet categories of race and ethnicity do not function as objective realities, and neither do the categories of minority and majority pertaining to ethnic or racial groups within a population.[8] Kenan Malik examines the political and historical context surrounding the use of the word 'race' from the Enlightenment through to the mid 1990s, and 'ethnicity'

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[6] Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 1.

[7] Colour is used as a category to infer racial heritage. It is interesting to note that the term 'other' appears within three of the categories of ethnicity. And whilst the label 'white' stands on its own, 'Caribbean', 'African' or 'Other' are used to qualify the category 'black'. For example there is no 'white other' category. These categories of ethnicity have significant resonance in relation to Edward Said's analysis of the term 'other', Frantz Fanon's critique of 'black' and Richard Dyer's questioning of the function of 'white'. It positions 'white' as majority, as norm, with no need for further qualification because the additional categories are identified as not white, and therefore as minority or other, through their geographical association: 'Indian'; 'Pakistani'; 'Bangladeshi'; 'Chinese'; 'Asian Other'; and or use of colour 'Black Caribbean'; 'Black African'; 'Black Other'; or classification as just 'Other'.

[8] See Kenan Malik, *The Meaning of Race: Race, History and Culture in Western Society* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1996) print.

from post-world war Britain to the 1990s in *The Meaning of Race*.[9] The political significance of the distilling of populations into distinct ethnic groups in the form of communities will be discussed in more detail in this chapter in the section "Community as an organizing principal."

In the Museums and Galleries Commission fact sheet, *Responding to Cultural Diversity: Guidance for Museums and Galleries*, published in 2000, under a sub-heading "Why does cultural diversity matter?" emphasis is placed on the broadening of "the UK's demographic cultural mix"[10] over the last 50 years. The following message to museum professionals is highlighted in bold and placed in a box to convey its importance:

> Museums have a vital part to play in presenting an inclusive vision of society, in challenging stereotypes and in providing a subtle and creative interpretation of world culture and internal diversity. As public institutions, they need to find ways in which to communicate with a wider public. And economics argue forcibly for the wisdom of maximising attendance through expanding the range of visitors.[11]

This statement gives museums two particular responsibilities: convey an image of an inclusive society and expand museum attendance involving a broader public.

In 1997 the first of two reports commissioned by the Museums and Galleries Commission (MGC) on cultural diversity and museums was completed titled: *Cultural Diversity in Museums and Galleries*.[12] This report was completed in the same year the New Labour government's Social Exclusion Unit was established; both are products of the Government led focus on marginalization. The Asian Leisure and Arts Planners (ALAAP) carried out the research which involved establishing the "attitudes of Board and staff members at 14 museums and galleries towards the role of cultural

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[9] See Malik, *The Meaning of Race* 169-178.

[10] Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 1.

[11] Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 2.

[12] Asian Leisure and Arts Planners, *Cultural Diversity in Museums and Galleries* (n.p, 1997) PDF file.

diversity in their institution."[13] The research was distilled into a series of recommendations to be addressed if cultural diversity were to be implemented into a museum or gallery:

- Institutional commitment;
- Time and flexibility;
- Relationship of trust with communities;
- Appropriate staffing;
- Projection of positive images.[14]

An expectation for cultural diversity to manifest within museum practices and staffing is clearly identified within these recommendations in 1997. This practical approach is a characteristic of the museum sector's response to cultural diversity between 1997 and 2010. An additional recommendation was made in the *Cultural Diversity in Museums and Galleries* report to the MGC, which conveyed the necessity for a second piece of research, on the "views of members of ethnic minorities about museums and galleries."[15]

In 1998 *Cultural Diversity: Attitudes of Ethnic Minority Populations towards Museums and Galleries*[16] was completed. Commissioned by the MGC, "[t]his report compared the attitudes of ethnic minority communities with those of society at large."[17] The following points were collated through the research, which established why "members of ethnic minorities were more likely to feel that museums and galleries did not meet their needs:"[18]

- Lack of relevant museum objects and other material;
- Language barriers;
- Lack of clarity/honesty about the provenance of some items;
- Negative image of south Asians: connected with disasters, famine etc;

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[13] Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 2.

[14] Asian Leisure and Arts Planners, PDF file, quoted in Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 2.

[15] Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 2.

[16] BMRB International, *Cultural Diversity: Attitudes of Ethnic Minority Populations towards Museums and Galleries* (n.p, 1998) PDF file.

[17] Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 2.

[18] Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 2.

- A colonial view of history that portrayed Black people as weak victims.[19]

The recommendations in this second report, in keeping with the previous one, were expressed as practical guidance for museums and galleries to act on and include:

- Highlight ethnic minority contributions in permanent collections;
- Collect material relevant to ethnic minority communities;
- Use temporary exhibitions on topics relevant to ethnic minority communities;
- Work with local communities on historical and cultural projects;
- Build on the existing skills and traditions of communities;
- Develop longer-term relationships with communities;
- Consult with communities on interpretation and selection of images;
- Seek to be more imaginative in marketing strategies.[20]

The instructive recommendations refer to key museum functions from collecting to interpretation and outreach, highlighting the fact that all museum processes must promote cultural diversity.

The findings of both the reports: *Cultural Diversity in Museums and Galleries,* and *Cultural Diversity: Attitudes of Ethnic Minority Populations towards Museums and Galleries* were incorporated into the MGC fact sheet *Responding to Cultural Diversity: Guidance for Museums and Galleries* written by Naseem Khan[21] of Asian Leisure and Arts Planners, published in January 2000. The research recommendations embody a pro-active, practical guide to cultural diversity for museums. This characteristic is continued in the MGC fact sheet, which presents a step-by-step process to create an, " 'accessible culture' for ethnic minority communities."[22] This is broken down into six areas: Context, Policy and Planning, Staffing,

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[19] BMRB International PDF file, quoted in Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 3.

[20] BMRB International PDF file, quoted in Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 3.

[21] Naseem Khan wrote the report *The Art Britain Ignores: The Arts of ethnic Minorities in Britain* (London: The Commission for Racial equality, 1976) print.

[22] Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 3.

Training, Community Liaison, and Community Credibility, which shows clear expectations for cultural diversity to be promoted extensively throughout museum activity. The promotion and support of cultural diversity practice across the museum sector continues. The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), launched in 2000 carried on the support of the practical integration of cultural diversity in to museums initiated by the MGC. A Cultural Diversity Advisor was appointed at MLA; in each of MLA's regional agencies Cultural Diversity Network Coordinators were located to promote diversity; the Cultural Diversity Network: email discussion list was started; and the *Cultural Diversity Checklist: a Toolkit for a Basic Audit* was created.[23] In 2004 the MLA published a report that presented an overview. of the current cultural diversity policy landscape. The document was titled: *New Directions in Social Policy: Cultural Diversity for museums, libraries and archives.*[24] It aimed to inform future policy development, implementation of good practice and highlight areas that would benefit from further research. The MLA established a clear "goal"[25] for the impact of 'cultural diversity' policy on the sector:

> The goal is for cultural diversity to be an integral part of all aspects of an organisation's operation. It needs to be included in their policies, plans, practices, budgets, programmes, exhibitions, collections, management, recruitment and governance.[26]

This expectation for cultural diversity to be embedded in museum activity was not just promoted by the MLA but is also clearly evident in the Museums Association's *Code of Ethics for Museums*. The Code was first adopted in 2002 with a revised edition published in 2008. It replaced the *Code of Conduct for People who Work in Museums*, in existence from 1996, and the *Code of Practice for Museum Governing Bodies*, adopted in 1994. The *Code of Ethics for Museums* is structured upon what the MA

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[23] "Cultural Diversity: Ethnicity and Race," *Museums, Libraries and Archives*, Birmingham, Museums, Libraries and Archives, web, 25 Jun. 2007.

[24] Helen Denniston Associates, *Holding up the Mirror: Addressing Cultural Diversity in London's Museums,* London: London Museum Agency, 2003. PDF file.

[25] "Cultural Diversity: Ethnicity and Race" web.

[26] "Cultural Diversity: Ethnicity and Race" web.

refers to as: "ten core values that society can expect museums to uphold."[27] These core values are based on the definition of museums promoted by the MA since 1998: "Museums enable people to explore collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment. They are institutions that collect, safeguard and make accessible artefacts and specimens, which they hold in trust for society."[28] This code is intended to be used by museum professionals for general guidance and more specifically in the process of forming a mission statement for their institution and when developing policy.[29]

In the index of both the 2002 and the 2008 *Code of Ethics for Museums,* "cultural diversity"[30] is listed and directs the reader to five particular points in the code: 3.2, 3.6, 9.5, 9.6 and 10.3. The first two points relate to access and community engagement and are under the third core value: "Encourage people to explore collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment."[31] Under this third core value the Code highlights the responsibility of museums to actively recognise diversity and respond to the needs of distinct cultural groups to support access: "3.2 Recognise the diversity and complexity of society and uphold the principle of equal opportunities for all. [...]. 3.6 Respond to the diverse requirements of different cultural groups."[32] The following two points are under the ninth core value: "Research, share and interpret information related to collections, reflecting diverse views."[33] This section in part pertains to the conscious collection of living cultures through the accumulation of individuals views, classified within distinct cultural groups:

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[27] Museums Association, *Code of Ethics for Museums* (London: Museums Association, 2002) 3.

[28] Museums Association, *Code of Ethics for Museums* 3.

[29] Museums Association, *Code of Ethics for Museums* 4.

[30] See index section in both: Museums Association, *Code of Ethics for Museums* 21 and Museums Association, *Code of Ethics for Museums* (London: Museums Association, 2008) 22.

[31] Museums Association, *Code of Ethics for Museums* (2002) 11.

[32] Museums Association, *Code of Ethics for Museums* (2002) 11.

[33] Museums Association, *Code of Ethics for Museums* (2002) 18.

> "9.5 Cultivate a variety of perspectives on the collections to reflect the diversity of the communities served by the museum. [...]. 9.6 Represent ideas, personalities, events and communities with sensitivity and respect. Recognise the humanity of all people. Develop procedures that allow people to define, and seek recognition of their own cultural identity."[34]

The final point identified in the index that relates to cultural diversity is located in the tenth core value section: "Review performance to innovate and improve."[35] This section emphasises the importance of museums to be reflective to ensure they are effective and efficient. The focus of this final point, listed in the index, is on workforce diversity: "10.13 Strive to increase the diversity of staff and members of the governing body so that they adequately represent the museum's present and potential audience."[36]

This expectation for cultural diversity to be embedded in museum activity is fore grounded by cultural diversity practices such as: community engagement, collecting living cultures and diversifying workforces. These characteristics can be identified within the activity of the MLA, the MA and the DCMS highlighted so far in Chapters 1 and 2.

In an analysis of "Cultural diversity in relation to museum policy and practice,"[37] Elizabeth Crooke affirms the aims of 'cultural diversity' policy on museum practice and points out that a "museum that has embraced its responsibilities for cultural diversity should have this reflected in the collections they hold and display, the stories they tell, audiences they attract and people the museums employ."[38] Despite the aim of MLA for the impact of 'cultural diversity' policy to completely permeate the organisations operation a persistent criticism levied at diversity work is tokenism and this is the subject of the next section.

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[34] Museums Association, *Code of Ethics for Museums* (2002) 19.

[35] Museums Association, *Code of Ethics for Museums* (2002) 19.

[36] Museums Association, *Code of Ethics for Museums* (2002) 20.

[37] Elizabeth Crooke, *Museums and Community: ideas, issues, and challenges* (New York: Routledge, 2008) 87-93, print.

[38] Crooke 87.

Multicultural tokenism

The integration of cultural diversity practices in the display of collections can actively contribute to the presentation of what Jo Littler and Roshi Naidoo refer to as the creation of a "white past, multicultural present,"[39] manifesting a form of "cultural amnesia"[40] that ignores Britain's immigration history:

> In Britain, heritage as a space constituted by flows of, for example, Angles, Saxons, Normans, Huguenots, Indians, Africans, West Indians has been well documented by historians […]. Yet, despite this work, multicultural society can still sometimes be figured as a 'new' development, rather than as a phenomenon which has always been with us, as a phenomenon formatively constitutive of our past as well as our present.[41]

The relegation of people to a " 'new' " status instigates a perpetual cycle of alienation "from a more long-standing or deeply historically rooted sense of belonging."[42] Marginalization is compounded through this status; and location outside of the centre is perpetuated. Littler connects the "white past, multicultural present"[43] practice to "another problematic position – multicultural tokenism,"[44] in which superficial connections are established that present "gestures towards diversity."[45] Littler highlights multicultural tokenism as a familiar criticism of diversity work. She cites James Donald and Ali Rattansi who refer to this approach as the "saris, samosas and steel-bands syndrome."[46] This syndrome is characterized by a very superficial interaction. Writing about the status of ethnic minorities in Britain, Naseem Khan points out "[i]n 1976, it was escape from invisibility;

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[39] Jo Littler and Roshi Naidoo, "White Past, Multicultural Present: Heritage and National Stories," *History, Nationhood and the Question of Britain,* eds., H. Brocklehurst and R. Phillips (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004) print.

[40] Littler 94.

[41] Littler 94.

[42] Littler 94.

[43] Littler 93-94.

[44] Littler 94.

[45] Littler 95.

[46] James Donald and Ali Rattansi, "Introduction," *'Race,' Culture & Difference*, eds. James Donald and Ali Rattansi (London: Sage Publications Ltd, 1992) 2, print.

in 1999, it was escape from marginality."[47] Khan presented this summary in response to the critical discussions mobilized at the *Whose Heritage?* conference held in 1999.[48] The multicultural tokenism debate actively informs the discussions surrounding what has been called the 'Welfare Model' of museum practice. The term 'Welfare Model' has evolved through criticisms of a type of museum outreach activity, characterized as top down and tokenistic. Mark O'Neil, Head of Art and Museums at Glasgow City Council, defined the 'Welfare Model' at the Victoria and Albert Museum conference, *From the Margins to the Core?,[49]* as reinforcing the division between majority and minority, or core and marginal.[50] O'Neil went on to say that projects functioning within the 'Welfare Model' can be characterized as working with small numbers of people from communities on projects that do not do enough to have an impact on the whole community.[51] This analysis aligns the 'Welfare Model' with multicultural tokenism that reinforces the marginalization and minority status of the people they involve. However, collaboration with people from local communities is central to the 'Welfare Model' actively developing processes to expand the variety of perspectives and voices present in museum displays. The project analysed in Chapter 3, at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery, the Hindu Shrine Project (2002) and in Chapter 4, at Manchester Museum, the Rekindle video series (2003) and Collective Conversations (2004-) could be considered within the context of the 'Welfare Model' criticism. For the museum projects involve artists and limited numbers of

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[47] Khan "Taking root in Britain" 141.

[48] The 1999 national conference, Whose Heritage? brought together the Arts Council, Heritage Lottery Fund, MGC, North West Museums Service, and North West Arts Board in a critical discussion of the construction of heritage, addressing the presentation of heritage as a fixed truth, with the intention of expanding the possibility of whose heritage to display. Whose Heritage? The impact of Cultural Diversity on Britain's Living Heritage, The Arts Council, G. Mex, Manchester, 1-3 Nov. 1999, conference.

[49] From the Margins to the Core?, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 24-26 Mar. 2010, conference.

[50] Mark O'Neil, "Panel discussion: Leaders in the Cultural, Museum and Heritage Sectors Respond," From the Margins to the Core?, Victoria and Albert Museum, London. 24 Mar. 2010, speaker.

[51] O'Neil speaker.

people from the local community classified as ethnic minorities according to cultural diversity definitions.

Community cohesion

'Community cohesion' is another significant policy theme used by New Labour from 2001, which the museum sector has integrated into its cultural diversity work. In the Museums Libraries and Archives (MLA) website policy pages, accessed in 2007, the definition of cultural diversity incorporates community cohesion:

> MLA defines cultural diversity as 'diversity based around ethnicity and race,' and social justice, identity, community cohesion and social inclusion are some of the key government policy themes that our cultural diversity work seeks to address. Cultural diversity is one of the key themes addressed by MLA's New Directions in Social Policy programme.[52]

The role of museums in New Labour's community cohesion is articulated in the report *Building Cohesive Communities* published in 2001.[53] This report establishes New Labour's focus on what Crooke refers to as "a commitment to civil renewal as a response to 'deep fracturing of communities on racial, generational and religious lines.' "[54] Crooke highlights that "[c]ohesion, conveyed as the touchstone at the heart of the community, suggests a cooperative and peaceful society. It is because community cohesion is thought to be lacking that many Governments have placed it high in the public agenda."[55] Notably, she emphasizes that "[t]he *Building Cohesive Communities* report specifically refers to the learning potential of museums as places where cross-cultural themes could be explored."[56] This report advocates the integration of cultural identity through cross-cultural themes as an appropriate feature of museum practice to support social cohesion. Subsequent reports and guidance from the

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[52] "Cultural Diversity: Ethnicity and Race" web.

[53] Great Britain, DCMS, *Building Cohesive Communities* (London: DCMS, 2001) PDF file.

[54] Crooke 46.

[55] Crooke 45.

[56] Crooke 47.

Department of Culture, Media and Sport reinforce the role culture plays in developing community cohesion including *Bringing Communities Together through Sport and Culture*[57] published in 2004. Recommendations are presented in the report to support community cohesion including partnership work and celebration of place, to encourage pride and a feeling of belonging.[58]

Crooke points out that Government policy on community cohesion is influencing local government and highlights the creation of *Community Cohesion an Action Guide*[59] published in 2004 by the Local Government Association. She illuminates the fact:

> Arts, sports and cultural services are advocated by Community Cohesion as [a] 'powerful tool to engage all sections of the community and break down barriers between them' and as 'an opportunity for 'joined up working' with other public and voluntary agencies.'[60]

The integration of the 'community cohesion' agenda into cultural policy is apparent. The impact of this practice on to regional museums is evident, ultimately in the redevelopment of permanent ethnographic displays. The stages through which permanent displays are amended is discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.

Community as an organizing principal

The use of the term 'community' as an organizing principal is prevalent in New Labour's policy. Elizabeth Crooke in her discussion of the relationship between community and the museum sector in the UK,[61] examines the extent to which 'community' can be used by the Government "as a building

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[57] Great Britain, DCMS, *Bringing Communities Together through Sport and Culture* (London: DCMS, 2004) PDF file.

[58] Great Britain, *Bringing Communities Together.*

[59] The Local Government Association, *Community Cohesion an Action Guide: Guidance for Local Authorities* (London: Local Government Association, 2004) PDF file.

[60] Quoted in Crooke 47.

[61] See Crooke 41-63. Please note Crooke uses UK and not Britain in her text.

block of society and as a means to achieve the aims of Government."[62] Crooke outlines the debate on New Labour's "communitarianism [that focuses on] the issue of maintenance of authority,"[63] with Brian Schofield as a main player.[64] Schofield draws on Foucault's concept of government mentality, he argues that New Labour's use of the term 'community' is not descriptive, reflecting lived experience, but is more accurately thought of as a managerial process.[65] He perceives 'community' as a useful governing mechanism that naturalises politically motivated activity.[66] New Labour's concept of 'community' as a process of control and not a descriptive notion is of particular importance to the debate about identity politics and will be discussed next.

The idea of 'community' contains a distinct classification of members of society into a priori groups; ethnicity is a key category in this process of classification, as is minority. Legislative use of the term 'community' shows, in Bhabha's and Rutherfield's terms, "containment of cultural difference."[67] The notion of a dominant ethnic group, a core identity, is mobilized through active use of minority as a category. The focus on classifying people as minorities creating essentialised cultural identities effectively also defines the majority through a system of difference, whilst avoiding describing core identity. Core identity thus appears natural or normal against which all else differs. G.J. Ashworth, Brian Graham and J.E. Tunbridge describe this as the 'Core+' cultural model in *Pluralising Pasts*:

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[62] Crooke 45.

[63] Crooke 61.

[64] Crooke references the following in her discussion on New Labour's communitarianism: Isabelle Fremeaux, "New Labour's Appropriation of the Concept of Community: A Critique," *Community Development Journal* 40, 3, (2005) 265-274, PDF file*;* Michael Marinetto, "Who Wants To Be an Active Citizen? The Politics and Practice of Community Involvement," *Sociology* 37, 1, (2003) 103-120, print; Brian Schofield, "Partners in Power: Governing the Self-sustaining Community," *Sociology* 36, 3, (2002) 663-683, print.

[65] Schofield 663-683.

[66] Schofield 663-683.

[67] Bhabha and Rutherford 208.

This type of model, often with quite different origins, is found in developed Western democratic societies with longstanding agreed national unities, as well as emergent postcolonial societies in the process of shaping more or less agreed state identities. The model is characterized by a consensual core distinctiveness to which other different cultural identities are added. To reiterate, the critical relationship is that of the core to these add-ons.

The add-ons are accepted as having a valid and continuing existence and may be viewed by the core society in one of two ways. They may either be perceived as something apart, of no especial relevance to the core, but equally as unthreatening to it. Thus, there is no need for the majority to adapt, participate in or even particularly notice the minority cultures. Alternatively, the peripheral add-ons can be viewed as in some way contributing to or enhancing the core. They may be: sub-categories of it, contributory (often regional) variants, or more or less exotic embellishments, which can be added selectively on to the core as and when desired.[68]

The Core+ model recognizes a dominant core culture and its relationship to a series of add-ons, or periphery cultures within a multicultural society. This model focuses on difference, and functions by grouping and classifying people as either part of the core or majority or as the periphery or minority add-ons. Ashworth, Graham and Tunbridge, highlight three particular ways that heritage can function in the Core+ model:

Heritage, often by circumstance rather than design, has multiple roles in such societies. It may be used as the instrument for creating and sustaining the leading culture. It can be adapted to a defensive position in preserving the integrity of the core, preventing the dilution of its perceived essential character from being subsumed by the periphery. Simultaneously, it can be used to promote the values and norms of the core among the peripheral add-ons, thus preventing society from fragmenting into non-communicating cells. Conversely, it can also be adapted to a core enhancement role by promoting the heritages of the peripheries to the core populations.[69]

The final way described that heritage can relate to the Core+ model, "promoting the heritages of the peripheries to the core populations" as enhancing the core, could be used to consider the case study museum

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[68] G.J. Ashworth, Brian Graham and J.E. Tunbridge, *Pluralising Pasts: Heritage, Identity and Place in Multicultural Societies* (London: Pluto Press, 2007) 141, print.

[69] Ashworth, Graham and Tunbridge 141-142.

projects discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. Within this model of a multicultural society the cultures that exist apart from the core are very much separated from the core; they exist in the same society but they are defined as add-ons or as peripheral.

Barnor Hesse's anthology *Un/settled Multiculturalisms: Diasporas, Entanglements, Transruptions,*[70] problematizes the categorisation of people as marginalized ethnic minority communities.[71] The text, published in 2000, brings together nine individual contributions on the subject of multiculturalism and its "social, political and intellectual meanings"[72] with a focus on Britain. The text has two parts. The first pays particular attention to the experiences of a diasporic populous and the issues that arise from living within the British nation state. The second part titled "Cultural entanglements", as the heading suggests, focuses on specific instances of conflicting mergers of cultures which includes examples both inside and outside of Britain. Stuart Hall points out in the final chapter of *Un/settled Multiculturalisms* "[a]s we have tried to show, ethnic minority communities are not integrated collective actors […]. The temptation to essentialize 'community' has to be resisted."[73] Yet the practice persists in Government policy. Prompted by this continuing activity, in 2001 Josie Appleton, in *Museums for 'The People'?*, examines what the construct of "the People"[74] alluded to in New Labour's policies actually means. She positions it as a pure fabrication of Government rhetoric and points out:

> The People is made up of many different categories of people, all well defined (by the state). Diversity is the great buzzword among supporters of The People. Because of the talk about diversity and difference, it appears more individualistic.[75]

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[70] Barnor Hesse ed., *Un/settled Multiculturalisms: Diasporas, Entanglements, Transruptions* (London: Zed Books, 2000) print.

[71] See, Barnor Hesse, "Introduction: Un/Settled Multiculturalisms," Hesse 1-30; Barnor Hesse, "Diasporicity: Black Britain's Postcolonial Formations," Hesse 96-120; Stuart Hall, "Conclusions: the Multi-cultural Question," Hesse 209-241.

[72] Hesse, *Un/settled Multiculturalisms* back cover.

[73] Hall, "Conclusions: the Multi-cultural Question" 232.

[74] Josie Appleton, *Museums for 'The People'?* (London: Academy of Ideas 2001) print.

[75] Appleton, "Museums for 'The People'?" 123.

Diversity has become a mechanism used by the Government to support 'social cohesion' to encourage a sense of belonging, which has filtered down through museum sector reports, guidance and conferences through practical instruction and into museum practice. The problem of grouping people into ethnic minority communities in the museum sectors' cultural diversity work underpins this discussion of whether 'cultural diversity' policies have changed colonial practices or reinforced existing colonial categories of race and nation.

Artists, 'cultural diversity' and museums

It is in the context of the need to promote cultural diversity that artists are commissioned in regional museums. The regional museum is a key site for the promotion of cultural diversity due to the perception and association of certain regions with particular ethnic groups. Consequently it is at a regional level that community seems a particularly appropriate term.

Artists from source communities have increasingly been involved in museum practice contributing institutional critique,[76] diversifying the interpretation of collections,[77] and facilitating engagement of people from source communities.[78] In this period between 1997-2010 international and sector wide engagement of living cultures[79] and living heritage,[80] has, influenced the museum's perception of the value of working with artists from source communities.[81] A convergence of several key elements underpins this work: international museum best practice engaging source

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[76]See, Grey 34-37; Latimer 29-31.

[77] See, Arthur 29-31; Atkinson, "Democratic displays"; *Creating Engaging* Displays, web; Merriman and Poovaya-Smith, "Making Culturally Diverse Histories".

[78] See, Arthur 29-31; Felicity Heywood, "Source materials," *Museums Journal*, Vol 109 No 2 (2009) 23-27, print.

[79] See, Kreps, *Liberating Culture* 149.

[80] See, William S. Logan, "Cultural Diversity, Heritage and Human Rights," Graham and Howard 439-454.

[81] Heywood 23-27.

communities,[82] changes in human rights debates to incorporate the right for people "to assert their cultural rights in order to protect their heritage and identity,"[83] and New Labour's integration of identity as a viable vehicle for developing 'community cohesion'.

<u>The value of source community artists</u>

Felicity Heywood's 2009 article "Source materials,"[84] focuses on source community artist museum projects and discusses the artists "Fred Stevens, a Navajo medicine man"[85] and "Rosanna Raymond a New Zealand artist of Samoan descent living in the UK."[86] Heywood asserts "it is clear that the main benefit to the museum in working with indigenous individuals or groups is to bring authenticity to the collections. Objects can be brought to life through performance or artists' interpretations, or information-provision and research assistance on the historical meaning and use of an item."[87] The "authenticity"[88] the museum assigns to the artist and their contribution to the interpretation of the collection is a subject of critical importance. This topic is discussed in chapters 3 and 4, in relation to the case studies.

The primacy of diversity in policy and increasingly the need to meet targets to secure funding is evident in regional museums' collection and display practice. Tony Eccles, Curator of Ethnography at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter, commissioned artist Rosanna Raymond in 2006 to create

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[82] See, Karp, Kramer, Lavine, *Museums and Communities;* Peers and Brown, *Museums and Source Communities*; Simpson, *Making Representations;* Sheila Watson ed., *Museums and their Communities* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007) print.

[83] See, William S. Logan, "Closing Pandora's Box: Human Rights Conundrums in Cultural Heritage Protection," *Cultural Heritage and Human Rights*, eds., D.R Fairchild and H. Silverman (New York: Springer) 33-52, print; Logan 439-454.

[84] Heywood 23.

[85] Heywood 25.

[86] Heywood 27.

[87] Heywood 27.

[88] Heywood 27.

a pair of "tapa-patched jeans,"[89] titled *Genealogy*. This commission

introduces a contemporary textiles piece into the existing collection of

barkcloth from the Pacific at Exeter.[90] In his report on the project Eccles

refers directly to the 2006 DCMS publication *Understanding the Future:*

Priorities for England's Museums[91] in order to point out the importance and

role of identity mobilized by the government:

> According to the government's *Understanding the Future*
> document, in a world where our sense of identity is increasingly
> dynamic and complex, museums can 'help people determine their
> place in the world and define their sense of identity.'[92] Identity is an
> integral element of the government's agenda and museums are
> encouraged by the availability of funding to address this. It is
> intended that ideas of identity and living cultures will feature clearly
> in the DCF- funded [Designation Challenge Fund] project and in
> the new interpretation being prepared for the museum's permanent
> displays.[93]

Eccles is clearly aware of both the government's and the funder's particular

focus on identity and living cultures, which actively influences museum

practice in his department. Eccles considers that the artist commission

Genealogy enables the Museum to "tackle cultural identity, continuity,

change, and the contemporary world,"[94] which provides evidence that the

ethnographic department at Exeter integrates identity and living cultures

into their practice. Eccles points out:

> Today, Raymond's *Genealogy* not only conveys a sense of identity
> and expresses female creativity, it also demonstrates the
> integration of diversity: Raymond describes herself as a New
> Zealand born Pacific Islander of Samoan descent, while the pieces

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[89] Tony Eccles, "Rossanna Raymond's *Genealogy* (2007): Notes on a new addition to the World Cultures Collection at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter," Journal of Museum Ethnography, No 20, March (2008) 124, print.

[90] Eccles 123.

[91] Great Britain, DCMS, *Understanding the Future: Priorities for England's Museums* (London: DCMS, 2006) print.

[92] Great Britain, *Understanding the Future* 6, quoted in Eccles 123.

[93] Eccles 122-123.

[94] Eccles 123.

of barkcloth used to make the patches [on the Levi's jeans] came from not one but many islands.[95]

The value of *Genealogy* is evidently as a demonstrable connection to "living culture"[96] perceived to be embodied in Rosanna Raymond's decorated jeans. Eccles' perception of Raymond and *Genealogy* as a manifestation of "diversity"[97] locates the commission as an appropriate response to the government and funder's priorities, whilst it also enhances the museums collection and permanent display.

Rosanna Raymond is a successful artist who works with museums in Britain.[98] The tapa-patched jeans commissioned by Eccles are one of three pairs Raymond has made, two of which exist in museums' collections and are at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter and at the World Museum, Liverpool.[99] Eccles inspiration for the *Genealogy* commission came in 2004, at the World Museum, Liverpool, when he saw Raymond perform *Beaten, Twisted and Flowing* in which she wore "a pair of visually stunning jeans covered with patches of stitched tapa."[100] The concept behind the creation of the first pair of tapa-patched jeans made by Raymond in the early 1990s was timely and purposeful. Living and working in New Zealand as a stylist Raymond was frustrated by the lack of

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[95] Eccles 124-125.

[96] Eccles 123.

[97] Eccles 125.

[98] In 2004 Rosanna Raymond performed *Beaten, Twisted and Flowing* at the World Museum, Liverpool; in 2006 she was artist in residence at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts at the University of East Anglia during the exhibition "Pacific Encounters: art and divinity in Polynesia, 1760-1860" from 21 May to 13 August 2006; on 4 June 2007 she performed *Tusks and Fevers* at the Pacific Playhouse, Southwark, London in which she formally presented the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter with *Genealogy*. For more information on Raymond see: Karen Jacobs, "Artists-in-residence: Polynesian engagements with the past," *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, No. 21 (2009) 112-126, print; Rosanna Raymond and Karen Jacobs, "An artist's perspective, 1," *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, No. 20 (2008) 127-138, print; Rosanna Raymond, "Genealogy: Artist's statement," *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, No. 21 (2009) 125-126, print; Veronica Sekules, "Mutual change in the process of encounter: working with world art in East Anglia," *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, No. 21 (2009) 152-166, print.

[99] Eccles 124.

[100] Eccles 124.

Polynesian presence in fashion and its advertising. This prompted her to create the first pair of barkcloth patched jeans. She used a pair of Levi's jeans. Levi's was a company she had worked with for sometime and they were one of the first to advertise reflecting the actual cultural make-up of New Zealand's population, including Polynesians. In the early 1800s sheets of barkcloth, an expression of female creativity, were presented to important European visitors when they came to Polynesia. These returned with the Europeans as souvenirs. Knowing the historical, cultural and political significance of the barkcloth and Levi's advertising activity imbues the first pair of jeans Raymond made with significant socio-political meaning. The second and the third pair commissioned by the Museums, 15 years later, have a different resonance. The possible interpretation of the jeans as, in part, commissioned souvenir is of interest. The jeans show a merger of Western (Levi's), postcolonial (New Zealand) and Polynesian (Raymond) influences. The act of commissioning, prompted by policy focused on visualising diversity, renders the Museum implicit in the object's creation. The practice of commissioning objects to enhance collections was prevalent through out the colonial era. The relationship between current museum activity involving the commissioning of artists and museum's colonial collecting practices from the 19th century is discussed further in Chapter 5.

Conclusion

The commissioning of Rosanna Raymond to create *Genealogy* by Tony Eccles at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter, is an appropriate place to draw this chapter to a close. The commission, the trousers themselves, are a unified form, an act of resolution of differences; they are a literal manifestation of community cohesion practices because modernity and Polynesian traditional culture are stitched together. This example also highlights the impact of the Government on regional museums' activity explored further in the next two case study chapters. For as Eccles emphasizes as 'identity' has become prioritised as a theme within the government's agenda for museums to work with it has become a priority for

the sector to address; clearly responding to the government's report that museums can: "help people determine their place in the world and define their sense of identity."[101]

'Identity' as a theme runs through the 'cultural diversity' agenda and the 2001 'community cohesion' agenda. Identity, diversity and community are all ideas that are based upon the premise of the group and the classification and organization of people according to ethnic and racial differences. These terms are covers for processes of grouping people and understanding the world according to difference. Malik, however argues that the categories of race and ethnicity are themselves constructs and do not function as objective realities, and neither do the categories of minority and majority pertaining to ethnic or racial groups within a population.[102] He suggests these are ways in which we are taught to see people.[103] This chapter aims to highlight the existing debate surrounding this process of categorisation in order to demonstrate that this way of organizing people is fundamentally problematic. This perception of society is divisive and seems to work in direct opposition to the creation of integrated communities. Jo Littler critiques what she terms "the plaster effect of cultural diversity [which] uses heritage to paper over the cracks of social inequality. Heritage initiatives, in other words, are in this formation expected to do 'too much work' on their own to right the world's wrongs."[104] The museum outreach activity and its optimistic goals of cohesion are continually undermined by the fact that the principles that underpin the Government and museum sector initiatives are essentially divisive and maintain the segregation of groups of individuals along the lines of ethnicity and race. These strategies of cohesion, although they can be considered on the one hand as an attempt to amend colonial processes, on the other hand it seems that they also, in fact, contribute to their continuation.

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[101] Great Britain, *Understanding the Future* 6, quoted in Eccles 123.

[102] See Malik, *The Meaning of Race* 71-100 and 169-177.

[103] See Malik, *The Meaning of Race* 149 – 177.

[104] Littler 98.

Chapter 3 The presentation of 'world art': redisplaying Brighton Museum and Art Gallery's ethnographic collections

Introduction

This chapter and the next focuses on changes in gallery spaces in the period 1994 to 2010 in order to assess the extent to which 'cultural diversity' policies in regional museums may become evident in ethnographic displays. Attention is paid here to the practice of regional museums developing their permanent ethnographic exhibitions by commissioning work by artists from source communities that also involve people classified as ethnic minorities in the creation of the work, whom live locally to the museum. The commissioned pieces reflect a significant shift from the engagement of artists and members of the local community as a temporary activity to a permanent feature of museum interpretation practice. Through visual and critical analysis of the artists' work and the gallery in this chapter and in Chapter 4, the commissioned work is situated as an outcome of the 'cultural diversity' agenda. For all the debate surrounding 'cultural diversity' and 'community cohesion' practices these chapters draw attention to the fact that, in practice, less attention is paid to the actual changes in collecting, of which commissions form a part.

As stated in Chapter 1, the ethnographic exhibitions chosen for case study are at the Brighton Museum and Art Gallery and the Manchester Museum, University of Manchester. This chapter focuses on Brighton Museum and Art Gallery. The Museum is located in the southeast of England in the city of Brighton and Hove; it is a regional museum and incorporated into the larger administrative body of the Royal Pavilion, Museums & Libraries,

Brighton & Hove (RPMLBH).[1] The Museum is located on the Royal Pavilion estate. The Royal Pavilion is a palace located in the centre of Brighton, famed for its "exotic oriental appearance,"[2] presenting an important architectural manifestation of British Orientalism. The Pavilion also hosts "some of the finest collections and examples of the Chinoiserie style in Britain."[3] The Brighton Museum is part of one of the four museum services in partnership in the Museums, Libraries and Archives Hub, Renaissance South East.[4] The collections housed in the Brighton Museum and Art Gallery range from local history, to art and design, to Egyptology and anthropology. In 1997 the decorative arts collections and the non-Western art and anthropology collections received Designation. In the "Designated Collections" document the Brighton Museum collections highlighted are:

> [T]he Willett Collection of ceramics illustrating popular history, and outstanding holdings of British and European 20th century decorative design and craft. The Designated collections of non-Western art and anthropology include particularly fine textile collections, such as the Green Collection from Burma.[5]

In 1992 the James Green collection, noted in the Designation description, was given to the Museum after an extended period on loan. This was accompanied by an annual endowment for the continued research and

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[1] The Royal Pavilion, Museums & Libraries, Brighton & Hove incorporates the following museums: Brighton Museum and Art Gallery; Hove Museum and Art Gallery; Booth Museum of Natural History; Preston Manor; Brighton History Centre. For further details on the individual museums see, "Museums," *Royal Pavilion, Museums & Libraries*, Brighton, Royal Pavilion, Museums & Libraries, web, 19 Nov. 2010. The case study museum is entitled Brighton Museum & Art Gallery and marketed in this way online and in print, as a result I refer to the Museum throughout as the Brighton Museum and Art Gallery. Please note however that the administrative name for the organisation used by Museum staff is, Royal Pavilion & Museums.

[2] "Royal Pavilion," *Royal Pavilion, Museums & Libraries*, Brighton, Royal Pavilion, Museums & Libraries, web, 19 Nov. 2010.

[3] "Royal Pavilion" web.

[4] "Renaissance South East," *Museums, Libraries and Archives Renaissance South East*, Oxford, Museums, Libraries and Archives, web, 18 Nov. 2010.

[5] "Designated Collections," London: Museums, Libraries & Museums, PDF file, 29.

development of the Green collection.[6] My focus is on the redisplay of the non-Western art and anthropology collection, referred to from 2002 as the World Art collection.

A history of art and ethnography

From the 1950s onwards Brighton Museum and Art gallery has exhibited its ethnographic collections as art. The longevity of this interpretation is implied by the current title of the permanent ethnographic exhibition, "The James Green Gallery of World Art". This title clearly defines items on display as art,[7] premised with the term 'World'. The term 'World' functions, in this instance as a classification category, to mean essentially not European. This is discussed in Chapter 5 in relation to the artwork I have developed as part of this doctorate. This chapter focuses on the shifting meanings of the collection as art. This includes the profile of the ethnographic collection in the fine art world from the 1940s; the involvement of conceptual artists through interventions in the collection through the 1990s; the commissioning of source community artists early on in the 21st century, and the re-presentation of the ethnographic collections as art in the permanent gallery from the 1950s to 1970s, and from 1994 to the present day.

The origins of Brighton Museum and Art Gallery

Brighton Museum and the town's library are founded upon the collections of the Brighton Royal Literary and Scientific Institution, active between 1841 and 1869.[8] The Institution "organized lectures, mostly given by local celebrities, collected objects of scientific and historical interest, and built up

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[6] Elizabeth Dell and Sandra Dudley, eds., *Textiles from Burma, featuring the James Henry Green Collection* (London: Philip Wilson in association with the James Green Centre of World Art, 2003) 18, print.

[7] The relationship between ethnographic collections and art is the dominant theme discussed by the contributors to the *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, No 11 (1999) in response to the theme of the Museum Ethnographer's annual conference entitled: 'Arts Premiers'? Ethnography and Art in the late 20th Century.

[8] Clifford Musgrave, *Life in Brighton: From the Earliest Times to the Present* (London: Faber and Faber,1970) 347, print.

a library collection."[9] All the museum collections were transferred to the town from 1862, including that of the Institution, which was originally located in the "upper rooms at the Royal Pavilion."[10] The Pavilion Purchase Act of 1850 afforded the up keep of the Pavilion estate.[11] In 1871 a need for more space prompted the conversion of the Pavilion's old stabling and coach houses, which lined Church Street, into the permanent location for the towns collections.[12] The formation of the Public Library, Museum and Picture Gallery in 1873 resulted in a number of significant contributions from local collectors.[13] These included Mr Henry Willet's famous collection of British pottery and porcelain that was loaned initially in the early 1870s and then gifted in 1901, as well as Sir Charles Dick's donation of ivories and armour.[14] The Museum still remains in the same vicinity, in the old stable complex situated diagonally opposite the Pavilion, however the library has been relocated off site, and the main entrance of the Museum and the location of the galleries has changed as a result of redevelopments, including the transformations of, 1901, 1903 and 1966.[15]

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[9] Musgrave 347.

[10] Musgrave 347.

[11] The Pavilion Purchase Act of 1850 saw the transferral of the Royal Pavilion and estate to the people of Brighton. For more information see Musgrave, "Purchase of the Royal Pavilion" 251-252.

[12] Musgrave 347.

[13] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 2.

[14] The Museum's website attributes the formation of the Museum to local brewer and social reformer Henry Willet, Musgrave does not however corroborate this see, "History of Brighton Museum & Art Gallery," *Royal Pavilion, Museums &and Libraries*, n.d., Brighton, Royal Pavilion, Museums &and Libraries, 19 Nov. 2010, 19 Nov.ember 2010, web <http://www.brighton-hove-rpml.org.uk/Museums/brightonmuseum/history/Pages/home.aspx> ; and Musgrave 348-349.

[15] For further information on the development of the museum, gallery and library complex see, David Beevers, "The Pride of Brighton," *The Royal Pavilion & Museums Review*, Number 1 (1985) 6-7, print; Musgrave 349; Anthony Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art and Ethnography at Brighton," *The Royal Pavilion & Museums Review*, Number 1 (1993) 2, print.

The ethnographic collection

Anthony Shelton, Keeper of Ethnography and Musical Instruments at Brighton Museum from 1991 to 1995,[16] emphasizes the importance of the ethnographic collections held at Brighton. He highlights the recognition and attention the collection has received going back as early as 1894.[17] Shelton notes: "Edge-Partington, an early specialist in Pacific material culture […]. [included] thirty-five of the objects in the supplement to his Ethnographical Album."[18] Partington's contact with the Museum resulted in his classification system being adopted by "the then curator, Benjamin Lomax, to re-arrange the collection."[19] Prior to this the ethnographic collection had been void of any "formal anthropological classification."[20] The ethnographic collections were "scattered through the various galleries" until 1903 when a permanent gallery was created.[21] Shelton describes the persistent chaotic nature of the display of objects up until a redisplay in the 1950s. He notes the objects:

> [S]pilled out haphazardly into adjacent rooms […]. [T]he jumble of weapons covering the walls and the smaller or utilitarian objects previously stacked in cases were removed and placed in storage.

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[16] This information regarding the exact start dates and departure dates of keepers at Brighton Museum in the non-Western art department is not readily available. Helen Mears the current keeper is in the process of compiling this information, confirmed on the 3 December 2010 over the telephone. Anthony Shelton confirmed via email the years he worked at Brighton (Anthony Shelton, personal message, 31 Jan. 2011, email).

[17] For more information on the recognition of Brighton's ethnographic collection see the following recent doctoral projects and existing publications: Helen Mears, "Sites of discipline, sites of power, E.H. Man's photographs of the Andaman Islands, 1869-1901," *The Royal Pavilion & Museums Review*, December (2004) 3-4, print; Helen Mears, "Shan Court textiles from Burma," *The Royal Pavilion & Museums Review,* July (2006) 7-8, print; Megha Rajguru, *From Shrine to Plinth: A change of meaning through the transference of a Hindu idol from a temple to a museum setting*, diss., University of Brighton, 2010, PDF file; Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 2; Clare Wintle, *Objects of Evidence: Colonial encounters through material culture from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands at Brighton Museum,1858-1949*, diss., University of Sussex, 2009, PDF file.

[18] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 2.

[19] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 2.

[20] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 2.

[21] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 2.

Displays which replaced them consisted principally of sculptures and textiles chosen on their artistic merit.[22]

This strong art historical approach to display was combined with a geographical classification system, which lasted for over 20 years until a redisplay in 1974 when division by cultural geographic grouping and what they defined as 'tribe' were the organizing principles of the permanent Gallery until 1994.[23]

Interestingly, the profile of Brighton's ethnographic collections, by the late 1970s, had received attention within the fine art world. Items from the Pacific collections were exhibited in 1948-49 alongside Modernist "paintings and sculptures by Braque, Picasso, Miro, Dali, Giacometti"[24] in the Institute of Contemporary Arts exhibition, entitled "40,000 Years of Modern Art".[25] This connection between African sculpture and modern art is confirmed again in the 1970s by the then Keeper of Ethnography at Brighton Museum, George Bankes, in the publication *African Carvings*, 1975, in a section titled "African Sculpture and the Modern Movement in Art".[26] Brighton's ethnographic collections went on to feature in two subsequent fine art exhibitions. The first in 1978 by the Arts Council titled "Dada and Surrealism Reviewed" and the second, in 1991 titled "Exotic Europeans".[27] For the purpose of this thesis the redisplays of the ethnographic collections completed in 1994 and 2002 will be analysed in order to discuss the impact of 'cultural diversity' policies on the practices of curators and their effect on museum activity at Brighton, including the commissioning of artists.

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[22] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 2.

[23] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 2.

[24] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 3.

[25] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 3.

[26] George Bankes, *African Carvings* (Brighton: Royal Pavilion, Art Gallery and Museums, Brighton, 1975) 10-13, print.

[27] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 3.

Redisplaying the non-Western art and ethnographic collections, 1994, and 2002

In this chapter I focus on two redisplays involving the Brighton Museum ethnographic collections: "The Green Gallery of Non-Western Art & Archaeology" in 1994 and "The James Green Gallery of World Art" in 2002. The 1994 redisplay has been included as an important point of comparison with the changes in interpretation practice that have occurred following 1997. This marks the point the Labour government was instated and promoting cultural diversity. The next set of changes, in 2002, were when we might expect them to become embedded so I am going to look at shifts over time and shifts in how those policies have been negotiated by curators.

"The Green Gallery of Non-Western Art & Archaeology" 1994 redisplay

In 1994, Anthony Shelton curated a substantial redisplay of the ethnography and archaeology collections at Brighton Museum. This redevelopment comprised of three galleries: an ethnography gallery (referred to as the "Cultures Gallery" from 1994 to 2002) and a new ethnography gallery with an adjacent local archaeology gallery (referred to jointly as "The Green Gallery of Non-Western Art & Archaeology" from 1994 to 2002). The "Cultures Gallery" was located on the ground floor at the bottom of the main stairs, since labelled number eight on the floor plan from 2010 (Figure 3-1). "The Green Gallery of Non-Western Art & Archaeology" were also on the ground floor but were across the main central gallery space from the "Cultures Gallery", now where the current "James Green Gallery of World Art" is, labelled number six on the floor plan from 2010 (Figure 3-1). The galleries were entered from the north side of the building in close proximity to the Museum's main entrance, which at that time was on Church Street through the most easterly doorway (Figure 3-2).

Writing in 1993, a year before the galleries opened, Shelton describes the decision in 1991 to refurbish the galleries as "timely to say the least

[…providing] the Museum with the opportunity to renew its commitment to one of its strongest, if neglected, assets."[28]

The funds for the 1994 redisplay of the collections came from a six year project titled the Cultures Project, which was divided into three phases and worth £350,000.[29] The funds came from "the James Green Charitable Trust, the Museums and Galleries Commission Wolfson Improvement Fund, and the Friends of the Royal Pavilion, Art Gallery & Museums."[30] The development of the galleries was part of the first phase of the Cultures Project, which started in May 1991; the opening of these galleries marked the beginning of the second phase of the project.[31] Shelton describes the third phase, in the section of his article titled "Futures", as incorporating "ambitious development and research programmes […] a vigorous and innovative programme of exhibitions, research, and other activities intended to place Brighton at the forefront of museum ethnography and non-Western art studies in Europe."[32] The refurbishment itself involved the complete redevelopment of the gallery spaces and "the reorganisation of the reference collections."[33] Public consultation formed an integral part of the preparatory activity carried out prior to the collection's redisplay. Questionnaires were used to ascertain public opinion on the existing museum and a workshop was run with a focus on the issues and politics surrounding the exhibition of non-Western collections. This consultative activity will be the focus of the next section.

Collecting visitor feedback

Visitor's feedback was sought and considered when planning Brighton Museum's 1994 redisplay of the permanent ethnographic galleries; this was

[28] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 3.

[29] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 3.

[30] John Roles, "All change at Brighton Museum," *The Royal Pavilion and Museums Review*, No 1 (1995) 9, print.

[31] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 3.

[32] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 4.

[33] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 3.

also the case for the 1995 redisplay at Manchester Museum.[34] At Brighton Museum and Art Gallery two modes were used to ascertain public opinion on the existing gallery and thoughts on the development of the new gallery. A one-day workshop was run, titled the *Politics of Exhibitions*, and visitor surveys were conducted.[35] Shelton states the workshop was attended by "a wide variety of people, including representatives of Brighton's ethnic communities, special interest groups, teachers and local politicians."[36] The Museum, along with Sussex University, created further opportunities for debate in a series of lectures and seminars on "Critical Museology […] on the nature of museums and the ways in which they communicate with the public."[37]

By the early 1990s visitor surveys had become a fairly regular tool of analysis for museums. The quality of visitor surveying being carried out across the museum sector had received criticism from Eilean Hooper-Greenhill in her essay "Counting visitors or visitors who count?" published in 1988 in the anthology *The Museum Time-Machine*.[38] Hooper-Greenhill encourages a re-evaluation of the visitor survey as part of a broader review of the purpose of museums in the late 20th century, in order to establish clear aims and objectives for the museum. As the title of her essay suggests, Hooper-Greenhill was critical of the trend in museums to produce visitor figures without having a more complicit understanding of their different "user groups."[39] Implicit to the criticism levied at museums' visitor surveying practice, was the fact that most surveys were not considered core work at the museum and were given to "inexperienced, untrained,

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[34] Please refer to Chapter 4 to the section titled "Visitor feedback" for further information on Manchester Museum's visitor survey activity.

[35] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 3.

[36] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 3.

[37] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 3.

[38] Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, "Counting visitors or visitors who count?," Lumley 213-232.

[39] Hooper-Greenhill, "Counting visitors or visitors who count?" 213.

temporary staff"[40] to design and carry out. In this context Brighton Museum can be considered fairly typical, for students from Sussex University carried out visitor surveys to establish public views on the former gallery; the University's Enterprise Unit funded this.[41] This approach was also followed at Manchester Museum for the 1995 redisplay demonstrating that this was fairly standard practice for the time.

Activities and aesthetics: non-Western and Western interpretations

In the "Cultures Gallery", the curatorial approach combined an emphasis on the aesthetic qualities of the exhibits with a focus on function, highlighting the activities for which the objects were intended. Shelton makes reference to the fact that this approach was unusual in the display of ethnographic collections in the "United Kingdom"[42] at the time:

> While other permanent ethnography galleries in the United Kingdom have focused on providing the cultural context of the object (without appreciating the difficulty in translating and interpreting culturally specific forms of knowledge), or encouraging an aesthetic experience for their audience, the new gallery ["Cultures Gallery"] has sought to combine these not contradictory aspects.[43]

The aesthetic curatorial emphasis applied to the "Cultures Gallery" was incorporated in to the plans for the new displays detailed by Shelton in the 1993 article "Re-presenting Non-Western Art and Ethnography at Brighton". It was intended that the cases, fixtures, fittings, and walls were all to be painted pale grey "to produce the impression of a seamless conjunction of frames and supports that would offer minimal distraction from the objects to be exhibited."[44] Shelton clearly states the intended impact of this "was also

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[40] Hooper-Greenhill, "Counting visitors or visitors who count?" 216.

[41] Sussex University further showed support for Brighton Museum by creating a research fellowship in Museum Ethnography and funding the video documentation of the gallery refurbishment. See Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 3.

[42] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 3.

[43] Shelton,"Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 3. It is worth noting that providing cultural context was important in the 1995 curatorial approach to the redisplay of Manchester Museum's ethnographic collections, as discussed in Chapter 4.

[44] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 3.

crucial to encourage the public's appreciation of the formal sculptural or pictorial qualities of the objects,"[45] to convey in the first instance to the visitor that the items on display should be appreciated for their aesthetic, artistic qualities. He reveals the concept behind this strategy:

> The re-presentation of the collection celebrates cultural diversity but by comparing aspects of Western and non-Western cultures it is intended to emphasize similarities as well as differences. Instead of treating objects as curiosities the new gallery ["Cultures Gallery"] will present them as cultural and artistic achievements that deserve the same regard as is reserved for Western material culture and art preserved in museums.[46]

This art historical approach has been championed by Shelton through a number of publications.[47] Yet, paradoxically, the ethnographic collection displayed in the gallery across from the "Cultures Gallery" was literally defined by the fact that it is non-Western, communicated to visitors through the title, "The Green Gallery of Non-Western Art & Archaeology."[48] This 'other' status strongly emphasizes difference and not similarities.

The collections in the "Cultures Gallery" were categorised through anthropological themes[49] based on activities. This was considered by Shelton to be less ethnocentric, and it was thought, "more challenging than arranging material by cultural affiliations which would anyway have been compromised by limitations on gallery space and the lack of fully

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[45] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 3.

[46] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 3.

[47] See Anthony Shelton, "Constructing the Global Village," *Museums Journal,* Vol. 92, No. 8 (1992) 25-28, print; Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 1-4; Anthony Alan Shelton, "The Future of Museum Ethnography," *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, No 9 (1997) 43-44, print; Anthony Shelton, " Unsettling the meaning: critical museology, art and anthropological discourse," *Academic Anthropology and the Museum: Back to the Future*, ed. Mary Bouquet (New York: Berghahn Books, 2001) 142-161, print.

[48] The gallery is referred to as "The Green Gallery of Non-Western Art & Archaeology" by John Roles, Senior Keeper at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery writing in 1995 regarding the 1994 opening of the galleries. See, Roles, "All change at Brighton Museum" 9.

[49] Helen Mears, Keeper of World Art (2008-) referred to these categories in the "Cultures gallery" as "anthropological themes." Message to the author, 29 Dec. 2010, email.

'representative' collections."[50] Displays were arranged into the following: "performance, exchange, feasting, worship, etc, as well as subject categories such as gender, ancestors, strangers and power."[51]

Shelton's overall curatorial intention for the redisplay was to juxtapose, "largely non-Western notions of culture"[52] arranged according to activities in the "Cultures Gallery", with the presentation of "Western views on non-Western art and culture"[53] in "The Green Gallery of Non-Western Art & Archaeology".[54] Shelton states: "[t]aken together, the two galleries will represent the encounter between Western and other cultures, providing different views and interpretations, highlighting their similarities and differences, insights and misunderstandings, achievements and follies."[55] Interestingly though no reference is made by Shelton to the inclusion of any originating communities' direct contribution to the interpretations in regards to the "Cultures Gallery", yet it is intended by him to represent non-Western notions of culture.[56] The objects on display are left to do the talking.

The different approaches taken in the two gallery spaces that display objects from the non-Western art collections manifest in the style of the displays. However, the intended uniformity of the pale grey colouration of casing, fixtures, fittings, and walls did not actually occur in the "Cultures Gallery". The base of the cases appear black but the tops and frames are glass; the walls and the plinths inside the case appear to be unified by the use of the colour white (Figure 3-3). The objects are presented in line with art objects, on individual white plinths with a white background and labels located along the base of the case so that the object can be appreciated in isolation without the distraction of the label, which, at first glance, is left to

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[50] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 3.

[51] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 3.

[52] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 4.

[53] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 4.

[54] See, Roles, "All change at Brighton Museum" 9.

[55] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 4.

[56] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 4.

speak for itself. The displays in the "The Green Gallery of Non-Western Art" section of the second gallery are significantly different from the "Cultures Gallery". The cases including the bases, frames, and tops appear to be a distinctive matt black in colour and stand out against the walls of the gallery space painted white (Figure 3-4 - Figure 3-5). The labels accompanying the objects are presented right by their associated object and large text panels appear inside the cases in (Figure 3-5). The cases in "The Green Gallery of Non-Western Art & Archaeology" appear busier, and fuller, more in line with an ethnographic display than an art object display.

In the "The Green Gallery of Non-Western Art & Archaeology", it was intended that the Western perceptions of non-Western art and culture were to be shown in two particular ways. Firstly, through a time line comprising of Western and non-Western materials that "will juxtapose the social and cultural development of the East, Egypt and Peru with the historical evolution of the local community [in the south-east of England]."[57] And, secondly, Western perceptions were to feature in the display of five or six of the most significant contributors to the non-Western collections at Brighton Museum.[58] The purpose of this was to support a critique that would:

> [E]xamine the ideas and intentions behind nineteenth and twentieth-century collectors and place their collections in historical perspective. Because all of these collectors lived in south-east England, the exhibition will also document the region's changing view of the world's peoples.[59]

Shelton felt strongly that multiple interpretations of the collections on display should be included. For example the collectors' displays, in line with the particular interest of the donor, would focus on distinct ethnic groups

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[57] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 4.

[58] Including: "[T]he J.H. Green Collection of Burmese textiles, Alldridge's material from the Mende People of Sierra Leone, Melton-Prior's Far-Eastern Collections, Lucas's collection of ivory, bone and shell artefacts from around the world (particularly Inuit and Pacific artefacts), and W. Kebbell's Pacific Collections" Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 4.

[59] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 4.

from particular regions.[60] This would form an introduction to those respective people and geographical places alongside the presentation of 19th and 20th century collectors' ideas and intentions. However, by presenting objects from the non-Western art collection alongside archaeology from the Neolithic and Bronze Age excavated from the local Sussex area, problematic connections are created. In a review of the gallery by John Roles, Senior Keeper at Brighton Museum, describing the "experimental Archaeological Discovery room"[61] adjacent to the display of non-Western art collections he notes that "[v]isitors are introduced to the concept of the survival of evidence by comparing Mesolithic remains from Sussex with modern ethnographic parallels." [62] The juxtaposition of "modern" [63] ethnographic material with archaeological findings from Sussex dated to the Neolithic and Bronze Age, on a time line, mobilizes ideas subsequently critiqued by museum ethnographers that relate to an evolutionary scale, which presents non-Western cultures on a lower level than Western cultures.[64] It also plays out a museum practice identified by Annie Coobes, that is, the 'disappearing world museum syndrome', which locates the non-Western people, signified through the collections, firmly in the past.[65]

John Roles' review of the 1994 redisplay does not, however, notice Shelton's curatorial strategy intended to juxtapose non-Western notions of culture, through a focus on non-Western activities in the "Cultures Gallery" with Western ideas and interpretations integrated in to the "The Green Gallery of Non-Western Art & Archaeology" through the display of key collectors contributions to the collection. In addition, nor does Roles mention the aesthetic qualities of the non-Western art on display that Shelton intended to emphasize, made evident through the exhibition design

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[60] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 4.

[61] Roles, "All change at Brighton Museum" 10.

[62] Roles, "All change at Brighton Museum" 10.

[63] Roles, "All change at Brighton Museum" 10.

[64] Nicky Levell, "On keepers," Hallam and Levell 10.

[65] Coombes, "Inventing the postcolonial" 39-52.

of the "Cultures Gallery" displays. There is a strong possibility that visitors to the 1994 redisplay might not have noticed the curatorial subtleties either, missing out on the intended critical dialogues about "the problem of objectification"[66] that Shelton hoped to highlight.

The politics of display: the role of artists and temporary exhibitions

Artists are integrated into the third phase of the Cultures Project at Brighton Museum in the mid 1990s. This phase, supported by the James Green Charitable Trust, involved academics, museum professionals, and artists in what Roles describes as a "vigorous programme of [temporary and touring] exhibitions, research, publications and other activities."[67] For the purpose of this thesis, it is on the final phase of the Cultures Project, in which artists are integrated into the Museum, that is examined most closely. This is in order to demonstrate the shift in museum practices when working with artists that followed the introduction of the 'cultural diversity' policies of New Labour.

Through the first half of the 1990s Anthony Shelton, Keeper of Ethnography at Brighton Museum and Lecturer in non-Western art and critical museography,[68] actively shows commitment to the idea of the museum as an important site to encourage debate. In the article "Constructing the global village", published in 1992, he, states, "[t]he space controlled by the curator is a political space. It is like a piece of paper waiting for a statement to be written on it, but unlike paper the rarity of such spaces make it a scarce resource whose use is denied to the majority of the population."[69] In the same article Shelton insists that "[c]uratorial monopolies over exhibition space and narrative need to be re-examined"[70] and a change in conceptual approach to the role of museums is necessary. He proposes that museums

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[66] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 4.

[67] Roles, "All change at Brighton Museum" 9.

[68] Anthony Shelton was a lecturer at this time at Sussex University and East Anglia University.

[69] Shelton, "Constructing the global village" 26.

[70] Shelton, "Constructing the global village" 26.

should "re-define themselves as facilitators whose custody of space and meaning is loosened to enable new relationships with indigenous representatives, minorities, artists and academics to be constructed."[71]

Whilst at Brighton Museum, following the redisplay of the ethnographic galleries in 1994, Shelton worked on in excess of seven temporary exhibitions over an eighteen month period, all of which included academics and a range of museum professionals.[72] Three of the exhibitions involved fine artists: "Hold," 11 March – 2 April 1995; "Fetishism: Visualising Power and Desire," 29 April – 2 July 1995; and "Peep," 29 April – 1 August 1995. These three exhibitions were all temporary. "Fetishism" went on to tour two subsequent venues after opening at Brighton, including Castle Museum & Art Gallery, Nottingham (22 July-24 September 1995) and The Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia (9 October – 10 December 1995).[73] "Hold" and "Peep" were single artist shows. "Fetishism" comprised of 19th century African works, 20th century surrealist artworks and contemporary artist works from the 1980s and 1990s.[74] All three exhibitions actively encouraged visitors to think about museum practices of making meaning as will be explored next.

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[71] Shelton, "Constructing the global village" 26.

[72] The exhibitions Shelton was involved with in this 18 month period include: "Travel;" "Kinyozi: The Art of African Barber Boards;" "Badgering the People. Mao Badges: A Retrospective 1950-1994;" "Peep;" "Hold;" "Belief in China;" "Fetishism;" and "Communicating Otherness: Cultural Encounters." There are catalogues with occasional papers for five of the exhibitions, in which museum professionals and academics contribute to a critical dialogue on the subject of the temporary display. These are: Louise Tythacott, *Kinyozi: The Art of African Hairstyles,* Brighton: The Green Centre for Non-Western Art and Culture, n.d., print; Nicola Coleby and Louise Tythacott eds., *Hold: Acquisition, Representation, Perception*, Brighton: The Royal Pavilion, Art Gallery and Museums, 1995, print; Robert Benewick and Stephanie Donald eds., *Belief in China: art, politics; deities and morality*, Brighton: The Green Centre for Non-Western Art and Culture, 1996, print; Anthony Shelton, ed., *Fetishism: Visualising Power and Desire*. London: The South Bank Centre, The Royal Pavilion, Art Gallery and Museums in association with Lund Humphries Publishers, 1995, print; Elizabeth Hallam and Nicky Levell eds, *Communicating Otherness: Cultural Encounters* (Falmer: University of Sussex, 1996), print.

[73] Shelton, *Fetishism.*

[74] Shelton, *Fetishism* 125-128.

"Hold"

In "Hold" (1995) Shirley Chubb displayed six original artworks in the Brighton Museum inspired by the non-Western collections held in store. Jessica Rutherford, Head of Museums and Director of The Royal Pavilion, identified the themes of Chubb's work in her preface to the exhibition catalogue:

> [O]f the uneasy relationship between Western colonialism and colonised peoples, the imposition of Western power, the creation of arbitrary boundaries, the alienation of non-Western peoples from their land, history and cultural traditions, here are explored again and enlarged in the six pieces that comprise the exhibition *Hold: Recent Work by Shirley Chubb*.[75]

Rutherford makes reference to the fact that Chubb's exhibition at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery is part of "a growing tradition of supporting and showing exhibitions that critically explore the nature and intellectual history of museums and the problems, limitations and ideological presuppositions underlying the construction of any form of visual representation."[76] The exhibition title, the work created, and the papers on the exhibition presented in the catalogue emphasize the *hold* the Museum has over the collections in its possession literally as a holding store. The museum is described as a holding store. The preservation of the objects endeavours to hold them in a relative physical stasis and the displays are designed to hold them in a particular context. The physical hold of objects is matched by an ideological hold. The Museum also holds distinct views on the significance and meaning of the collections allocating a value to the items, deciding whether they are worthy of public exhibition or not.[77] This critical look at the Museum's practices is presented to visitors through Chubb's artworks and the accompanying essays in the catalogue *Hold: Acquisitions, Representation, Perception*.

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[75] Jessica Rutherford, "Preface," Coleby and Tythacott 5-7.

[76] Rutherford, "Preface" 5.

[77] See, David Reason, "On hold/ Marks of Morality," Coleby and Tythacott 37-45; Rutherford, "Preface" 5; and Anthony Shelton, "Museums: holds of meaning, Cargoes of Re-collections," Coleby and Tythacott 13-26.

<u>"Fetishism"</u>

In the exhibition "Fetishism" objects were divided into three different categories: Section 1: African Works; Section 2: Surrealism; and Section 3: Contemporary Artists. The accompanying catalogue *Fetishism: Visualising Power and Desire* features a corresponding essay on each of the sections identified to support visitors' understanding of the shifting use and meaning of the term fetishism.[78] Anthony Shelton describes the 1995 exhibition "Fetishism" as:

> [A] good example of what a work that examines consecutive meanings given to a term can look like. By de-privileging Western and historical and contemporary usages of the word (concept) it provided a different kind of multicultural exhibition which acknowledged the role of the west, not in the discovery or understanding of Africa, but in its invention.[79]

The contemporary artists work included in the exhibition reflected the sustained critical engagement "with Western notions of the 'fetish'."[80] Renee Stout's artwork was importantly featured in this body of work, which presents a return to the original African meaning of 'fetish' as power object and charm, developing within a part of Afro-American identity.[81] See (Figure 3-6) for an example of Renee Stout's artwork displayed in the *Fetishism* exhibition.

<u>"Peep"</u>

In "Peep", Sonya Boyce created a series of installation artworks for the permanent ethnographic galleries at Brighton Museum.[82] Shelton cites Boyce's artistic intervention in 1995 in his article "The future of museum

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[78] See, Dawn Ades, "Surrealism: Fetishism's Job," Shelton, *Fetishism* 67-88; John Mack, "Fetish? Magic Figures in Central Africa," Shelton, *Fetishism* 53-66; Roger Malbert, "Fetish and Form in Contemporary Art," Shelton, *Fetishism* 89-124.

[79] Shelton, "The Future of Museum Ethnography" 42.

[80] Shelton, "The Future of Museum Ethnography" 42.

[81] Anthony Shelton, "Introduction," Shelton *Fetishism* 7-9.

[82] Sonya Boyce and Anthony Shelton refer to the permanent ethnographic gallery as the Cultures Gallery, in the catalogue that accompanied the exhibition "Peep."

ethnography"[83] along with Sokari Douglas Camp's work displayed in the British Museum, in the same year, as evidence that "museum ethnography can no longer avoid an engagement, which is long overdue and which is a necessary overture to rethinking the politics of its own display practices."[84] Shelton mobilizes the idea that artists' work located in the museum can actively contribute to the analysis of established display practices. Gilane Tawadros, co-organiser of "Peep", supports this notion through her description of the intervention:

> The transparent glass display cases, which usually present artefacts and objects from around the world have been hidden from view behind opaque paper sheeting. To see the objects now, you are forced to move up close to the glass cases and peer through the uneven shapes cut out of the tracing paper. Looking through these strangely shaped openings, your view is limited, partial and incomplete and you are made to feel self-conscious about the act of looking, as if the artist was determined to make us peeping toms. But perhaps that is what museums are all about.[85]

The practice of looking, implicit in the museum experience, is brought into question by Boyce; the process is exaggerated, encouraging visitors to think about the meaning of their involvement. The view presented to visitors of the objects in the cases is also highlighted, which in turn illuminates the practice of constructing a point of view, revealing the contrived nature of the museum display.

Through this period of museum practice in Brighton Museum and Art Gallery's World Art department artists are integrated into the intellectual reflection upon the role and practices of museums, to stimulate debate on the politics of display. This is, however, confined to temporary exhibitions, the legacy of which is largely lost to visitors who arrive after the exhibitions are over. Although exhibition catalogues remain these are not made available to see in the existing gallery, or to purchase in the Museum shop or to study in the History Centre now located on the first floor of the

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[83] Shelton, "The Future of Museum Ethnography" 33-48.

[84] Shelton, "The Future of Museum Ethnography" 44.

[85] Gilane Tawadros, "Peeping Toms," *Peep* 3.

Museum, which has archived only some of the Museum's exhibition catalogues. In addition, interestingly, the Museum places no overt emphasis on the contemporary artists' ethnicities involved in the exhibitions discussed.[86] For instance, neither Shelton nor Tawadros from the co-organizing institutions refer to Boyce's Guyanian diasporic status in the associated exhibition publication. The focus is her artistic and conceptual contribution to the Museum site. A noticeable departure from this type of integration of artists into critical museum practice occurs later. Ethnicity of artists becomes more important and public by 2002.

"The James Green Gallery of World Art" 2002 redisplay

In May 2002, the ethnographic collections at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery re-opened after a significant redisplay. The two existing galleries (1994-2001) that exhibited non-Western art and culture, and local archaeology became a single extended gallery with three distinct areas, which runs the length of the main gallery on the ground floor. A new entrance was created at the southerly end of the gallery responding to the newly formed reception area and entrance to the Museum from the Pavilion Gardens (Figure 3-7 - Figure 3-8). As noted local archaeology was removed and the gallery was titled "The James Green Gallery of World Art" continuing the interpretation of the ethnographic collection as art, with the caveat of the term 'World'.

Change

The 2002 ethnographic gallery redevelopment was carried out in a period of considerable change. For Brighton Museum and Art Gallery's refurbishment was part of a city wide focus on regeneration and outreach. The redevelopment was funded in part by the Brighton Museums Service, Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) of £1.637 million allocated over five years between 1996 and 2000.[87] Jasper Jacobs redesigned the Brighton

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[86] The one exception found was in relation to Renee Stout in Malbert, "Fetish and Form in Contemporary Art" 96-113.

[87] David Martin, "Outreach case study: Brighton Museum and Art Gallery," *Museum Practice Online,* Issue 11 (1999) 83-86, 28 May 2009, web, 3 Oct. 2010.

Museum and Art Gallery for the 2002 redevelopment project.[88] Janita
Bagshawe, Principal Keeper of education and exhibitions, highlights how
the SRB bid process raised the profile of the Museum within the local
council "of the potential role of the museum in supporting social, cultural
and educational activities in local communities."[89] The Museum's bid for
SRB funds identified several key impact areas, summarised by David
Martin:

> [T]o raise funding to improve facilities at the museum and for
> investment in new displays and information technology to increase
> public access to the collections. To complement this work, the bid
> also covered funding for extra staff to enable the museum to:
>
> - Undertake outreach work with local communities, including
>   old people, residents in areas identified as being in need of
>   regeneration, and people from ethnic minority groups
>
> - Help make collections and related subjects accessible to
>   people who would not normally visit the museum.[90]

One of the staffing posts funded by the SRB funds with additional financial
support from the James Henry Green Trust resulted in the full-time post of
Assistant Keeper of Non-Western Art.[91] Caroline Cook was appointed in
the post in 1996; a significant part of her role included "outreach work with
Brighton's Indian community."[92] The manifestation of this outreach work in
the permanent "James Green Gallery of World Art" is the subject of analysis
in the remainder of this chapter.

Another staff role funded by the SRB was a temporary community
researcher. In 1997 research was carried out with Museum visitors and
non-users. A vacant city centre shop became the base for much of this
research activity, from which questionnaires were distributed and feedback

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[88] Javier Press, "Jacob's ladder," M*useum Practice*, Winter (2005) 30-33, print.

[89] Martin 83.

[90] Martin 83.

[91] Martin 83.

[92] Martin 83.

gathered to identify what people wanted from the Museum.[93] These findings

informed the Museum's "programmes of SRB-funded outreach"[94] and

underpinned the successful application to the Heritage Lottery Fund, which

resulted in a grant of £7.56 million in January 1998. Martin states the funds

were "for major capital works including improved access to the museum

building, redisplay of galleries and better facilities for educational activities

and care and storage of collections."[95] He goes on to identify:

> The Museum's Single Regeneration Budget funded outreach
> programme had four main strands initiated in 1997, which were:
>
> - Portable displays produced by project and curatorial staff
>   and deployed in a wide range of venues in the town
> - Community exhibitions produced by local groups with help
>   from an outreach worker
> - Reminiscence work with old people in residential homes and
>   day centres
> - Activities with people from ethnic minorities.[96]

This chapter will shortly focus in on the Hindu Shrine Project, which is

located in the fourth category of Brighton Museum's SRB funded outreach

work.

Multiple meanings: "makers, believers and collectors," Gallery description

In what follows, I am seeking to interpret the space as both visitor and

critic.[97] From the large, open, brightly lit space of the "Twentieth Century

Art and Design Gallery" comes the front entrance into the "James Green

Gallery of World Art" (Figure 3-9). Walls are coloured burnt red with grey

ceilings, which brings the edges of the Gallery in close. Pale wooden

boards cover the floor, running the length of the Gallery. They call out with

creaks, scuffs, and scrapes as visitors walk over them, the only constant

audio accompaniment present in the exhibition. The Gallery is long and

thin. From the front entrance the eye can travel uninterrupted along two

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[93] Martin 83.

[94] Martin 83.

[95] Martin 83.

[96] Martin 84.

[97] For further discussion on this approach see: Lindauer, 203-225.

thirds of the gallery space to the last case in the "Collectors"[98] section (Figure 3-10). A number of visitors are pulled along by this view to the back of the gallery, walking at a pace; the Gallery catches some people and looses others. Archways mark the three themed sections along the length of the Gallery: "Makers", "Believers", and "Collectors".[99] The titles crawl up the walls, vertically, in oversized capital letters, several shades darker than the walls (Figure 3-11). Large cases line the edges of the Gallery and fill the central areas. The cases have glass on three sides, the bases and tops are decorated the same burnt red as the walls. Consequently objects appear to float, held in stasis separated from the floors and ceilings in the glass boxes. Low intensity spotlights twinkle from ceiling brackets creating soft lighting throughout. The largest cases aligned with the walls are lit up brightly from inside. In the first of the three sections, "Makers", a totem pole five foot in height meets visitors as they enter the Gallery. The label states the totem was:

> Made by Israel Shotridge
> Tlingit people
> Alaska
> North America
> Made in 1994 from cedar wood
> Commissioned with the aid of the JH Green Charitable Trust in
> 1994[100]

It rests on a ledge to the right of the lift that takes people up to the first floor of the Museum. The word "Makers" tracks up the wall vertically parallel to the totem (Figure 3-11). To the left of the entrance five carved wooden colonial officials, stand in the centre of the first wall on display, positioned at head height (Figure 3-12). The largest of which, head and shoulders above the others, has a gaze that falls to the floor into the middle distance. From their vantage point they face down the length of the Gallery. A painting of an Australian Aboriginal creation story, by Bessie Nakamarra Sims (1995),

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[98] "Collectors", in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, gallery signage.

[99] "Makers"; "Believers". In James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, gallery signage.

[100] "Eagle Totem Pole", in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, object label.

hangs closely to the colonialist officials (Figure 3-12). These carvings, the label states, are from "Tanzania, Africa […] Maker unrecorded."[101] One step taken into the Gallery and makers from Indonesia, Australia, Tanzania, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, and Alaska are all present. To the right of the entrance a Yoruba sculpture from 1880-90 turns constantly on a rotating plinth, the carved figures look out to visitors (Figure 3-10). A giant carved "Winged fish for Malagan ceremony" hangs in the large central case, suspended, with a label that states "Maker unrecorded"[102] (Figure 3-13). Tall, metal stakes hold up "Spirit masks for Malagan ceremony"[103] with human facial features, at head height, from Papua New Guinea, brought face to face with visitors. Is there a warning to be heeded here by the heads on stakes? Opposite a girl and a man stand side by side (Figure 3-14). Head and shoulders visible, they look straight out from their position on canvas about 100 cm in width and 70 cm in height, placed on a raised plinth approximately one metre tall; a label states:

> Untitled artwork
> Sabah Naim
> Cairo
> Eygpt
> Africa
> Created in 2008 mixed media and photography on canvas
> Purchased with the aid of the MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund[104]

Why are they here, these anonymous people photographed by Naim on the streets of Cairo, placed next to the "Woman's robe Qi pao China" of turquoise and blue covered in butterflies and the "Mask of an antelope […]Ivory Coast"?[105] We are told in the label that Naim "reclaims them

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[101] "Group of colonial officials," in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, object label.

[102] "Winged Fish," in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, object label.

[103] "Spirit masks," in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, object label.

[104] "Untitled artwork Sabah Naim," in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, object label.

[105] "Woman's robe," in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, object label; "Mask of an antelope," in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, object label.

through adding embroidery, paint and other media to her images. Naim's work picks out the individual from the crowd."[106] Once again the man and girl stand out, this time in a non-Western art gallery.[107] The cases in the "Makers" section do not have titles to influence visitors' interpretations of the items on display. The objects are generously spaced out, and the labels are discreet, placed at knee height, focusing attention on the aesthetic forms of the objects, reminiscent of the "Cultures Gallery" (Figure 3-3 - Figure 3-31). The "Makers" wall text panel, tucked around the side of the lift explains:

> Each object in this Gallery stands as a tribute to the skill and invention of the makers or workshops that produced them. They were made at different times, came from many different places and have had different uses […]. Although the makers were often well known within their communities most collectors did not record their names.[108]

One of five categories is detailed on every object label, which indicates the route of acquisition of the object: "purchased," "donated," "commissioned," "reproduced," or "on loan from."[109] The "Makers" text panel and the acquisition category goes some way to explain to the visitor the presence of the large number of labels which state "maker unrecorded" found throughout the Gallery.

In the "Believers" archway, raised to the waist height of an able bodied adult, is a carving of the Hindu God Ganesh (Figure 3-15 - Figure 3-26) resting on a shelf open to visitors to touch, "[M]ade by Balvendra Elias Brighton UK Europe", commissioned in 1997 (Figure 3-28), this carving faces a 2nd-4th century sculpture of Buddha under the protection of a glass

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[106] "Untitled artwork Sabah Naim" object label.

[107] Sabah Naim's artwork was added to the "James Green Gallery of World Art" in 2009.

[108] "Makers," in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, text panel.

[109] "Purchased;" "donated;" "commissioned;" "reproduced;" or "on loan from." In James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, object label.

case where the "Maker is unrecorded".[110] The elephant god is brightly lit, while Buddha has a single spotlight resting on him that pushes away the shadows that fall heavily in the archway. The emphasis is placed on the users of the objects on display in the "Believers" section through the case titles. In a sweeping glance it is apparent that each of the five cases in view has a large text panel presented inside the display, each of which starts "Used by" (Figure 3-16). The display to the right, which travels the length of this section of the Gallery, is titled "Used by Buddhists in Burma Myanmar"; to the left are three displays: "Used by Hindu families in Brighton"; "Used by Aboriginal people in Australia"; "Used by Igbo people in Nigeria".[111] In the centre is a case with rows of Chinese deity figures titled "Used by believers in China" (Figure 3-17). A more recent display positioned behind the Chinese deities, installed in 2009, moves away from the "Used by" trend and the large text panel is titled "The arts and beliefs of the Amazeigh people, North Africa".[112] A Hindu Shrine rests in the display "Used by Hindu families in Brighton". The text panel tells the visitor that the shrine was decorated by the local Gujararati community. Electric candles flicker their artificial flames placed to the left and to the right of the 19th century alter. Garlands, coins, silks, textiles, bronze, alabaster and soapstone deities, and plastic bracelets and flowers adorn the shrine (Figure 3-18 - Figure 3-19 - Figure 3-20).

The shredded bark of the initiation figure from the Bark Islands, in the Pacific, stands opposite the Maori people's ancestor carving, which is cast into darkness, its spotlight blown. The figure's large face peeks through the shadows marking the archway between "Believers" and "Collectors". Next, the contributions of six collectors are presented. "Melton Prior (1845-1910)"

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[110] "Ganesh," in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, object label; "Buddha," in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, object label.

[111] "Used by Buddhists in Burma Myanmar"; "Used by Hindu families in Brighton"; "Used by Aboriginal people in Australia"; "Used by Igbo people in Nigeria"; "Used by believers in China". In James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, text panel.

[112] "The arts and beliefs of the Amazeigh people, North Africa", in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, text panel.

features in the display on the left; "Mary-Clare Adam (b1945)" in the cases to the right; and "Fredrick William Lucas (1842 - 1932)" in the exhibits straight ahead.[113] Round the corner of the Prior display the contributions of "James Henry Green (1893-1975)"[114] are shown, which include a database of 2000 images taken in Burma, many by Green between 1918 and 1935, a number by Hkanhpa Tu Sadan in 1998 and the rest by Saw Loe Ehsoe also in 1998 (Figure 3-21). Subsequent objects collected during periods of research that Green's posthumous charitable trust has funded are also presented. "Thomas Joshua Alldridge (1847-1916)" and "Sheila Paine"[115] complete the named collectors exhibited in this section positioned opposite the James Green display cases. Paine who is a recent edition, added in 2009, does not have a text panel dedicated to her; her introduction is provided on one half of an object label. No birth date is detailed moving away from the format of all the other collectors' plaques. The cases at the far end of the Gallery form the temporary exhibition area. In the next section of this chapter the significant influences on the 2002 gallery redevelopment will be discussed.

Practices of inclusion

Elizabeth Dell, Keeper of Non-Western Art (circa 1996 - 2005), led the curation of the 2002 Gallery redevelopment. Two distinct imperatives impacted upon the redisplay, the first of which can be defined as inclusive museum practices involving local ethnic minority communities and individuals from source communities. The second influence was the continued categorisation of the collections as art. This redisplay was part of the large scale outreach and regeneration projects of the Museum as a whole. Toni Parker, formerly an Assistant Curator of World Art at Brighton

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[113] "Melton Prior (1845-1910)"; "Mary-Clare Adam (b1945)"; "Fredrick William Lucas (1842 - 1932)". In James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, text panel.

[114] "James Henry Green (1893-1975)", in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, text panel.

[115] "Thomas Joshua Alldridge (1847-1916)" in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, text panel; "Sheila Paine", in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, object label.

Museum and Art Gallery, notes: "[o]ne of the key aims of this redevelopment was to promote inclusion and improve access in all its forms: physical, intellectual and cultural."[116] The Hindu Shrine Project displayed in the "Believers" section of the 2002 gallery redisplay occurred because of this attention to inclusive museum practice. Parker states: "[t]he partnership between the Museum and Brighton and Hove's Gujarati community, which was the basis for the Hindu Shrine Project, was one of several initiatives that aimed to engage local community members with the Museum and its collections."[117] In a special redevelopment issue of *The Royal Pavilion, Libraries and Museums Review*, in October 2003 this new inclusive practice is emphasized:

> A new approach has been adopted in these galleries that show objects from the World Art collections, not only in display and interpretation of objects but also in the unprecedented extent of community involvement. The dazzling appearance of the Hindu shrine is the product of a long-standing partnership with members of Brighton and Hove's Hindu community who came to the Museum to dedicate and decorate it.[118]

A number of other methods have been incorporated into the redisplay in order to actively include source communities, specifically through a limited number of quotes and a series of photographs. The quotes introduce the words of the originating community, identified by speech marks and the name of the person speaking. All of the source community quotes are taken from artists; three out of the five have work on display in the Gallery and the quotes relate directly to the work and are incorporated into the accompanying text labels. This includes Bessie Nakamarra Sims and Sabah Naim in the "Makers" section and Rosie Nangala Flemming in the "Believers" section.[119] The quotes from Sims and Flemming put the creation

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[116] Toni Parker, "A Hindu Shrine at Brighton Museum," *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, No. 16, (2004) 64, print.

[117] Parker, "A Hindu Shrine at Brighton Museum" 64.

[118] Royal Pavilion Museums, "World Art Galleries," *The Royal Pavilion Museums Review*, October. (2003) 2, print.

[119] "Janganpa Jukurrpa," in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, object label; "Untitled artwork Sabah Naim" object label; "Warlukulanh," in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, object label.

stories they depict in their respective paintings into their own words. The short quote from Naim is used to give an insight into her perception of the anonymous people she photographs in the second paragraph of the accompanying label:

> Sabah Naim lives and works in Cairo. She photographs anonymous people on the street and then reclaims them through adding embroidery, paint and other media to her images.
>
> Naim's artwork picks out the individual from the crowd. She describes her subjects as "standing, waiting…for an unexpected answer."[120]

The artist Galarrwuy Yunupingu is quoted on the label that accompanies Nakamarra Sims work in the "Makers" section and on the large text panel 'Used by Aboriginal people in Australia' in the "Believers" section.[121] His quotes provide an insight into the philosophical approach that underpins the role of painting in Aboriginal society (Figure 3-16-Figure 3-22).

Additional quotes present in the Gallery include a statement from the artist Shirley Chubb on her work *Travel* (1993) on display near the James Green cases and four further quotes in the "Collectors" section two, from collectors Mary-Clare Adam and Thomas Joshua Alldridge and two from the *Illustrated London News,* 1910, on the collector Melton Prior.[122] Four out of the six collectors named in the Gallery have their signatures incorporated into the design of the large text plaque that introduces them and the individual collections specifically: Mary-Clare Adam; Fredrick William Lucas; Thomas Joshua Alldridge; and James Henry Green (Figure 3-23). In addition, photographs support visual repatriation of the collections in the "Believers" and "Collectors" sections of the Gallery. There are eight images in the "Believers" section and twenty-two in the "Collectors" section plus the

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[120] "Untitled artwork Sabah Naim" object label.

[121] "Janganpa Jukurrpa" object label; "Used by Aboriginal people in Australia" text panel.

[122] "Travel," in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, object label; "Mary-Clare Adam (b.1945)" text panel; "Thomas Joshua Alldridge (1847-1916)" text panel; "Melton Prior (1845-1910)" text panel; "Consulting the map of Zululand," in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, object label.

2000 photographs on the touch screen database in the Gallery (Figure 3-21). In the Green exhibits, as previously noted, objects from James Henry Green's collection from the first part of the 19th century are exhibited alongside objects collected during periods of research Green's posthumous charitable trust has funded in the 1990s. In the last paragraph the introduction to the Green cases states: "The original Green collection has inspired contemporary research and collecting in the Kachin state."[123] Images are notably used to provide a visual comparison of clothing trends and ceremonial traditions from the early 19th century and the 1990s in these cases. In addition the process of weaving is signified in one image, which features Shadan Ja Raw the named maker of the sample cloth from the Kachin state, collected in 1996, on display (Figure 3-24 - Figure 3-25).[124] Seemingly where known, images are presented with the name of the person who took the photograph and holds the copyright of the image. However the names are not provided of the Museum staff that collected the items on display in the fieldtrips in 1996, 1997 and 1999, Elizabeth Dell and Sandra Dudley. This shows some inconsistency regarding the process of naming collectors in the "Collectors" section of the Gallery.[125] This practice of not naming Museum staff that collected objects on display demonstrates the absorption of individuals' contributions into the un-named institutional voice prevalent in the ethnographic gallery space. The un-named institutional voice is going to be discussed further in Chapter 4. To accompany the Kachin State Textiles fieldwork Dell and Dudley produced a substantial write up of the research trips held in the Museum's archive titled the *Kachin Textiles Project*, which is not mentioned in the permanent display of the items collected. This omission highlights an additional challenge faced by the Museum to provide visitors with access to the current research that underpins the collections, even if that means just

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[123] "James Henry Green (1893-1975)" text panel.

[124] "Sample cloth," in James Green Gallery of World Art, *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*, object label.

[125] In addition Dell and Dudley produced a substantial write up of this research trip held in the Museum's archive titled the *Kachin Textiles Project*, which is not mentioned in the display of the items collected. Elizabeth Dell and Sandra Dudley, *Kachin Textiles Project* (Brighton: n.p., c.1999) print.

acknowledging that it exists in the display so that the visitor can then request it. If copies of unpublished and published research on the collection combined with the documentation of related temporary exhibitions[126] were kept in the Brighton Museum's History Centre it would greatly support the visitors' intellectual access to the collections.

The presentation of 'world art'

Defining ethnographic collections as art explicitly in 2002 is a continuation of the 1994 redisplay approach championed by Anthony Shelton. The Gallery title, the generous space between the objects and the lighting all encourage the visitor to reflect upon the aesthetic form of the object. Julia Tanner, Curator at Haslemere Educational Museum, in her review of the 1994 "James Green Gallery of World Art" highlights a number of critical issues regarding this positioning of the collections as art, which contrasts with the characteristically ethnographic content of the labels:

> [T]he gallery's title unequivocally introduces the objects as 'Art', whilst panels and labelling provide contextual ethnographic information. However, there is no formalized discussion of these types of presentation within the gallery. Instead, an artistic presentation is suggested through the soft spotlighting of objects, and the careful distancing between items and labels that are spatially disassociated from their subjects. In this manner, the visitor is prompted to appreciate an object independently for its aesthetic qualities alone. Conversely, the detailed text panels and individual labels set the objects in a factual and ethnographic context. Given the title of the gallery and the subject of the displays, these two approaches might be helpfully debated within the exhibition space.[127]

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[126] A temporary exhibition titled "Collecting textiles and their stories" was on display in the James Green Gallery of World Art at Brighton Museum from May 2002 - May 2003, which presented a breadth of material about this collecting project. Access to documentation of the temporary exhibition including leaflets produced, content of text panels, labels and photographs of the exhibits or a list of items on display would provide further insight into the collections on display and support visitors' interests into the collections.

[127] Julia Tanner, "The James Green Gallery of World Art. The Brighton Museum and Art Gallery," *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, Volume 17 (2005) 266-268, print.

This absence of debate regarding the contrasting mobilization of aesthetic value and ethnographic value generates a number of paradoxical issues. The title of the Gallery and its designation of the collections on display as art clearly does' not remove the colonial past of the large majority of the items on display. Objects donated by colonialists are shown with items on loan from other collections and those purchased by the Museum. Labels that state "maker unrecorded" are presented alongside contemporary artists work commissioned by the Museum. This mobilizes a complex set of issues regarding on going contact histories and contact relations with source communities, none of which are discussed in the Gallery.

The Hindu Shrine Project

The Hindu Shrine Project features in the "Believers" section of the "James Green Gallery of World Art". The project saw the commissioning of Balavendra Elias to work in consultation with the Gujarati community to carve a donation box and three domes to go on top of an existing 19th century shrine held in the collection (Figure 3-26). The Gujarati community also made garlands, jewellery and clothes for the deities, dressed the shrine, and contributed to a booklet on Hinduism, all of which were placed on permanent display (Figure 3-29 - Figure 3-30).[128] The partnership between Brighton Museum and the local Gujarati community dates back to the "India in Brighton" project and the resulting exhibition of the same name from 19 October 1997- 25 January 1998.[129] The Museum commissioned Balavendra Elias to carve a statue of Ganesh for this 1997 exhibition. The Ganesh statue is on display in the 2002 exhibition and the accompanying "Ganesh" label usefully makes reference to this previous exhibition, which indirectly shows the longevity of the contact relationship between the

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[128] Parker, "A Hindu Shrine at Brighton Museum" 65.

[129] For more information on the project and subsequent exhibition see, Caroline Cook, "Brighton Marks India's 50th Anniversary of Independence," *The Royal Pavilion Museums Review*, April. (1998) 4-5; Caroline Cook, "Report on the 'India in Brighton' Project September 1997 – June 1998," (Brighton: n.p.,1998) print; Martin, "Outreach case study" 85-86.

Museum and the local Hindu community. The exhibition celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of India's independence from British colonial rule.[130]

In 1999 influenced by the working relationship between the Gujarati community and the Museum established in 1997, a research and collection project of Gujarati textiles occurred. The project lead was Caroline Cook, Assistant Keeper of Non-Western Art at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery. Cook highlights in her report that the focus on Indian textiles was a response to the existing collections. For there was a limited number of Indian textiles held in the Museum compared to a substantial range of Indian material culture, this new collection would also complement the strength of the Green collection of Kachin state textiles, from Burma.[131] The focus on Gujarat arose from Cooks' involvement with the Gujarati community through her supervision of Brighton Museum and Art Gallery's outreach programme since her appointment in 1996.[132] In January 1999 Cook went on a collection expedition to India made possible by her community engagement work in which she visited the friends and families of the people she had been working with at the Museum to aid her in the collection of Gujarat textiles.[133] She states:

> The opportunity to visit Gujarat, and extend my relationships with people I know through my work in Brighton, to their friends and families in India, was an exciting possibility. […]. While in India I wanted to visit Hindu temples, and see domestic shrines in family homes, so that I could visualise how members of the community working on this project intend the Museum's shrine to look. […] I chose to spend my time in Bombay, Ahmedabad, Bhuj (Kutch), Rajkot, and Jamnagar. Friends and families of people I know in Brighton live in all of these places, and conveniently each is also a centre for different textile styles.[134]

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[130] Parker, "A Hindu Shrine at Brighton Museum" 64.

[131] Caroline Cook, "Report on study trip to India January 1999" (Brighton: n.p., 1999) 2, print.

[132] Cook, "Report on study trip to India" 2.

[133] Cook, "Report on study trip to India" 3.

[134] Cook, "Report on study trip to India" 3.

Cook completed a twenty-three page report of the fieldwork in February 1999. This associated fieldwork and collecting, linked to the Gujarat community involved in The Hindu Shrine Project presented in the 2002 Gallery, is not referred to in the permanent display. Consequently visitors do not know of the use of local source communities' friends and families in the research and collection activity of the Museum.

Following the "India in Brighton" exhibition and amidst further community consultation, Toni Parker notes it was suggested that a shrine be put on permanent display at the Museum. As a result the presence of a shrine was integrated into the new plans for the re-display of ethnography in Brighton Museum.[135] Parker highlights that the intention was to actually create "a religious space – a Hindu shrine"[136] within the "James Green Gallery of World Art."

The Hindu Shrine Project invited people who had domestic shrines in their homes to come and decorate the 19th century shrine. An inter-generational textiles project was run that led to the making of garlands, jewellery and clothes for the deities on the shrine. Handling sessions took place at the museum and community venues to select objects for display on the shrine. As a consequence of the handling sessions several objects were reinterpreted and previously unidentified deities were named and interpretations offered, contributing narratives with clear ethnographic value.[137] These interpretative contributions are not emphasized or even directly acknowledged within the display and as a consequence the opportunity to mobilize these respective voices within this exhibit is not taken. Instead, this information is absorbed by the museum and expressed through the un-named institutional voice. In this instance, consultation with source communities maintained established museum practices as opposed

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[135] Parker, "A Hindu Shrine at Brighton Museum" 64.

[136] Parker, "A Hindu Shrine at Brighton Museum" 64.

[137] Parker, "A Hindu Shrine at Brighton Museum" 64.

to changing them.[138] This is a missed opportunity to show visitors the active process of constructing interpretations and perpetuates the privileging of the institutional voice. This perhaps reflects the fact that direct representation of source community voices was less developed at the time. The "Rekindle" series, displayed in 2003 at Manchester Museum discussed in Chapter 4, can be usefully considered as a more sophisticated expression of this museum activity in England.

Through the process of involving source communities in decorating the shrine Parker states, "the museum hoped to ensure an accurate and contemporary representation of a Hindu shrine, and one which the local community would use and view as sacred."[139] The accuracy or level of authenticity with which the people involved were allowed to decorate the shrine was fundamentally compromised and controlled by the museums conservation practice. Ordinarily, a Hindu shrine is kept in pristine condition, painted and redecorated regularly, but the museum's conservation policy actively prohibited the 19th century shrine's peeling paint from being re-painted, an issue of contention between the museum and the Gujarati community. This compromise is not communicated in the display; on the contrary a notion of the authentic is expressed in the text plaque by stating that the shrine "has been dressed by members of the Hindu Women's Group and Hindu Elders' Group."[140] Compromise is an essential part of any collaborative project and it would have brought an interesting level of critical dialogue and transparency to the construction of the display for the visitor to be given an insight into the conflict between conservation and authentic practices. As it stands the bare wood is a dominant feature of the commissioned Ganesh Elm carving, the donation box and the three domes all of which would usually be elaborately painted,

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[138] For further discussion on community engagement that maintains institutional practices instead of changing them see, Clifford, *Routes*; Michael M. Ames, "How to decorate a house: the renegotiation of cultural representations at the University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology," Peers and Brown *Museums and Source Communities* 171-180.

[139] Parker, "A Hindu Shrine at Brighton Museum" 64.

[140] "Used by Hindu Families in Brighton," text panel.

but this is not explained in the display (Figure 3-26 - Figure 3-27 - Figure 3-29). The Gujarati community also created outfits for the deities as part of an intergenerational textiles project (Figure 3-19). This is not explicitly detailed and only one person, Mrs Mohini Bansal, is acknowledged for making the silk decorations and costumes for the deities in the back of the booklet accompanying the exhibit. The information supplied in the sixteen-page booklet titled *Hinduism in Brighton* [141] includes information on private domestic Hindu practice and information on seven Hindu deities.

The Gujarati community also donated decorations and deities for the exhibit, complementing the existing collection of deities held within the museum, some of which belonged to Hindu soldiers that convalesced in the Royal Pavilion after the First World War. The interesting provenance of the deities was, however, not illuminated through the labelling of the shrine. A curatorial decision was made not to include individual object labels "as it was felt that this would detract from the visual and spiritual impact of the shrine." [142] This curatorial rationale is not explained in the display. In the context of the ethnographic exhibition where the majority of objects are accompanied by individual labels this decision might well lead visitors to wonder about the provenance of the objects and to question whether the contents are important enough to have labels. Unfortunately the collaborative nature of the Hindu Shrine Project and the critical dialogues that arose between Brighton Museum and the Gujarati community are not elements that featured heavily in the curation of the display or the accompanying literature, actively silencing these important dialogues for the visitor.[143]

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[141] Caroline Cook, *Hinduism in Brighton* (Brighton: Royal Pavilion, Libraries & Museums Brighton & Hove Council, 2001) print.

[142] Parker, "A Hindu Shrine at Brighton Museum" 65.

[143] The analysis of the Hindu Shrine Project at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery is developed further in an artwork to be exhibited in March 2011 (24, 25 and 26) at the *Picture This Conference* at Sussex University.

Conclusion

Within Brighton Museum and Art Gallery, from the mid 1990s to the late 1990s and onwards, artists involvement in the World Art collection has changed. The commissioning of artists to contribute temporary exhibitions that are critical and questioning of museum practices, encouraging visitors to, at best, think and reflect upon the collections and practices of viewing have halted. Whilst the commissioning and purchasing of source community artists' work to display in the permanent Gallery as 'World Art', part ethnographic artefact part art object, has continued. Notably this practice has continued even though the subtleties and value of this curatorial approach, used in the 1994 redisplay, went unnoticed by a senior keeper, in his review of the exhibition. This in turn creates some doubt as to whether the visitor would comprehend the curatorial intentions pertaining to the critical dialogue about "the problem of objectification"[144] the curator hoped to emphasise. However, this practice of display has carried on and developed through the incorporation of commissioned artists working with particular groups of source communities through the Museum's outreach programme, to in part respond to "the problem of objectification"[145] and the call from people to engage in the process of self-representation. This activity has come to a conclusion in the form of the Hindu Shrine exhibit in the "Believers" section in the 2002 Gallery, in which the artist Balvendra Elias and the local Hindu community have been involved in the production of artefacts for display in the form of a Ganesh statue, a donation box and three carved domes, as well as dressing a Shrine in the permanent exhibition. There have been other artistic commissions involving the World

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[144] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 4.

[145] Shelton, "Re-presenting Non-Western Art" 4.

Art collection but the permanent Gallery has remained unchanged by these in the long term.[146]

The conflicting ideas I have highlighted in this analysis of the Gallery redisplays and The Hindu Shrine Project between conservation and living practice, community engagement and evidence of contribution, named interpretations and un-named institutional interpretations are indicative of the merging of museum practices that have occurred throughout the New Labour administration from 1997 to 2010. Museum ethnographers' work with source communities, largely developed from the ground up in Britain, can be seen to have adapted and combined with New Labour's cultural diversity policies, generated from the top-down, the former evolved from and influenced by international museum best practice and the growing academic field of museum studies, the latter from a government's theoretical agenda. The expectation for cultural diversity to be embedded in museum activity through, community engagement, collecting living cultures and diversifying workforces discussed in Chapters 1 and 2 in reference to MLA, MA and DCMS documents, creates a distinct political context in which Brighton's outreach work fits. The appointment at Brighton Museum of an outreach worker funded in part by the Single Regeneration Budget and a curatorial assistant responsible for carrying out outreach work with the local Hindu Community is indicative of this.

The practical application of cultural diversity into museum practice clearly relies upon individual museum professionals' and institutions' particular interpretations of policies and guidance. The exhibition case studies addressed in this chapter and the next reflect the evolution of this cultural

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[146] The following two projects Twelve (2005-2006) and On the Pull (2008) have continued the process of working with artists but have not resulted in any additions to the permanent display in the "James Green Gallery of World Art". Some objects and text from Twelve were placed in the permanent Gallery whilst the project was on and various items were acquired and are now in the World Art collection. Helen Mears, message to the author, 21 Jan. 2010, email. For further information on the projects see, "Twelve," *Royal Pavilion Museums & Libraries*, Brighton, Royal Pavilion, Museums & Libraries, 1 Nov. 2011, web; "On the Pull: 'Opening up collections' case study," Brighton: Royal Pavilion & Museums, [2008], PDF file.

diversity museum practice, which seems to in part combine museum practice with policies. The representation of cultures within this period has become an issue of access, a case of responding to cultural diversity remedied by involvement and engagement of people classified by ethnicity and marginalized status, all of which fundamentally maintains and cements a division of minority and majority. For policies and museum practices continue to use and perpetuate these categories. Marginal, ethnic minority status permits access to museum collections, yet, within the confines of an initiative or project.

Visitors could be given much more of an insight into the dialogues that occur between the museum and project participants, conveying a transparency regarding the construction of collection interpretations but they are not. Without this transparency the un-named institutional voice can ultimately appear to absorb and express the interpretative contributions provided by people targeted in outreach projects. In the case of The Hindu Shrine Project the knowledge and understanding provided by participants on a number of the deities, previously un-named and unknown to the Museum, went unacknowledged within the permanent display.

This chapter has aimed to show that curating projects in ethnographic exhibitions that feature local source communities is complex and important work. The uncomfortable tensions that can arise between the museum and its local communities create the frontline of contemporary ethnographic museum practice and provide an opportunity to reflect ongoing contact relations and histories to visitors.

Figure 3-1 *Map*. Brighton: Brighton Museum & Art Gallery, 2009. Leaflet.

Figure 3-2 Original Brighton Museum & Art Gallery entrance on Church Street. Personal Photograph. 3 Jan. 2011.

Figure 3-3 "The Cultures Gallery" 1994 redisplay. Labels are positioned some distance away from the objects; the case interior and surrounds blend in with the white gallery walls. "The Cultures Gallery." *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*. Brighton. 1994-2002. Exhibition. Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove. JPEG file.
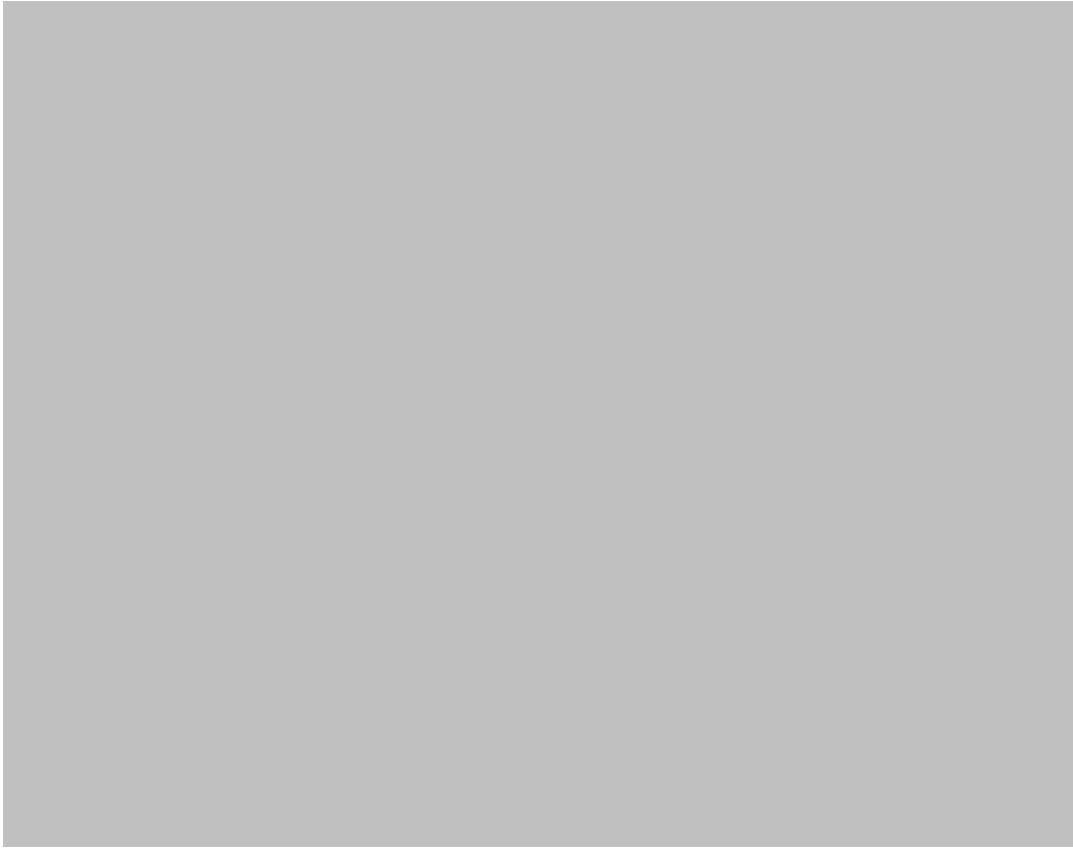
Figure 3-4 "The Green Gallery of Non Western Art & Archaeology," 1994 redisplay. The black surrounds of the cases stand out against the white walls of the gallery. "The Green Gallery of Non-Western Art & Archaeology." *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*. Brighton. 1994-2002. Exhibition. Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove. JPEG file.

Figure 3-5 1994 redisplay case detail, the labels are positioned very close to the objects on display. "The Green Gallery of Non-Western Art & Archaeology." Exhibition. Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove. JPEG file.

Figure 3-6 Renee Stout, Fetish No.3, 1989. Shelton, Fetishism 101.

Figure 3-7 Current entrance to Brighton Museum & Art Gallery opened in 2002. Personal Photograph. 27 Jun. 2005.

Figure 3-8 Current reception area at Brighton Museum & Art Gallery opened in 2002. Personal photograph. 27 Jun. 2005.

Figure 3-9 The entrance to the "James Green Gallery of World Art" from the "Twentieth Century Art and Design Gallery," next to reception since the extension opened in 2002. Personal photograph. 11 Jan. 2011.

Figure 3-10 View of the length of the "James Green Gallery of World Art," following the 2002 redisplay, from the "Makers" section through "Believers" to "Collectors". "James Green Gallery of World Art." *Brighton Museum and Art Gallery*. Brighton. 2002-. Exhibition. Personal photograph. 27 Jun. 2006.

Figure 3-11 "Makers" gallery signage and "Eagle Totem." "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 23 Jun. 2006.

Figure 3-12 Colonialist officials and Australian Aboriginal creation story painting by Bessie Nakamarra Sims. "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Jan. 2011.
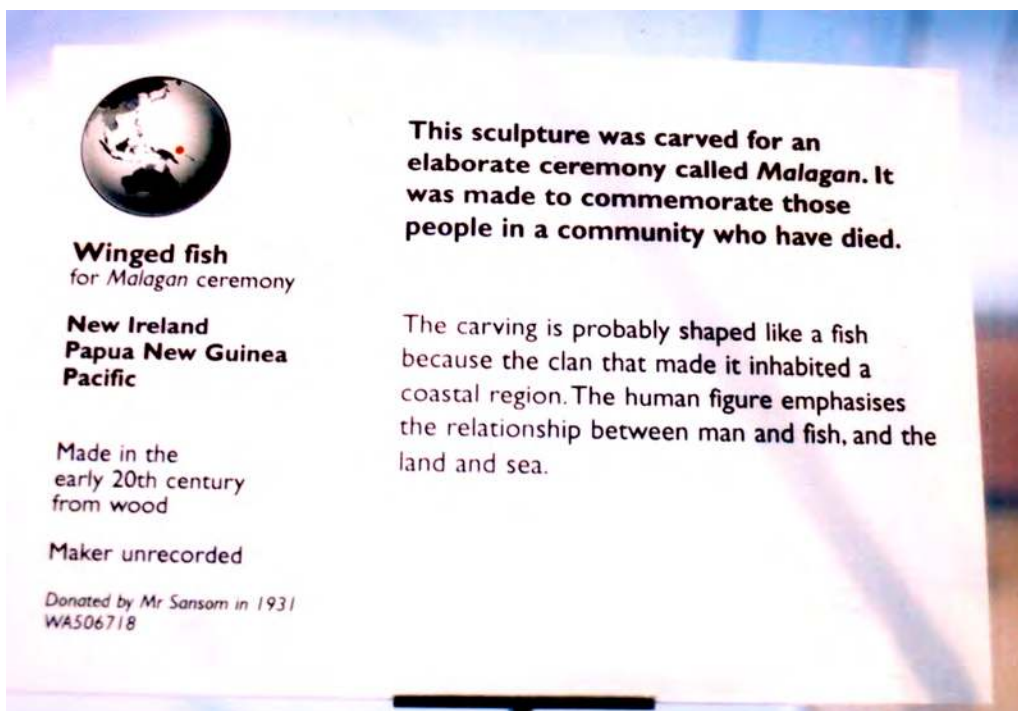
Figure 3-13 "Winged fish" object label, example of "Maker unrecorded" inscription. "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Jan. 2011.

Figure 3-14 Sabah Naim, "Untitled artwork", Cairo (2008). "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Jan. 2011.

Figure 3-15 "Believers" section. "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 23 Jun. 2006.

USED BY ABORIGINAL PEOPLE IN AUSTRALIA

"When we paint, whether it is on our bodies for ceremony or on bark or on canvas for the market – we are not just painting for fun or for profit. We are painting as we have always done to demonstrate our continuing link with our country and the rights and responsibilities we have to it. Furthermore, we paint to show the rest of the world that we own this country, and that the land owns us."

Galarrwuy Yunupingu, 1993
Yirrkala, Australia

The patterns in Aboriginal art are a complex combination of symbols.

The designs tell of legendary journeys made by the Aboriginal ancestors - journeys that shaped the Australian landscape at the beginning of time.

These creation stories are based on a close relationship between the land and the people. This continues to be central to Aboriginal identity. Artistic expression is one way that new generations identify with this. The stories are retold in images, song, music and dance.

Some parts of the stories are secret, all are sacred.

Northern Territory landscape, Australia 1995
© Tamara Lucas

Figure 3-16 "Used by Aboriginal People in Australia" text panel includes quote in red from Galarrwuy Yunupingu. "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11. Jan. 2011.

Figure 3-17 "Used by Believers in China" text panel and deity figures. "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Jan. 2011.

Figure 3-18 Hindu Shrine: deities, decoration, coins and petals. "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 9 Apr. 2010.

Figure 3-19 Hindu Shrine: deities dressed in hand-crafted outfits made by the local Gujarati community as part of the Hindu Shrine project. "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 9 Apr. 2010.

Figure 3-20 The Hindu Shrine exhibit. "The James Green Gallery of World Art."
Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Apr. 2010.

Figure 3-21 Touch screen photographic archive. "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 23 Jun. 2006.
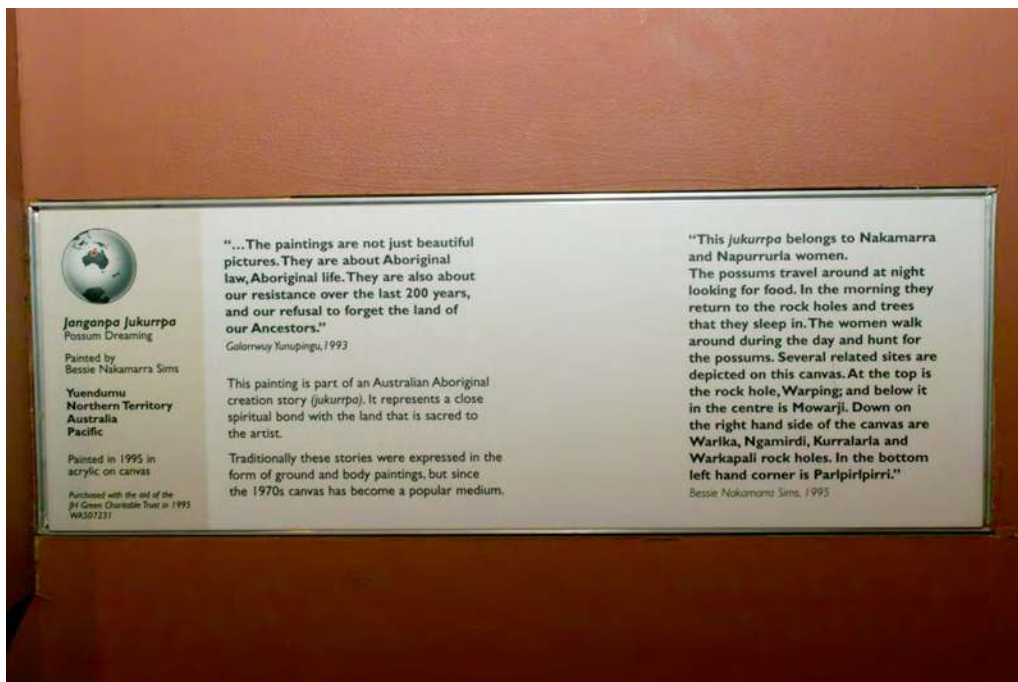
Figure 3-22 Quotes from Galarrwuy Yunupingu on the left and Bessie Nakamarra Sims on the right, on the object label for Sim's painting shown in (Figure 3-12). "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Jan. 2011.

MARY-CLARE ADAM
(b. 1945)

"The Sepik River in the '70s was a world so different from anything else I'd known, yet somehow I fitted in. Being a part of this and attending ceremonies such as yam cult displays, being allowed in the spirit houses to talk to newly initiated young men, to watch clay pots being made, masks carved, all inspired me to collect. Apart from wanting to own a beautiful work of art, such as the Gogodala pieces, my chief motivation for collecting was to hold on to a way of life I had loved so much."
Mary-Clare Adam, 1994

Mary-Clare Adam grew up in Australia and trained as an anthropologist. During the 1970s she lived in Papua New Guinea, studying the decoration used on ceremonial and everyday objects. She also worked for the Papua New Guinea Government collecting artefacts for the country's museums.

In 1995 Mary-Clare Adam sold part of her personal collection to Brighton Museum. This collection is a record of her time in Papua New Guinea, and of the relationships she established with people there.

Mary-Clare Adam with ancestor figures and their maker.
Sepik River, Papua New Guinea 1970s
© Mary-Clare Adam

Figure 3-23 "Mary-Clare Adam" text panel includes collector's signature top left, quote highlighted in red and image. "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Jan. 2011.
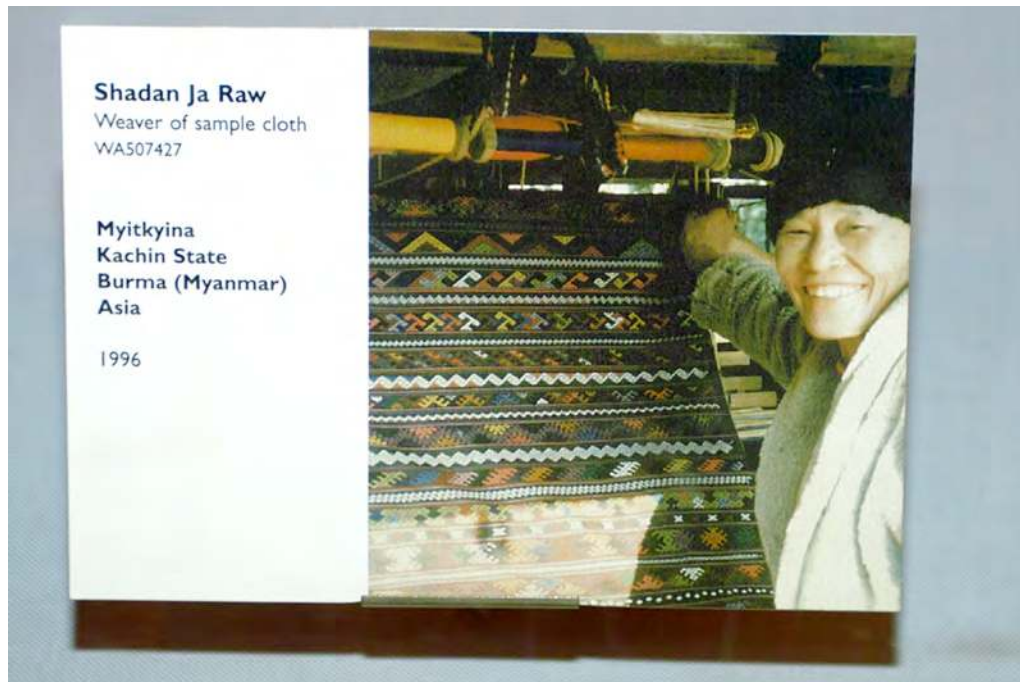
Figure 3-24 Photograph of the weaver of the sample cloth exhibited in the
"Collectors" section. "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal
photograph. 11 Jan. 2011.

Figure 3-25 The sample cloth is exhibited along the back of the case, the photograph of the weaver is shown in the bottom right. "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Jan. 2011.

Figure 3-26 Ganesh, donation box and the domes located on top of the 19th
century Hindu Shrine, carved by Balavendra Elias. "The James Green Gallery of
World Art." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 9 Apr. 2010.

Figure 3-27 Close up of Ganesh carving, left unpainted due to the Museum's conservation practices. "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 23 Jun. 2006.
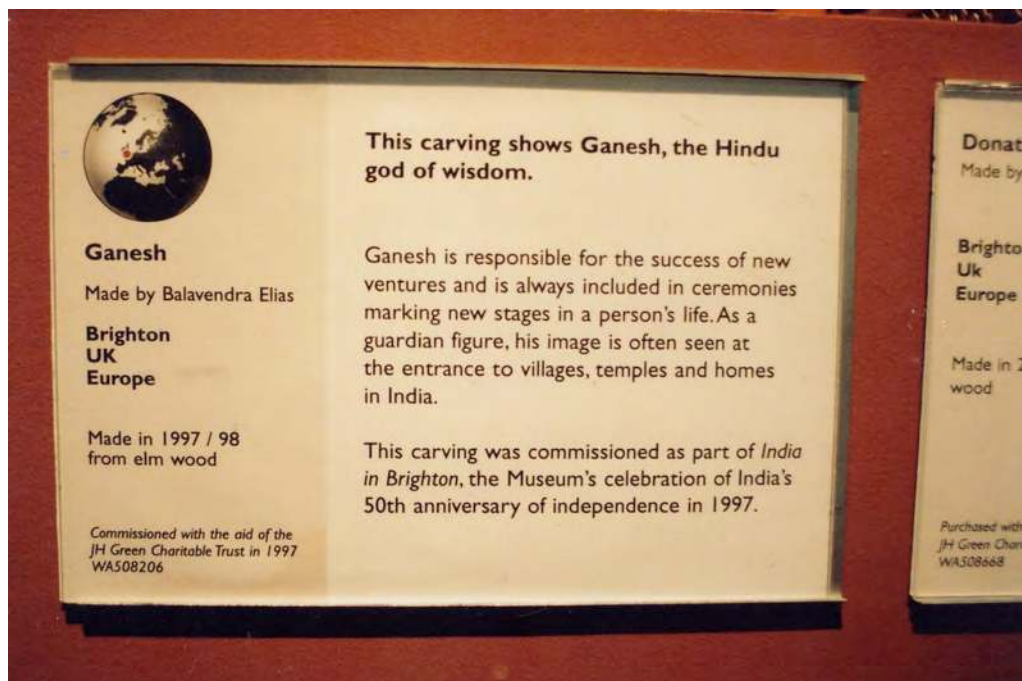
Figure 3-28 "Ganesh" object label. "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal Photograph. 23 Jun. 2006.

Figure 3-29 Deities in hand-crafted outfits made by the local Gujarati community as part of the Hindu Shrine Project. The 19th century shrine has been left unpainted adhering to the Museum's conservation practices and not traditional Hindu practices. "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 9 Apr. 2010.

Figure 3-30 *Hinduism in Brighton,* Hindu Shrine exhibit booklet. "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 9 Apr. 2010.

Figure 3-31 Labels shown positioned some distance away from the objects. "The James Green Gallery of World Art." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Jan. 2011.

Chapter 4 The collection of 'living cultures': redisplaying Manchester Museum's ethnographic collections

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the Manchester Museum, University of Manchester.[1] The Museum is located in the north-west of England in the city of Manchester; it is a regional museum and a university museum, integrated into the University of Manchester. The Museum has a range of collections from the natural sciences and the humanities. The entire holdings of the Museum were Designated in 1997 and pertaining to the Designation Scheme are recognized as being of national and international importance. In the "Designated Collections" document the Manchester Museum collections are listed as "The natural sciences [that] include Botany, Entomology, Geology, Mineralogy and Zoology and the humanities collections [that] comprise Archaeology (Mediterranean, European and Western Asiatic), Egyptology, Ethnology, Numismatics and Archery."[2] My focus is on the Ethnology collection, referred to since 2003 as the 'Living Cultures' collection. The Manchester Museum is one of six museums in the north-west in the Museums, Libraries and Archives Hub, Renaissance North West.[3] The Manchester Museum was founded upon several natural history collections including those of John Leigh Philips, the Manchester Natural History Society, and the Manchester Geological Society.[4]

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[1] The official title of the case study museum is the Manchester Museum, University of Manchester. Online and print marketing of the Museum usually includes the University of Manchester logo and the title Manchester Museum. Through this thesis I will predominantly refer to the abbreviated title, Manchester Museum.

[2] "Designated Collections," *Museums, Libraries and Archives*, Birmingham, Museums, Libraries and Archives, web, 17 July 2010.

[3] "Renaissance North West," *Museums, Libraries and Archives Renaissance North West*, Manchester, Museums, Libraries and Archives, web, 17 July 2010.

[4] Samuel J.M.M. Alberti, *Nature and Culture: Objects, Disciplines and the Manchester Museum* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2009) 10-30, print.

A history of interpretative changes

The following account of the history of Manchester Museum is shaped by the most recent scholarly study of the collections by Samuel Alberti which attends to the first 100 years of the institution. His analysis addresses the development of natural history in the Museum and the emergence of what he calls the cultural collections and the humanities, which saw the shift of Egyptology, Anthropology, Ethnology and Archaeology from science into the cultural realm.[5]

The history of the Manchester Museum could be written as distinct approaches to the interpretation of collections particular to specific periods in time.[6] The changes evident in the redevelopment of the ethnographic displays between 1997 and 2010 can effectively be located within this interpretative history. The origins of the Manchester Museum can be traced back to a single collector of natural history, John Leigh Philips (1761-1814).[7] Philips' collection and display, "juxtaposed natural objects and antiquities, fine art and printed material, demonstrating the diversity of natural history."[8] The display of man-made things as well as natural specimens reflects an approach to natural history particular to the 18th century, predating the distinctions of nature and culture that occurred in the latter stages of the 19th century.[9]

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[5] Alberti *Nature and Culture* 71-83.

[6] Michel Foucault's comprehension of knowledge underpins my approach to the changes in interpretation at Manchester Museum. Knowledge according to Foucault is a product of a particular period in history and is also importantly culturally specific, which fundamentally brings into question the idea of essential and universal truth. Foucault refers to classification in its simplest and most complex forms as the order of things; it is understood that through order meaning is created, which is also subject to change and re-interpretation due to the time and place of its formation. Michel Foucault *The Order of Things an Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1970) XV, print.

[7] Alberti, *Nature and Culture* 10.

[8] Alberti, *Nature and Culture* 10.

[9] Alberti, *Nature and Culture* 10.

The evolutionary approach of the first Curator of Collections, William Boyd Dawkins had a profound impact on the interpretation of the collections, evident in the Museum's displays from 1868 right up until 1960. The Museum on Oxford Road commissioned by Owens College (Figure 4-1 - Figure 4-2),[10] was designed by Alfred Waterhouse to reflect William Boyd Dawkins' evolutionary approach to display. The museum was arranged with galleries laid out in a single continuous path up the building, enabling the collections to be viewed as an evolutionary sequence.[11] Dawkins' approach firmly secured a place for ethnology and archaeology within the natural history museum. This was, however, within the context of colonial attitudes that rested on the assumption that by studying contemporary 'savage' cultures gaps could be filled in Europe's own ancient past,[12] locating non-European cultures firmly behind Europe's on the evolutionary scale, articulating distinct colonial prejudices.[13]

In the early 20th century Manchester Museum's collection experienced a period of tremendous growth that reflected the geographical and administrative expansion of the British Empire.[14] The humanities collections came into being in this period due to a series of influential donors[15] including the Rochdale businessman Charles Heape[16] and the local yarn merchant Jessie Haworth. Heape and Haworth's considerable donations to these collections, amongst others, meant it was impossible to exclusively

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[10] Owens College became the University of Manchester.

[11] Alberti, *Nature and Culture* 24.

[12] Alberti, *Nature and Culture* 65.

[13] The division of nature and culture relating to the Manchester Museum's collections are detailed extensively in Samuel J.M.M. Alberti's text: *Nature and Culture: Objects, Disciplines and the Manchester Museum*. The first hundred years of the Museum from 1890 to 1990 are discussed within the broader context of disciplinary transformations between the two poles of nature and culture. See the following references analysing the use of museum exhibitions to articulate colonial attitudes to non-Western cultures: Coombes, *Reinventing Africa*; Pearce, *On Collecting;* Shelton, *Collectors: Expressions of Self and Other*.

[14] Alberti, *Nature and Culture* 94.

[15] Alberti, *Nature and Culture* 95.

[16] Alberti, *Nature and Culture* 95.

continue Dawkins' approach of placing objects from these collections throughout the Museum to articulate developments in human civilisation. Haworth made three considerable financial contributions to fund the re-housing of the collections of Egyptology, physical anthropology, ethnology and archaeology in three extensions to the Museum that opened in 1912, 1913[17] and 1927.[18] By 1945 the humanities collections were separated by discipline in the displays. However, the desired visitor walk-through still enforced Dawkins' approach of articulating a scale of civilisation; contemporary 'primitive' cultures led to their perceived equivalent in prehistoric Europe, ending with ancient Mediterranean civilisation.[19] Dawkins' evolutionary approach to the display of the humanities collections continued through the exhibition of general archaeological material until 1960.[20] Samuel Alberti points out this change came "long after academic archaeology and anthropology had moved away from universalist interpretations of material culture."[21] This illustrates an ongoing issue for museums in relation to the lag that can develop between intellectual developments and permanent museum displays.

Redisplaying the ethnographic collections 1995, 2003, and 2009

In this chapter I have focused on three redisplays involving the Manchester Museum ethnographic collections, "Explorers and Encounters" in 1995, "Living Cultures" in 2003 and "The Manchester Museum Gallery" and "Your Museum, Your Stories" in 2009. The 1995 redisplay has been included in order to consider the extent to which changes in the highest level of government can effect, or otherwise, museum practice. The 1995, 2003

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[17] Alberti, *Nature and Culture* 69.

[18] Alberti, *Nature and Culture* 73.

[19] Alberti, *Nature and Culture* 65-66.

[20] In 1960 James Forde-Johnston in charge of the ethnography and prehistoric archaeology collections since 1958, replaced the general archaeology collection installed on the second floor of the 1927 Haworth extension, still displayed using Dawkin's evolutionary approach, with the Japanese collection donated by Robert Wylie Lloyd. Alberti, *Nature and Culture* 77.

[21] Alberti, *Nature and Culture* 77.

and 2009 redisplays are important markers in time for the overall context within which curators have to work and reinterpret policy.

"Explorers and Encounters" 1995 redisplay

In 1995 George Bankes curated the first substantial redisplay of the ethnographic collections at Manchester Museum since 1958. The redisplay was titled "Explorers and Encounters".[22] Bankes took over the post of keeper of ethnology in 1982 when James Forde-Johnston retired.[23] Bankes' describes the ethnographic exhibition before the 1995 redisplay as being outdated, with a layout reminiscent of an open store, with densely packed objects, and brief labels, with the addition of a number of maps.[24] Bankes points out that Britain's colonial past was evident in the display, describing the exhibition as "very much a product of the British Empire, with 'Colonial' names like 'Ceylon'"[25] still being used (Figure 4-3). With minimal information available through the object labelling, an emphasis was placed on the geographical location of the objects through the presence of maps in the exhibition. A sense of the world in miniature was communicated through the gallery, further contributing to the expression of a colonial display.

The funds for the 1995 redisplay of the collection came from two main sources: £60,000 from the Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund under the Wolfson Scheme in 1993, and £30,000 from the Museum's revenue budget funded by the University of Manchester.[26] The cost of the 1995 redisplay was limited to £90,000 by reusing some of the existing cases from the 1958 "Ethnology" gallery and keeping the design and installation of the gallery predominantly in-house, led by Andy Millward,

[22] The title "Explorers and Encounters" was developed in consultation with Maria Noble, a local community education officer and by the Museums' educational staff; it was based on a section of the National Curriculum at the time: 'Exploration and encounters 1450 to 1550 Key Stage 2'. See George Bankes, "From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters," *Journal of Museum Ethnography,* No 9 (1997): 81.

[23] Alberti, *Nature and Culture*, 79.

[24] Bankes, "From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 79.

[25] Bankes, "From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 79.

[26] Bankes, "From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 79.

Keeper of Display.[27] The renovation proposed involved the refurbishment of the existing showcases, a new layout, cleaning and conservation work of objects to be re-exhibited, and the implementation of technology to control light levels and humidity in the new showcases.[28] Notably, the 1995 redisplay resulted in a considerable decrease in the number of objects on display from 638 to 335.[29]

<u>Visitor feedback</u>

Visitors' feedback was sought and considered when planning the 1995 redisplay. However, visitor surveying was not yet integrated into the core activity of the Museum and left to willing students. This is typical of the approach to visitor surveying at the time, as discussed in Chapter 3 in the section titled "Visitor feedback". Sara Burdett a student at Manchester University on the Art Gallery and Museum Studies Diploma Programme conducted the visitor survey in April 1992 assessing attitudes to the existing 1958 gallery. Bankes' summation of the survey focuses on visitor opinion of the gallery and is notably brief in his report: "[P]eople wanted more information, particularly in the form of videos. They wanted basic ethnographic information and an indication of age, important since the gallery is located next to one on ancient Egypt."[30] The 1995 redisplay of the collection was to encompass more information on the context of the objects than the 1958 display. Based on comparative research Bankes conducted at the Pitt Rivers Museum and the Brighton Museum and Art Gallery, he decided to use a series of themes in the redisplay to develop cross-cultural connections. In Table 2 a selection of the names allocated to displays in the 1958 to 1994 display are presented alongside the 1995 display:

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[27] George Bankes, "From Explorers and Encounters to Living Cultures," *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, No 18 (2006): 32, print.

[28] Bankes, "From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 79.

[29] Bankes, "From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 87.

[30] Bankes, "From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 81.

1958 – 1994 display names	1995 re-display names
African Sculpture	Association and Rituals
The Naga	Musical Instruments
Andaman Islands	Maori of Aotearoa
South African Beadwork	Contact and Tourism
	Collectors and Collections

Table 2 Comparison of display themes from 1958 and 1995 exhibitions[31]

It is possible to see from Table 2 a shift in display approach. In the 1958 to 1994 exhibition specific places and people are focused on. In the 1995 redisplay cross-cultural thematic displays are present alongside 'single people' displays like the 'Maori of Aotearoa' exhibit. The Pitt Rivers Museum inspired Bankes to make cross-cultural connections between similar objects from different cultures around the world, in order to develop the context and meaning of undocumented objects in the collection.[32] Bankes was enthused by the "Brighton Cultures Gallery's use of anthropological themes including '*Association and Gender*'."[33] As a result Bankes stipulates he made the following changes in the redisplay:

> I did make use of *Association* in the *Associations and Rituals* section but felt that *Gender* was best incorporated throughout the gallery with a small 'g' into the artefacts, text and illustrations. Also I wanted to include sections derived from earlier temporary exhibitions at the Manchester Museum, notably *Rattans* (1983), *The Mursi of Ethiopia* (1985), *Musical Instruments of the World* (1988-9), *Aotearoa The Maori Collections at the Manchester Museum* (1990) and *Sanuq and Toltecatl Pre-Columbian Arts of Middle and South America* (1992-3).These earlier exhibitions and other influences led to the installation of cross-cultural sections like *Musical Instruments* and 'single people' displays like the *Maori of Aotearoa.* The MEG [Museum Ethnographers Group] conference on *Anthropology, Tourism and Museums* at Hull in 1992 and my

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[31] Titles of the displays are detailed in: Bankes, "From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 79 and 81.

[32] Bankes, "From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 81.

[33] Bankes, "From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 81.

own interest in Tourist Art prompted the section on *Contact and Tourism*.[34]

It is clear from this quote that Bankes' 1995 redisplay was influenced by three key areas: the curatorial best practice of other regional museums ethnographic departments; the current critical dialogues within the museum ethnographers sector; and the research of the Manchester Museum's ethnographic department present in the temporary exhibits. The incorporation of current research into the permanent display included Manchester University staff activity, specifically social anthropologist David Turton's research on the Mursi of Ethiopia. Bankes stipulates this was done with the intention of providing visitors with an insight into a contemporary anthropologists' work whilst presenting Mursi material culture.[35]

A level of institutional critique was included in the 1995 redisplay. The limitations of the museum to construct cultural identities were mobilized in a display titled "People of Manchester".[36] The case included a Tesco shopping trolley, two football scarves from opposing Manchester teams, a Boddingtons beer can and some examples of Manchester University formal dress (Figure 4-5 - Figure 4-6). Bankes states in his write up of the 1995 redisplay that "[i]t was hoped that this section would suggest to visitors that the selection of objects could only provide a partial picture of contemporary Manchester and of our own society."[37] The case was positioned at the entrance to the gallery, encouraging visitors to view the rest of the Gallery with this notion in mind.[38] He took everyday objects, like the supermarket trolley, a beer can, and the football scarves and made the familiar strange by placing them in a display cabinet in the entrance to the ethnographic gallery, drawing attention to the everyday objects to enable visitors to

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[34]Bankes, "From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 81.

[35] Bankes, "From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 81.

[36] "People of Manchester," in Explorers and Encounters, *Manchester Museum*, text panel.

[37] Bankes, "From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 86.

[38] Bankes , "From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 86.

experience the museum effect. This is a process I implement in my own artwork to encourage visitors to think about the construction of meaning in museums through collection and display practices, which is discussed in Chapter 5.

Source communities: global and local

In the 1995 redisplay consideration was given to the communities from where objects belong on a global and a local level. During the 1990s in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the USA government policies were created in support of the repatriation of cultural property to their respective native populations.[39] Restitution and community consultation were important issues for the sector on an international level. In 1993 the Museum Ethnographers Group annual conference was titled *Museum Ethnography and Communities*[40] reflecting the increasing activity between museum ethnographers and communities. The conference included papers on the process of developing the "Atlantic Slave Trade Gallery" at the Merseyside Maritime Museum, which involved consultation with the local "Black community" and papers on museums working with "indigenous communities."[41] The July 1994 edition of *Museums Journal* focused on the repatriation of human remains responding to the prevalence of the topic for museum professionals.[42] In the same year the Museum Ethnographers Group published revised guidelines "concerning the storage, display, interpretation and return of human remains in ethnographical collections in

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[39] Moira Simpson, "Taxing Returns," *Museums Journal* No 1 January (1996): 19, print.

[40] See George Bankes, "MEG Conference: 'Museum Ethnography and Communities,'" *Journal of Museum Ethnography* No 6 Oxford (1994): 1-6, print.

[41] Bankes, "MEG Conference: 'Museum Ethnography and Communities'" 1.

[42] See Edmund Southworth, "A Special Concern," *Museums Journal*, Vol 94, No 7 (1994): 23-25, print; Moira Simpson, "Burying the Past," *Museums Journal,* Vol 94, No 7 (1994): 28-32, print; N.H Nail, "Treasured Bones," *Museums Journal* Vol 94, No 7 (1994): 32-34, print.

United Kingdom museums."[43] In January 1996 the restitution debate dominated *Museums Journal* again, focusing on the need for open debate and more guidance for curators on the topic.[44]

Bankes was engaged in a number of projects that resulted in the repatriation of human remains that had been held in the Manchester ethnographic collection. These included the repatriation of "a skeleton and two *mokomokai* (tattooed heads) [which] were sent back to New Zealand in 1990."[45] Through involvement with an exhibition at Bury Art Gallery and Museum in 1994 titled, "The First Americans", Bankes came into contact with the All Nations Forum. The All Nations Forum was created to promote the Native American Peoples of North America. A list of North American Indian objects held in Manchester Museum's collections was created so that items could be selected for display in "The First Americans" exhibition. The All Nations Forum was consulted in the selection process and as a result "a pipe bag and two beaded charms containing umbilical cords of babies"[46] were excluded from public display at both Bury Museum and at Manchester Museum because they were considered too personal. Significantly consultation with the All Nations Forum affected what was considered acceptable for public display and what was deemed inappropriate for exhibition.

On a local level opinions were gauged on the 1995 redisplay through the Mancunian umbrella organisation, Broad African Representative Council (BARC), who at the time acted for around 6,000 Africans living in the area.[47] A number of individuals were also consulted at the planning stage of the

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[43] Museum Ethnographers Group, "Professional Guidelines Concerning the Storage, Display, Interpretation and Return of Human Remains in Ethnographical Collections in United Kingdom Museums," *Journal of Museum Ethnography,* No 6, Oxford (1994): 22-24, print.

[44] See, Simpson, "Taxing Returns" 19; David Jones, "Home truths," *Museums Journal* No 1 January (1996): 20-21, print; Christopher Chippindale, "One-way traffic," *Museums Journal* No 1 January (1996): 22-23, print.

[45] Bankes,"From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 82.

[46] Bankes,"From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 84.

[47] Bankes,"From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 82.

gallery redevelopment. Maria Noble was consulted from the Manchester Education Department, experienced in issues surrounding gender and the Black community, and Lance Lewis who taught Black Studies at the Peacock Centre in Manchester was also consulted.[48] An element of the consultation process involved listening to the personal experiences of the consultants regarding the Museum. In the 1995 redisplay report Bankes refers to a discussion he had with Lance Lewis regarding unpleasant childhood memories when visiting the Museum, experiencing racial stereotyping in the displays.[49] A dialogue ensued on how to avoid repeating this type of exhibitionary racism. The consultation process also involved inviting the consultants to view the collections. Bankes highlights a particular instance in which Lance Lewis observed a slide taken by Frank Jolles of Zulu girls wearing their beadwork.[50] Bankes states Lewis thought his community (people of Afro-Caribbean descent) would be interested in the girls' hairstyles and as a result, a photo of this image was included in the beadwork display.[51] A request by Lance Lewis to conduct a blessing ceremony was accommodated after some reticence, and carried out in the gallery on the day it reopened on the 24th October 1995. Although libations had been held in the gallery before[52] Bankes was initially concerned that because the gallery represented so many cultures there was the potential for the Museum to be inundated with requests to carry out blessings. Lewis proposed that this single blessing could be for all the collections on display and so the libation went ahead, carried out by Nkamuhayo a Ugandan man resident in Manchester (Figure 4-8).[53]

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[48] Bankes,"From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 82.

[49] Bankes,"From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 82.

[50] Bankes,"From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 82.

[51] Bankes,"From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 82.

[52] On 23 July 1990 *Ngati Ranana* performed "a pre-dawn blessing of the *taonga* in the *Maori Aotearoa* exhibition." Bankes, "From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 82.

[53] Bankes, "From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 84.

It is important to understand the way in which the Manchester Museum's global restitution activity and local community consultation informed the 1995 redisplay on a sliding scale of community engagement work. This practice had been developing throughout the museum sector on an international level. At one end of the engagement scale were visitor surveys, which varied in detail and effectiveness, from merely counting visitors to profiling them, as noted by Hooper-Greenhill.[54] Next there was ad-hoc community consultation including: gaining feedback on existing exhibitions, collections and plans for redisplays through community organisations and spokespeople. The level of community consultation within some museums evolved to the point where user panels were convening.[55] By 1995 community engagement at its most involved, recorded in the *Museums Journal,* incorporated people from local 'minority' groups in setting the cultural agenda for individual museums and creating exhibitions.[56]

The visitor surveying conducted within museums during the 1980s and 1990s had significantly highlighted alongside who was attending museums, the 'groups' of people from the local population who were not visiting museums.[57] This awareness of absent visitors coincided with the repatriation debate[58] forming a heightened awareness in museums of the reception of ethnographic material by source communities. Debates on cultural representation informed by postcolonial theory became prevalent within museum studies forming significant critiques of the interpretation of

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[54] Hooper-Greenhill, "Counting visitors or visitors who count?" 213-230.

[55] See Heather Falconer, "Getting feedback," *Museums Journal* Vol 95, No 8 (1995): 27, print.

[56] Lucie Carrington, "Power to the people," *Museums Journal,* Vol 95, No 11 (1995): 21-24, print.

[57] Hooper-Greenhill, "Counting visitors or visitors who count?" 218.

[58] See Chippindale 22-23; Jones 20-21; Nail 32-34; Simpson, "Burying the Past"; Simpson "Taxing Returns" 19; Southworth 23-25.

ethnographic collections.[59] These elements converged in the middle of the 1990s and resulted in the increasing integration of marginalized members of the community in the interpretation of collections.[60] Within this context the Manchester Museum's global restitution activity and local community consultation can effectively be located as a process of institutional critique that is acknowledging and seeking amends for colonial exploitation and abuse from the past, whilst obtaining approval for its current activity in the present. However, it is important to note that the activity carried out with source communities within the Manchester Museum ethnographic department was behind the scenes and not recorded in the Museum for visitors to learn about.

"Living Cultures" 2003 redisplay

In July 2003 the second redisplay of the ethnographic collections at Manchester Museum was completed during George Bankes' tenure as keeper of ethnology. The redisplay involved a large extension to the existing "Explorers and Encounters" ethnographic gallery, forming two aesthetically distinct exhibition spaces. In the gallery floorplan the two galleries were numbered eleven and titled "Living Cultures", placed under the heading "World Cultures" along with "Ancient Egypt" and "Archery" on the first floor (Figure 4-7).[61]

Change

The 2003 ethnographic gallery redevelopment was carried out in a period of considerable change for Manchester Museum. The redevelopment was funded as part of the Manchester Museum's Capital Development Project.

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[59] See for example: Michael Ames, "Cannibal tours, glass boxes and the politics of interpretation," *Interpreting Objects and Collections*, ed. Susan M. Pearce (London: Routledge, 1994) 98-106, print; Durrans 144-169; Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture*; Annie. E.Coombes, "Museums and the Formation of National Identities", *Oxford Art Journal,* 11:2 (1988): 57-68, print; Coombes, *Reinventing Africa*; Hudson 457-464; Stocking, *Objects and Others.*

[60] Merriman and Poovaya-Smith 176-187.

[61] *The Manchester Museum Gallery Floorplan* (Manchester: Manchester Museum, University of Manchester, c.2003), leaflet.

The Capital Development Project had been planned since the middle of the 1990s and in 1997 the Museum successfully secured 12 million from The Heritage Lottery Fund for major redevelopment of its public spaces and a further 8.5 million in match funding.[62] The Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) awarded additional financial support to the Museum through Resource. The Museum Director, Tristram Besterman (1994-2008), wrote in the 2002-2003 Manchester Museum annual report about the importance of the social inclusion agenda to the development project:

> These funds are to be targeted to increase capacity and improve services, particularly in education from 15-16 years. The outcomes are very specific and will be measured in relation to the Government's agenda for social inclusion and learning.[63]

This summary exemplifies how the state's social inclusion agenda[64] is reinforced and integrated through funding pre-requisites for the museum sector. Samuel Alberti describes the decade before the redevelopment at the Museum as the most turbulent in the Museum's history and in museums in Britain more generally. Alberti points out that in this period the "New Labour government shifted the emphasis from free market economics to social inclusion."[65] Alberti goes on to state that it was:

> In this climate a new Director, Tristram Besterman, was appointed in 1994 to transform the Manchester Museum [...] Besterman orchestrated the most significant – and at times difficult – transformation in architecture and staff at the Manchester Museum since the 1920s, resulting in a new management structure, redisplayed galleries and a new entrance space.[66]

In this transformative period at Manchester Museum, under the Director Tristram Besterman, a major review of staffing occurred in 2001, which

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[62] Manchester Museum, *Annual Report 2002-2003* (Manchester: Manchester Museum, University of Manchester, 2003) 5, PDF file.

[63] Tristram Besterman, "Introduction by the Director," *Annual Report 2002-2003* (Manchester: Manchester Museum, University of Manchester, 2003) 4, PDF file.

[64] The DCMS published the policy document *Centres for Social Change: Museums, Galleries and Archives for All* in May 2000 which articulated the states social inclusion agenda, informing funding pre-requisites throughout the sector.

[65] Alberti, *Nature and Culture* 193.

[66] Alberti, *Nature and Culture* 193.

resulted in the role of keeper being phased out and replaced by the joint posts of curator and museum academic. It was considered that the role of keeper was prohibiting the Museum from adapting to necessary changes. This staffing change was so controversial it was reported in *Museums Journal* in December 2002.[67] By the time the Manchester annual report was published in 2003, two former keepers had relocated to academic posts, two keepers had retired including George Bankes, leaving three departments with keepers and seven with the new post of curator.[68] Another significant staffing change at Manchester Museum was the creation of the Education Manager post in 2000; this was in direct response to the Heritage Lottery Fund's focus on access and learning. The educational department continued to expand reflecting wider changes in policy and funding. By 2005 learning and public programming had become "a third of the whole operation of the Museum [...] reflected in senior management."[69]

The Manchester Museum Capital Development Project was divided into three phases; the ethnographic display space was redeveloped as part of the final phase. The transitional character of this period in the Museum's history is evident in both the process of creating the 2003 redisplay and the outcome. Importantly, the director of the Manchester Museum, Tristram Besterman, felt that an external designer was needed to help plan how to extend the exhibition into the new gallery. Besterman also considered it necessary to outsource the final design and installation of the gallery to an external design company; this trend is observable in other museum contexts.[70] The amount of people involved in the 2003 redevelopment

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[67] "Nine keeper posts to go at Manchester Museum," *Museums Journal*, Vol 102, No12 (2002): 7, print.

[68] The Manchester Museum, *Annual Report 2002-2003* 26-30.

[69] Bernadette Lynch, personal interview, 14 Mar. 2005.

[70] For further discussion on the outsourcing of design in museums see: Roger Miles, "Otto Neurath and the Modern Public Museum: the Case of the Natural History Museum", *Encyclopaedia and Utopia: the Life and Work of Otto Neurath (1882- 1945),* eds Elisabeth Nemeth and Friederich Stadtler (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1996) print.

process more than doubled from the 1995 redisplay. These changes marked a considerable change in the redisplay process for the ethnographic department, for both the design and installation had remained in house for the 1995 redisplay. In practice, Besterman's actions limited the control Bankes had over the 2003 redisplay, which impacted on the execution of the curatorial approach he later devised.

"Living Cultures" gallery descriptions: from the past to the present?

The intention was to leave the 1995 "Explorers and Encounters" gallery largely as it was. This formed the first ethnographic gallery visitors reached from the main stair case running from the entrance (Figure 4-11). Only one case "Associations and Rituals"[71] was moved from the first gallery into the new gallery to create an entrance into the 2003 extension (Figure 4-13).[72] The ambiance of the two galleries, now both under the title "Living Cultures," was considerably different. Soft brown carpet covered the floor in the first gallery silencing hard soled shoes and slightly muffling voices. Traditional dark wooden framed glass cabinets lined the sides of the gallery space (Figure 4-9 - Figure 4-10). Duck egg blue walls looked grey in colour where shadows fell. Spotlights embedded in the ceiling covered the gallery with a warm large pool of light. The first gallery had two structural sections to it, divided by a free standing wall. A large Buddha sat in front of the wall, facing visitors as they reached the first floor from the stairs in reception (Figure 4-11 - Figure 4-12). Displayed to the right, the Tesco trolley in the "People of Manchester" case punctuated the entrance, forming a striking juxtaposition of Buddha and trolley (Figure 4-5). As discussed earlier, observations of the walk through are particularly important for moments when visitors appear particularly engaged. People stopped to contemplate what it was they were encountering: Tesco trolley, Buddha, tourist souvenirs, coconut armour, sharks' teeth, musical instruments, collectors, and weapons. People seemed to pause for longer in the first gallery, wandering from cabinet to cabinet. The musical instruments on display

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[71] "Associations and Rituals," in Living Cultures, *Manchester Museum*, text panel.

[72] Bankes, "From Explorers and Encounters to Living Cultures" 23.

were silenced the week I visited in 2005; the audio accompaniment was out of order, no audio-visual screens to fill the air. However, the sounds from the new gallery filtered through.

The pace quickened in the new gallery, the surroundings modern, bright and clinical. Perhaps it was the familiarity and associations with the aesthetic of the interior, more commonly experienced in everyday life that propelled visitors around this gallery at an increased speed. Tall glass display cases with pale grey bases lined the sides and filled the central spaces. Bright spot lights embedded in the ceiling created pools of light, falling on to display plaques in places and illuminating exhibits; areas of darkness stood out in the Gallery where light bulbs had blown. Hard soled shoes could be heard echoing throughout the new gallery; conversations and children's voices reverberated off all the surfaces (Figure 4-14). Seven audio-visual screens arranged in between cases were thrown into action at the touch of a finger (Figure 4-15). The audio from the screens cut through the air, overlapping, competing and repeating. Five of these touch-screens formed the "Rekindle" series placed in between the "Cloth and Clothing" cases and the "Out of Clay" displays.[73] The "Rekindle" videos comprise of poetic, imaginative and surreal interpretations of objects in the displays by poets and members of the Museum's Community Advisory Panel (Figure 4-16). This series will be discussed in detail in this Chapter. The remaining two screens in the Archery gallery at the back of the room could be heard explaining manufacturing processes of bows. On entering the new gallery, to the right a large carved Benin elephant tusk stood erect, isolated in a glass cabinet, part of the "Masks and Carvings" theme (Figure 4-17).[74] A photograph taken by William Fagg showed the modest royal alters in Benin City recorded in 1958, sixty-one years after the tusk would have been taken from Benin by the British on a punitive expedition. This visual juxtaposition of Benin tusk and 1950s modest royal Benin altar suggested a sense of

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[73] "Rekindle," in Living Cultures, *Manchester Museum*, touch screen; "Cloth and Clothing," in Living Cultures, *Manchester Museum*, case signage; "Out of Clay," in Living Cultures, *Manchester Museum*, case signage.

[74] "Masks and Carvings," in Living Cultures, *Manchester Museum*, case signage.

place of origin, of removal, of loss showing where the carved tusk might once have been located, and revealing an object biography affected by colonialism.

In the centre of the gallery space was a large cabinet titled "Masks and Carvings", displaying collections from the Kongo, Youruba, and Ogoni. Long planks of pale wood lined the floor throughout the new gallery, pulling the gaze of the visitor down the length of the exhibition space. On the left of the entrance the "Recent Acquisitions" case was followed by a text panel on the funders and contributors.[75] The Heritage Lottery Fund had left a mark. In the outer edge of the "Cloth and Clothing" display case the first of five audio-visual screens was installed. Rolls of textiles from the Pacific Islands stretched the length of the first "Cloth and Clothing" exhibit (Figure 4-18). Photographic images taken in the 1970s lined the case showing manufacturing processes involved in making the textiles, followed by people wearing the fabrics (Figure 4-19 - Figure 4-20). The second audio-visual screen in the series divided the two "Cloth and Clothing" displays. Native North American Plains clothing filled the second "Cloth and Clothing" case. A dress made from animal skin hung from the top of the case, the arms of the dress stretched out, the skirt hanging down (Figure 4-21). The third audio-visual screen in the series marked the end of the "Cloth and Clothing" exhibit. To the right on a large text panel were illustrations of the Plains Indians in animal skin and fur clothing by water colourist Karl Bodmer. The text panel provided details on the 1833 expedition Bodmer and the explorer, naturalist and ethnologist Prince Maximilian zu Wied carried out along the Missouri river, visiting and studying the Plains Indian tribes (Figure 4-22). The text panel emphasized the importance of the illustrations and the written descriptions Bodmer and zu Weid constructed:

> The great significance and value of both the written descriptions and the water colour are that they form a sympathetic and informative record of the lives of the Plains Indian tribes of the

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[75] "Recent Acquisitions," in Living Cultures, *Manchester Museum*, case signage.

Missouri river before they were devastated by a smallpox epidemic and the impact of west-ward pushing white settlers.[76]

The text panel actively promotes the "great significance and value" of Bodmer and zu Weid disassociating them from the negative "impact of the west-ward pushing white settlers,"[77] and yet the two endeavours are implicitly embroiled in colonialist activity controlling land and representation and understanding. This paradoxical display will be discussed in more detail shortly.

The dominant walk through, suggested on entering the new gallery, encouraged visitors to go to the left of the central 'Masks and Carvings' case. The clear wide walk way drew the visitor to the very back of the gallery, past "Cloth and Clothing" and the 'Weapons and Armour' case, which separated the ethnography collections from the Archery displays at the back (Figure 4-14). By contrast the right hand side of the gallery was not as open. Floor to ceiling display plaques interrupted the flow through the space, drawing the eye away from the "Out of Clay" display that spanned the length of the right hand wall, and towards the left side of the gallery (Figure 4-17). Following the dominant walk through, the "Out of Clay" displays tended to be approached from the back of the gallery. China, Japan and England in one case - East meets West exemplified through the Bernard Leach work on display. Central and South America displayed - contemporary artists' work juxtaposed with Pre-hispanic pottery and modern utilitarian pots, all jostling for space (Figure 4-23). The Africa case had large sturdy cooking pots, water pots and beer pots. Two "Rekindle" video screens were installed in the frames of the "Out of Clay" display cases calling out to passers-by (Figure 4-23 - Figure 4-24). Whilst visiting the "Living Cultures" gallery voices from the videos provided a seemingly continuous audio accompaniment, visitors' fingers were drawn to the screens whilst bodies often stayed in motion.

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[76] "Cloth and Clothing," in Living Cultures, *Manchester Museum*, text panel.

[77] "Cloth and Clothing" text panel.

There was a coolness created in the gallery by the sharp lines of the glass display cases and the air conditioning system moderating the room temperature. The look and feel of the second gallery was contemporary, modern, shiny, bright, and angular in stark contrast to the first gallery, antique, wooden, and carpeted, from which the new gallery was entered. This difference in design aesthetic and atmosphere implied a change in time, a step from the past into the present, but the gallery itself formed an intriguing mix of both. Large glass modern cases, bustling exhibits anchored by ethnographic value, images of manufacturing processes and usage visually connect objects to source communities: traditional techniques are displayed through contemporary potters' work; European ethnographic reports from the 1830s used; maps locate countries; labels describe function and context; voices in the video series present poetic descriptions, imaginative narratives and thoughts, analysis, and questioning directed at the objects. In this chapter, in the section entitled "Makers Voices", how the 2003 gallery extension developed into this montage, will be critically discussed.

The colonial activity, featured in the new gallery extension of 2003 in the large information panel that accompanied the display of Plains Indian objects, demonstrates distinct trends in ethnographic exhibitions critiqued by Jo Littler, Roshi Naidoo and Annie Coobes respectively. The text panel's promotion of the beneficial nature of the expedition Bodmer and zu Weid carried out on the Plains Indians, and its separation from the negative effects of colonial activity, can be considered in relation to what Joe Littler and Roshi Naidoo call the practice of "uncritical imperialism."[78] This approach can be found in an array of forms in museum display. Littler and Naido describe uncritical imperialism as an instance when history is presented that ignores imperialism entirely or fails to include a critique of its negative impact on the colonized.[79] The display case and the text plaque

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[78] Littler 93.

[79] Littler presents the example of Cadbury World in Birmingham, which omits any reference to "the systems of slavery upon which the chocolate company was founded" (Littler 93).

combined, also manifest a sense of the 'disappearing world' museum syndrome, of which Annie Coombes speaks that highlights the museum process of firmly locating the people signified through the exhibit in the past with no manifestation in the present.[80] This display actively ignores the Museum's own engagement in 1994 with the All Nations Forum who promote the Native American Peoples of North America.[81] The contact with the All Nations Forum had impacted on the Manchester Museum display; the display of pouches with umbilical cords in them was considered too personal ensuring they would remain in storage and not on display. But this activity is kept behind the scenes of the Museum and not discussed in the display. The source communities from which the collections belong were, however, further considered by George Bankes in regards to the 2003 redisplay, and this is the subject of the next section.

Makers' voices

In the planning stages of the 2003 "Living Cultures" gallery extension it was decided that the approach of the existing gallery, created in 1995, would effectively be continued. George Bankes was, however, committed to relating the objects to their makers and diasporic communities within the 2003 display:

> [T]he new gallery would, like Explorers and Encounters, be a cross-cultural 'object-led' gallery, subdivided thematically. Also, given the Heritage Lottery Fund's emphasis on providing access to museum collections, I felt that the new gallery should be 'object-dense', thus providing access to as many objects as possible in the museum's ethnology collections. Finally, I felt that it was important that the objects should be related, as far as possible, to their originating and related diasporic communities, an aim that I envisaged being achieved through texts and visuals providing - through the artefacts - insights about their makers.[82]

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[80] Coombes, "Inventing the 'postcolonial' 39-52.

[81] Bankes, "From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters" 84.

[82] Bankes, "From Explorers and Encounters to Living Cultures" 23.

Three key elements that influenced the 2003 redevelopment are highlighted in this summary. The curatorial approach taken in the 1995 redisplay is a clear influence, which formed a "cross-cultural, 'object-led' gallery, subdivided thematically."[83] The second influence on the 2003 redevelopment was a key funder's priority, specifically the Heritage Lottery Fund's emphasis on "access to collections."[84] This emphasis is interpreted by Bankes to mean the new gallery should be "object dense."[85] The third influence conveyed in the quote is the importance of relating the objects to "their originating and related diasporic communities [...] through text and visuals," (Figure 4-19 - Figure 4-20) reflecting current best practice detailed in the 2003 Museum Ethnographers Group, "Guidance Notes on Ethical Approaches in Museum Ethnography".[86]

Bankes considered source communities when planning the 2003 redisplay; he writes about two particular ways in which he did this in his review of the "Living Cultures" gallery.[87] When carrying out fieldwork, Bankes consciously informed the people, from whom he purchased objects, that it was possible the objects may be displayed in a museum. He photographed the production of the objects and told the makers the photographs may also be displayed in a museum, in effect giving them the opportunity to decline participating.[88] Whilst on a fieldtrip in 1984 in Morrope and Simbila he carried with him photographs of an existing temporary exhibition "The Potter's Art in Peru"; he left a set of images with the artist Lucinda Santisteban, a potter, from whom he bought pots. Subsequently, he posted a book to Santisteban featuring a paper he had written with images of her creating a jug. In this instance the book was sent via Walter Alva at the

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[83] Bankes, "From Explorers and Encounters to Living Cultures" 23.

[84] Bankes, "From Explorers and Encounters to Living Cultures" 23.

[85] Bankes, "From Explorers and Encounters to Living Cultures" 23.

[86] Regarding current best practice Bankes refers to the: Museum Ethnographers Group, "Guidance Notes on Ethical Approaches in Museum Ethnography," *Journal of Museum Ethnography* No 15 (2003): paragraph 7.5, 162, print.

[87] Bankes, "From Explorers and Encounters to Living Cultures" 30-31.

[88] Bankes, "From Explorers and Encounters to Living Cultures" 30.

Lambayeque museum to ensure it reached the village because Lucinda
Santisteban had no postal address. This contact with potters, Bankes
highlights, is not always possible.[89]

When planning the 2003 redisplay Bankes integrated quotes from makers
in to information panels:

> At the head of the information panel for 'Out of Clay': Pottery from
> the Americas: Ancient and Modern' I included the words 'Clay
> Unites Us', my translation of the title of Gerasimo Sosa's book [...
> an artist potter featured in the display]. Also, I headed the
> information panel about African pottery with the words 'A Pot is the
> Gift of the Earth [...] A Container of Life and Tradition', a quotation
> from Azure, a Gurense potter from Ghana, which I copied from an
> exhibition about Africa in the National Museum of Natural History
> in Washington, DC.[90]

It is apparent that consideration to source communities was of significance
to Bankes' curatorial approach through visual repatriation in photographs of
production processes, combined with the inclusion of contemporary potters'
work. A key element of the curation of the new gallery was also to give the
source communities a voice in the exhibition through the inclusion of
quotations from makers in the information panels.[91] However, these quotes
were ultimately edited out of the final information panels. This decision was
taken by the external design company Ivor Heal Design Ltd and signed off
by Jeff Horseley the Manchester Museum Exhibition and Design
Manager.[92] As far as Bankes was concerned he had finalised the content of
the information panels, including the quotes, with Carolyn Eardley the copy
editor at Ivor Heal Design Ltd, prior to going on sick leave. On return he
found that Bridget Heal, the graphic designer at Ivor Heal had cut all of the
quotations. His subsequent protest was in vain, the design company
refused to make any changes. Fundamentally the Keeper was unable to
exert sufficient control over the design process when working with the

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[89] Bankes, "From Explorers and Encounters to Living Cultures" 30.

[90] Bankes, "From Explorers and Encounters to Living Cultures" 30-31.

[91] Bankes, "From Explorers and Encounters to Living Cultures" 30.

[92] Bankes, "From Explorers and Encounters to Living Cultures" 31.

external design company, which impacted greatly on the interpretation of the collection. The significance of the quotes communicating the voices of the makers was clearly not understood by the design company or by the Museum's Exhibition and Design Manager who had authorised the change. Key curatorial considerations were not appreciated and the design company succeeded in excluding the makers' voices. Bankes intended to further provide a voice for the source communities by including some short ethnographic films on touch screens, but he ran into a number of problems gaining permission to show the films, which made it impossible to integrate them into the new gallery. Significantly the two main elements Bankes had designed to develop a presence for the makers' voice in the 2003 redisplay were ultimately excluded. The photographic images included in the exhibits contributed to the objects on display being related to the makers, demonstrating origin, production and use; visual repatriation is a significant display method used in the museum sector to relate objects to source communities.[93] However, the overall intended impact of the makers' voices in the 2003 gallery was considerably diminished in the final permanent exhibition.

"Rekindle" and the Community Advisory Panel

The plan to convey makers' voices in the "Living Cultures" gallery formed one of two distinct approaches identifiable within the planning and realization of the 2003 redisplay that responded to issues raised around cultural representation. The second method was realized in the permanent gallery through the video screens (Figure 4-15 - Figure 4-24). The video series titled "Rekindle" visibly promotes the Museum's engagement with local people from ethnic minorities, and reflects greater access to the collections, outcomes which respond to the Heritage Lottery Funds (HLF) demand for 'access' and 'involvement.'[94] Following on from the previous

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[93] The significance of visual repatriation is discussed in detail by the contributors to "Part 2 Talking Visual Histories" in Peers and Brown, *Museums and Source Communities* 81-151.

[94] Liz Forgan, "Foreword," *Broadening the Horizons of Heritage: The Heritage Lottery Fund Strategic Plan 2002 - 2007* (London: Heritage Lottery Fund, 2002) 2, print.

HLF strategic plan, 'access' and 'involvement' were located as two of the four main priorities for the HLF strategic plan 2002 – 2007,[95] while 'conservation' and 'learning' completed the HLF's priorities and aims for that period.[96] The "Rekindle" series is displayed in the "Living Cultures" gallery in Manchester Museum. The project originally consisted of five touch-screens embedded in the frames of the display cases in the "Cloth and Clothing" section and the "Out of Clay" section of the gallery. A total of eighteen videos were exhibited, created by Kuljit Chuhan, a local digital media artist and filmmaker, depicting members of the Manchester Community Advisory Panel and two poets speaking to objects from the new "Living Cultures" gallery. The process of talking to an object will be discussed in the following section titled "Rekindle".

The "Rekindle" video series is linked to the Manchester Museum's Community Advisory Panel. The Community Advisory Panel is a forum that was created in 2000[97] to "debate, identify and articulate the needs and interests of diverse communities to create a culturally inclusive representation in the Museum."[98] Bernadette Lynch, the Manchester Museum's then recently appointed Education Manager, setup the Community Advisory Panel based on her working experience in Canada with Native North American communities "where you have a standing body within the museum."[99] In Canada in the early 1990s a report was commissioned by the Canadian Museums Association and the Assembly of First Nations on museum best practice, followed in 1994 with the publication of widely accepted guidelines.[100] Writing in 1997 James Clifford

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[95] Forgan 2.

[96] For details on conservation and access and learning see: The Heritage Lottery Fund, *Broadening the Horizons of Heritage: The Heritage Lottery Fund Strategic Plan 2002 - 2007* (London: Heritage Lottery Fund, 2002) 20-21, print.

[97] Manchester Museum, *Annual Report 2000-2001* (Manchester: Manchester Museum, University of Manchester, 2001) 11, PDF file.

[98] Manchester Museum, *Memorandum of Understanding between the Manchester Museum and the Community Advisory Panel Roles and Responsibilities* (Manchester: Manchester Museum, University of Manchester, 2008) 2, PDF file.

[99] Lynch, personal interview.

[100] Clifford, *Routes* 206.

affirms, "[s]erious collaboration is now the norm in Canadian exhibitions of First Nations art and culture."[101] Lynch pointed out her contrasting experience in Britain in 2001:

> I researched around the country to see if there were similar examples and couldn't find one because in Britain community advice is mostly solicited when you're devising a project like an exhibition. But having a community advisory panel which is ongoing is quite unusual because the purpose here was to have that critical voice within the Museum but also to be involved at quite a deep level with policy development, to be involved right across the board and so they have been.[102]

The Manchester Museum's Community Advisory Panel was set up to address the "concept of representation," ensuring the local community within a six mile radius of the Museum had a voice.[103] The Museum's local community is one of the most diverse in the city and was therefore considered to be sufficiently representative.[104] The creation of the Manchester Community Advisory Panel can usefully be positioned as being informed by museum best practice in countries with First Nations[105] whilst simultaneously responding to the 'cultural diversity' agenda in Britain.[106] In January 2000, the Museums and Galleries Commission published a fact sheet titled, *Responding to Cultural Diversity: Guidance for Museums and Galleries*, discussed in Chapter 2. The guidance specifically addresses "ethnically based cultural diversity."[107] A step by step process to creating an " 'accessible culture' for ethnic minority communities," [108] is then presented broken down into six areas: Context, Policy and Planning, Staffing, Training, Community Liaison, and Community Credibility. The guidelines on Community Liaison and Community Credibility are pertinent to the creation

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[101] Clifford *Routes* 206.

[102] Lynch, personal interview.

[103] Lynch, personal interview.

[104] Lynch, personal interview.

[105] See Simpson, *Making Representations* 51-69.

[106] Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 4.

[107] Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 1.

[108] Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 4.

of the Manchester Community Advisory Panel. The formation and maintenance of "links with local ethnic minority communities"[109] is considered crucial in the guidelines. To ensure credibility the guidelines state "[a] visible and consistent commitment to cultural diversity is the essential prerequisite."[110] The following question is then posed for the museum to answer by means of an internal checking system, "Is it clear to all that cultural diversity is accorded major importance?"[111] The Community Advisory Panel falls within these guidelines supporting ongoing links with local communities including those that are classified as ethnic minority groups. The "Rekindle" series makes a visible and audible display of these connections in line with the Museums and Galleries *Cultural Diversity* fact sheet guidance.[112]

Exhibiting people from the local community

The Community Advisory Panel had very limited involvement in the planning stages of the 2003 redisplay of the ethnographic collection. Bernadette Lynch explains the objects selected for display in the gallery had been decided before she had even begun working at the Museum.[113] The keeper system was still in place and Lynch argues it was a prohibitive structure that meant "in that traditional model the keeper does their gallery so the opportunity for input was not significantly possible."[114] The dominant involvement the Community Advisory Panel had with the 2003 redisplay was ultimately having a project they featured in being put in the display. This outcome - exhibiting members of the local community - is linked in part to policy and funders' pre-requisites in this period requiring visibility of

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[109] Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 4.

[110] Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 4.

[111] Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity* 4.

[112] The Museums and Galleries *Cultural Diversity* fact sheet guidance was produced in 2000 and was titled *Responding to Cultural Diversity.* See Khan, *Responding to Cultural Diversity.*

[113] Lynch, personal interview.

[114] Lynch, personal interview.

museums' engagement and involvement of ethnic minority groups.[115] This practice of visibility can also be mapped throughout the international museum sector in outreach projects and temporary exhibitions during the 1980s and early 1990s and relates to what Nick Merriman and Nima Poovaya-Smith refer to as "making culturally diverse histories."[116] Merriman and Poovaya-Smith point out that museum practices in North America were more progressive than in Britain in 1996 regarding "the recognition that the history and contemporary reality of minority communities are worthy of representation in museums,"[117] highlighting the "recent and somewhat faltering beginning in Britain, with the exception of Jewish history, which has a longer museum pedigree."[118] Merriman and Poovaya-Smith refer to Crew and Sims (1991), Karp and Lavine (1991), and Karp, Mullen Kreamer and Lavine (1992), to emphasize the "relatively sophisticated"[119] dialogue on cultural representation in museum practice occurring in North America.

Merriman and Poovaya-Smith reference a few temporary exhibitions that took place in England in the early 1990s reflecting a "common approach towards a recognition of cultural pluralism."[120] They point out that the projects were "linked to a particular community"[121] and list the 1992 Geffrye Museum's exhibition "Chinese Homes"; they also refer to Sheffield Museum as having "organized a number of exhibitions on its African Caribbean community, [and] Southampton [as having] organized an exhibition on its black community."[122] Merriman and Poovaya-Smith's critique of these single community exhibitions reflects the possibility of "institutionalizing their

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[115] See The Heritage Lottery Fund, *Broadening the Horizons of Heritage* 18-21 and Great Britain, *Understanding the Future* 11-18.

[116] Merriman and Poovaya-Smith 176.

[117] Merriman and Poovaya-Smith 177.

[118] Merriman and Poovaya-Smith 177.

[119] Merriman and Poovaya-Smith 177.

[120] Merriman and Poovaya-Smith 182.

[121] Merriman and Poovaya-Smith 182.

[122] Merriman and Poovaya-Smith 182.

marginalization as 'the Other'."[123] Single community outreach projects
continue to occur within the museum sector in the 21st century. The Hindu
Shrine Project, 2002 at the Brighton Museum and Art Gallery is one such
example.

Museum community engagement projects have also continued to evolve.
They frequently incorporate a number of 'minority' groups simultaneously.
Manchester Museum's "Rekindle" project is an important example of this
practice. In the November 2003 edition of the *Museums Journal* an article
titled "Desperately seeking sanctuary" reports on a number of projects at
different museums "working with asylum seekers and refugees," involving
people from many different countries.[124] Amidst this rise in museum
community engagement, the Hindu Shrine Project at Brighton and the
"Rekindle" project at Manchester are unusual because of their installation
into permanent ethnographic galleries.

"Rekindle"

The Manchester Museum's Community Advisory Panel members were
invited to participate in the "Rekindle" project. Each participant chose an
object from the new 2003 "Living Cultures" display which was then made
available for them to handle following basic training with conservation staff
(Figure 4-16).[125] Kuljit Chuhan (Kooj), a digital media artist and filmmaker
who created the "Rekindle" videos, came up with the idea of asking
participants to speak to the objects. Bernadette Lynch explains the process
involved:

> We worked with Kooj Chuhan who is the filmmaker; I had worked
> with him already a fair bit, he's a community filmmaker, he's
> excellent. It isn't only his filming but it's his approach it's very
> integrated the way he works, the ethical way he works. Kooj came
> up with the idea that I thought was excellent where we asked
> people to speak to the objects rather than about them. So they
> chose the objects freely and they just came up with the thoughts

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[123] Merriman and Poovaya-Smith 183.

[124] Arthur 29-31.

[125] Lynch, personal interview.

they had themselves, which they wrote down and then we set up a session for the conservation staff to show them some basic handling techniques and then conservation stepped out of the room. So when they spoke to the objects it was strictly the filmmaker and the individual with the object so there was quite an intimate relationship. The most important thing was that they should feel free to say whatever, and the point was to encourage them to speak emotionally based on memory, whatever.[126]

Two poets were invited to participate in the "Rekindle" project. The members of the Community Advisory Panel were then shown the poets' performances in which they integrated narrative, emotion, imagination and humour when interacting with the objects. In preparation for the filming the Community Advisory Panel participants were also presented with several questions that they could use optionally. The Community Advisory Panel participants' interpretations do show a pattern in response by answering the 'optional' questions. Notably, many participants state their attraction to the object; what question they would like to ask the object; and what sound the object makes them think of. Visitors, however, are not told about the questions presented to the participants. A strong characteristic of all 18 videos in the series is the way in which the participants directly speak to the objects. The objects are approached like a person, they are assumed to retain memory and meaning, and know about the context of their production and use. There is a sense of a dialogue between the past (the collection) and the present (the participants), which can also be read as a statement by the Museum about progress, from colonialism to outreach, source communities being given a voice. The recorded voices and accompanying videos are a sign of a wider community that have been given a place in the gallery as an act of inclusion and representation. Through "Rekindle" the Museum also appears to stage the community's involvement that they want to encourage; an interaction is performed with people from the source communities and objects from the collections.

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[126] Lynch, personal interview.

The "Rekindle" participants were generally encouraged to speak emotionally and from memory when engaging with their chosen object.[127] Bernadette Lynch who came up with the idea for "Rekindle" summarized the intention for the project:

> The idea was to encourage others to feel that you don't have to have prior knowledge of an object to respond to an object. We didn't have any control of what was selected or what was said and what was very interesting about that project was how often people chose objects outside of their own cultural heritage.[128]

The fact that the participants chose objects "outside of their own cultural heritage"[129] meant that lived experience of the material culture was largely absent in the "Rekindle" interpretations. [130] This indicates that the value of the spoken interpretations was not considered in relation to a sense of the 'authentic' pertaining to ethnographic value or lived experience. Instead, the value of the interpretative content of the members of the Community Advisory Panel lay in the legitimacy of the emotive, imaginative individual engagement with the object. Implicit in this approach is the museum sector-wide attunement to people – implemented in order to consciously develop audiences and visitor engagement. Michelle Henning has observed the burgeoning museum practice of creating experiences that aim to instigate a transformative personal experience for the visitor.[131] In her discussion of museum design as "setting the stage for transformative experiences," [132] she points out that "[t]he emphasis on experience displaces the emphasis

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[127] Lynch, personal interview.

[128] Lynch, personal interview.

[129] Lynch, personal interview.

[130] Bernadette Lynch analyses this selection of objects further in: "The amendable object: working with diaspora communities through a psychoanalysis of touch" *Touch in museums: policy and practice in object handling*, ed Helen J. Chatterjee (Oxford: Berg, 2008) 261-272, print. Lynch highlights the emotional and therapeutic nature of this object handling for the participant: "One participant, an Indian woman knows she is not the African jar, she respects the difference between her and the jar, yet she is using the jar creatively, to work through her own feelings about exile and alienation. Objects elicit psychological reactions. People interact with things" 267.

[131] Michelle Henning, *Museums, Media and Cultural Theory* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2006) 90-97 and 109-113, print.

[132] Henning 112.

on artefacts."[133] Within this process of emphasizing subjective experience Henning argues that museum objects are frequently rendered "little more than props or stimuli."[134] This is evident in the "Rekindle" interpretations and conveyed through the visual aesthetic of the videos. The post-production of the videos presents a very high contrast image with strong shadows and intensely lit areas. This aesthetic, combined with the glare and reflections from the screens due to their positioning in the display, reduces visible detail and definition, inhibiting the ease with which the objects can be identified.[135] The videos would have clearly benefitted from being tested on location and adapted accordingly. The visual aesthetic and display of "Rekindle" as it stands actively draws attention away from the object and on to the participant's oral interpretations, reinforcing the notion that the project is not about the objects but about the people's emotional engagement and imaginative responses.

The "Rekindle" video series installed in the 2003 gallery involves a device – the touch screen – that explicitly incorporates "the visitors' presence into the space."[136] Henning states that "[h]ands-on exhibits acknowledge the visitor's presence and even require it to activate them."[137] The "Rekindle" series not only acknowledges the visitor's presence but, arguably, was aimed at appealing specifically to people of diverse ethnic origins. To clarify, seventeen of the eighteen videos featured people from ethnic minorities and one showed a young white woman. Thus, through "Rekindle" the Museum was able to make visible its facilitation of access between people from local ethnic minority communities and the collections, responding to both cultural diversity policies and access policies. Visibility of community engagement is an increasingly important consideration for

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[133] Henning 112.

[134] Henning 112.

[135] George Bankes, the keeper of the 'Living Cultures' collection (1982-2003), was notably unable to identify one of the objects from the "Rekindle" video, see Bankes, "From Explorers and Encounters to Living Cultures" 32.

[136] Henning 64.

[137] Henning 61.

museums. For example, Eithne Nightingale and Deborah Swallow in their essay "The Arts of the Sikh Kingdoms: Collaborating with a Community" consider that the exhibition, "The Arts of the Sikh Kingdoms", held at the Victoria and Albert Museum was "an externally visible dimension of an ongoing programme of activity and dialogue between the Museum and South Asian individuals and communities which had started some decades earlier and continues today."[138]

The visibility of the individuals who were creating the "Rekindle" interpretations is important within the context of the ethnographic gallery because it distinguishes these subjective interpretations from the un-named curatorial voice. In this instance in a museum a voice without a name is the voice of authority, a reversal of usual power relations associated with authorship. The "Rekindle" interpretations were clearly named in two ways, the participants were physically shown in the video and their names listed under the tab 'People' on the touch-screen. Analysed within the context of the ethnographic gallery the authored "Rekindle" interpretations do not share the same status as the un-named curatorial voice which conveys what Carol Duncan describes as secular truth, "truth that is rational and verifiable – that has the status of 'objective knowledge.'" [139] However, Bernadette Lynch locates the videos' power in being distinct from the rest of the gallery, highlighting the fact that "Rekindle" succeeds in "getting some voice into that gallery, in what [she states] is a very traditional gallery in essence." [140] Lynch describes "Rekindle" as an intentional process "like putting down the first marker that it is legitimate to include narratives, personal narratives in the interpretation of objects that are not based on

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[138] Eithne Nightingale and Deborah Swallow, "The Arts of the Sikh Kingdoms: Collaborating with a Community," Peers and Brown *Museums and Source Communities* 55-71.

[139] Carol Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* (London: Routledge, 1995) 8, print.

[140] Lynch, personal interview.

prior academic knowledge."[141] This distinction between the authoring of the community voice and the un-named curatorial voice is indicative of the conflicting ideas present in the 2003 gallery redisplay. Interestingly, the "Rekindle" interpretations and the more traditional curatorial voice present in the 2003 redisplay do co-exist within one gallery; both are absorbed into the Manchester Museum's ethnographic exhibition's interpretive offering. Consequently the incorporation of members of the local community into the collection's interpretation could be construed as endorsing the approach taken in the 2003 redisplay.

Source Communities and 'living cultures'

By 2003 museums work with source communities includes what Christina Kreps refers to as a concern "with people's living cultures and not just their past."[142] Living cultures were a clear consideration for Manchester Museum, communicated through the retitling of the ethnographic galleries in 2003 to "Living Cultures". This title change was championed by Bernadette Lynch, then Head of the Education Department.[143] The "Rekindle" project, at first glance, appears to function within this concern with living cultures. However this direct correlation is contradicted by the fact that the majority of people who took part in "Rekindle" chose objects to which they were not connected. Consequently the legitimacy of the "Rekindle" videos, where people talk to objects, relates to the three key elements discussed in the previous section: the emotive and imaginative

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[141] Lynch, personal interview. The interpretative practice of authoring labels was subsequently used by Bernadette Lynch and Samuel Alberti in the temporary exhibition "Revealing Histories: Myths about Race" in 2009 shown at the Manchester Museum, which involved contributors signing the labels they provided the content for. For more information on the exhibition see "Revealing Histories: Myths about Race," Manchester Museum, University of Manchester, Manchester, Manchester Museum, University of Manchester, 21 Dec. 2010, web; Bernadette T. Lynch and Samuel J.M.M. Alberti, "Legacies of prejudice: racism, co-production and radical trust in the museum," *Museum Management and Curatorship.* Vol. 25, No. 1, March (2010): 13-35, PDF file.

[142] Kreps, *Liberating Culture* 149.

[143] Lynch, personal interview.

interpretation, the elevation of the subjective experience,[144] and people from local ethnic minority communities visibly having access to the collections.

"The Manchester Gallery" and "Your Museum, Your Stories" 2009 redisplays

In the summer of 2009 the original ethnographic gallery, the first of the two "Living Cultures" galleries, was closed. The gallery was re-opened in September 2009, after six weeks, as "The Manchester Gallery".[145] Consequently the number of ethnographic objects on display at Manchester Museum reduced to approximately 300. [146] In this same period the "Living Cultures" gallery underwent a number of changes. Stephen Welsh Curator of Living Cultures[147] states:

> The Recent Acquisitions case was replaced with the Your Museum, Your Stories case including an audio-visual terminal. This new case and terminal is a permanent home to display the work of the Collective Conversations project [...] with a specific focus on the use of the 'Living Cultures' collection.[148]

"The Manchester Gallery" and "Your Museum, Your Stories"[149] display were funded through Renaissance North West. "Your Museum, Your Stories" forms a permanent exhibit of the ongoing project Collective Conversations in the "Living Cultures" gallery (Figure 4-25). Collective Conversations is described on the Manchester Museum website as:

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[144] For further discussion on museum display and subjective experience see, Henning 90-98 and 109-113; Hilde Hein, *The Museum in Transition: A Philosophical Perspective* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000) 65-87, print.

[145] Stephen Welsh, personal interview, 7 July 2010. "The Manchester Gallery," *Manchester Museum, University of Manchester,* Manchester, 2009, exhibition.

[146] Welsh, personal interview. Please note 259 of the 300 ethnographic objects on display remain in the "Living Cultures" gallery. Stephen Welsh, message to the author, 21 Sept. 2010, email.

[147] Stephen Welsh became Curator of "Living Cultures" in the Summer of 2007.

[148] Stephen Welsh, message to the author, 7 April 2010, email.

[149] "Your Museum, Your Stories," in Living cultures, *Manchester Museum, University of Manchester*, touch screen.

> [A]n award winning project that makes films about people's
> encounters with objects from the Museum's collections [...]. Since
> June 2004, The Manchester Museum has held 'conversations' with
> diverse groups and individuals including local migrant
> communities, researchers, enthusiasts and academics. They might
> be people who identify or have personal interests in the objects,
> people whose work gives them insights into relevant themes, or
> people who are simply curious.[150]

Two audio-visual touch screen terminals in "The Manchester Gallery"
display videos from the Collective Conversations project titled: "Manchester
Stories: Evacuation, Industry," and "The Manchester Moth"[151] "Your
Museum, Your Stories" in the "Living Cultures" gallery features six
Collective Conversations videos. The incorporation of Collective
Conversations into the Museum's permanent displays demonstrates to
visitors and funders the Museum's active engagement of people from a
range of local communities, including source communities.

Ensuring engagement is visible in "The Manchester Gallery"

The replacement of the first "Living Cultures" gallery with "The Manchester
Gallery" and the "Recent Acquisitions" case with the "Your Museum, Your
Stories" case are indicative of sector wide changes in museum practice that
seek to visibly demonstrate an engagement with local communities.[152] This
practice is reflected in "The Manchester Gallery" and recorded in the
gallery's introductory plaque in two ways (Figure 4-28 - Figure 4-29). The
first line of the introduction states, "This gallery examines the Manchester
Museum's connections to the city and its people through the individual
stories that the objects can tell."[153] This statement stresses the relevance of

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[150] "Collective Conversations," *Manchester Museum, University of Manchester*,
Manchester, Manchester Museum, University of Manchester, web, 17 Sept. 2010.

[151] "Manchester Stories: Evacuation, Industry," in The Manchester Gallery,
Manchester Museum, University of Manchester, touch screen; "The Manchester
Moth," in The Manchester Gallery, *Manchester Museum, University of Manchester*,
touch screen.

[152] See for example, Nightingale and Swallow 55-71.

[153] "The Manchester Gallery," in The Manchester Gallery, *Manchester Museum,
University of Manchester*, text plaque.

the Museum to the local community, embedding the Museum's collections in Manchester.

Links between the Museum and Manchester are forged in the exhibition by making reference to local collectors; a total of twenty-one collectors are mentioned in "The Manchester Gallery" (Figure 4-30).[154] The Museum is, as ever, a product of colonialism; the collections exist because of British colonial relationships. The majority of the collectors were from the Manchester area, and made use of networks that had developed as a result of colonialism, reflecting the imperial and commercial stature of Manchester.[155] Many of the donors who contributed to the science and humanities collections were colonial agents: merchants, missionaries, and military personnel. [156] There is, however, no discussion of the British Empire or colonialism present in "The Manchester Gallery".[157] The term 'Empire' features in the first "Journeys" case, linked to the Roman Empire (Figure 4-31 - Figure 4-32).[158] The 'British Empire' is directly referenced once, in the second "Journeys" case, in relation to the laying of telegraph cables along the sea floor connecting Britain to the colonies. British colonial rule is mentioned only once in the "Collectors" case with regards to the rebellion of Zulu people.[159] The local connection of the collectors to Manchester is clearly the focus in "The Manchester Gallery" whilst the wider political, economic, military and colonial context, which led to the collections and the Museum, is not made clear.

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[154] "The Manchester Gallery" exhibition.

[155] Alberti, *Nature and Culture* 95.

[156] Alberti, *Nature and Culture* 94-95.

[157] "The Manchester Gallery" exhibition.

[158] "Journeys," in The Manchester Gallery, *Manchester Museum, University of Manchester*, case signage.

[159] "Collectors," in The Manchester Gallery, *Manchester Museum, University of Manchester*, case signage.

The engagement of local communities in the process of developing "The Manchester Gallery" is significantly emphasized in the introductory plaque, which points out:

> The gallery was developed as part of a collaborative project with local communities, designed to strengthen the Museums relationships with the people who live around it. A wide range of people have helped to develop the themes, research the stories and choose objects that are on display. The design of the gallery was shaped by the development process – we've used a colourful, lively 'mind-map' to capture and share the fantastic diversity of information that was generated. We hope you enjoy exploring this gallery.[160]

The 'mind-map' design used throughout "The Manchester Gallery" uses bold text contrasted with a hand drawn style which is used for arrows, text boxes, and text bubbles along with fluorescent highlights used for emphasis (Figure 4-30 - Figure 4-32 - Figure 4-33). The 'mind-map' contrasts considerably with the "Living Cultures" interpretative display conventions in the adjacent gallery. It implies a more personal approach with the hand-drawn components opposed to the formal typed labelling in "Living Cultures". This is combined with the use of a form of visual communication, the 'mind-map', found in general usage throughout society. Stephen Welsh[161] discusses the thinking behind the integration of the mind-map, explaining the intention to reduce intellectual intimidation by appearing less formal:

> [T]o implement this [mind-mapping] in the gallery and to go for that informal approach in the hope to reduce the level of what some visitors may or may not perceive as intimidation, intellectual intimidation - so you have the very regimented labels and printed text - and to sort of experiment in a way and get away from that and say OK let's do something quite different quite vibrant quite informal in a lot of respects lets use the mind map method and actually draw. So some of our in house designers actually did the design and drew the various arrows and text on to the board and so I think that was the concept behind it, [it] really was to try and one, experiment and two, again with that very direct intention to be

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[160] "The Manchester Gallery" text panel.

[161] Stephen Welsh, Curator of Living Cultures, had an active curatorial role alongside the lead curator Andrea Winn, Curator of Community Exhibitions, in the formation of "The Manchester Gallery." Welsh, personal interview.

less formal and a bit more vibrant in the way the objects were presented [...] we have had anecdotal feedback and some people like it and some people don't like it. Of real interest [were] school groups because apparently history teachers use this mind mapping method now in the classroom and so they thought it was a fantastic resource because they could see in the museum what they'd been teaching, the techniques they'd been using with their own pupils. So anecdotally we know that it's worked in some quarters and yet in others people have not appreciated it and have expected more of a typical museum response with printed text.[162]

Collective Conversations

The Collective Conversations project developed from the "Rekindle" video series.[163] The Collective Conversations in the "Your Museum, Your Stories" display features members of source communities interacting with objects from the Museum's 'Living Cultures' collections. In contrast to "Rekindle", all of the community participants in the Collective Conversations on display in the "Living Cultures" gallery interact with objects from collections they share a cultural heritage with.[164] Bernadette Lynch considers that the "Rekindle" videos legitimized for Manchester Museum the inclusion of individuals' narratives in the interpretation of objects.[165] Lynch states the Collective Conversations project is "an integrated way in building personal narratives in to the documentation processes."[166]

Lisa Harris the Curator of 'Living Cultures' from 2004 to 2007, was involved in trialling the first phase of the Collective Conversations project from 2004.[167] The Collective Conversations of which Harris was concerned were embedded in a substantial documentation and re-storing process of the entire 'Living Cultures' collection funded by Renaissance North West.[168]

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[162] Welsh, personal interview.

[163] Lynch, personal interview.

[164] See the sub-section titled "Rekindle" for further discussion on the selection of objects by participants.

[165] Lynch, personal interview.

[166] Lynch, personal interview.

[167] Lisa Harris, personal interview, 10 Mar. 2005.

[168] Lisa Harris, personal interview, 5 Mar. 2005.

Harris points out the two main functions of the project were "documentation"
[169] and "collecting stories."[170] Whilst the objects were out of storage being
cleaned and documented, Bernadette Lynch realized this created an
opportunity to develop 'contact' work between the Museum and certain
source community groups and individuals.[171] Chuhan worked closely with
the Museum on this trial of Collective Conversations, developing the
process, providing technical expertise and training Museum staff. The
2004-2005 Collective Conversations trial became a testing ground for "a
long term strategy right across the collections [...] not just anthropology, to
always bring in people to create this kind of 'contact zone' in the Museum
where people are free to speak and to have direct contact with objects."[172]
The development of Collective Conversations as a form of 'contact zone' is
evident through the titling of the Museum's permanent film studio as the
Contact Zone. The studio was set up for the specific purpose of recording
Collective Conversations.[173] It is important to note that the Museum links
their Contact Zone film studio with funding from the DCMS:

> The Contact Zone (funded by the Department for Culture Media
> and Sport's 'Renaissance in the Regions') is integrated into staff
> training and development, so that curators across all collection
> areas can continue the work of building-in community collaboration
> into the interpretation of all collections and exhibition and design
> staff may integrate the outputs into gallery development, temporary
> exhibitions and the Museum's website.[174]

This statement publically articulates Collective Conversations as a marker
of community engagement and an implicit part of the Museum's work.

"Your Museum, Your Stories"

The visibility of community engagement is a clear priority in the changes
made to the "Living Cultures" gallery in 2009. The 2009 audio-visual

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[169] Harris, personal interview 5.

[170] Harris, personal interview 5.

[171] Lynch, personal interview.

[172] Lynch, personal interview.

[173] "Collective Conversations" web.

[174] "Collective Conversations" web.

terminal announces to visitors through the exhibit title that this is "Your Museum, Your Stories". The exhibit is located on the left hand side on entering the "Living Cultures" gallery from "The Manchester Gallery" (Figure 4-26). The plaque introducing "Your Museum, Your Stories" tells the visitor that the Manchester Museum involves visitors and users in the process of developing exhibitions and galleries:

> Traditionally museums are places where collections are on display but out of reach, museum staff choose what to display and how to describe it. This museum is different visitors and users are involved in the development of exhibitions and galleries your knowledge adds to the museums understanding of the objects and specimens in its care [sic].[175]

Given that this statement is located at the entrance to the "Living Cultures" gallery, it could be interpreted by visitors as implying this museum practice has been integrated into the development of the entire "Living Cultures" gallery. The statement does not make it clear that the "Living Cultures" gallery, redisplayed in 2003 was not formed in this way. The "Your Museum Your Stories" area is, however, subtly separated from the rest of the "Living Cultures" gallery and linked to "The Manchester Gallery" through the extension of the grey carpet from the first gallery, in a sweeping curve to the "Living Cultures" gallery on which the 2009 exhibits are situated (Figure 4-26). In contrast, the rest of the gallery remains covered in polished pale pine flooring, forming a physical and distinct line between the 2009 and 2003 exhibits. This division between the two redisplays of 2003 and 2009 is intentional,[176] but it could have been made clearer through the use of the 'mind-map' interpretative display aesthetic in the "Your Museum, Your Stories" exhibits. Instead the labelling style actually adheres to the "Living Cultures" gallery convention, typed text with no hand drawn components (Figure 4-34). It is not obvious that the case behind the "Your Museum, Your Stories" audio-visual terminal, which exhibits the objects discussed in

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[175] "Your Museum, Your Stories," in Living Cultures, *Manchester Museum, University of Manchester,* text panel.

[176] Gurdeep Thiara, telephone conversation, 27 Sept. 2010.

the Collective Conversations, is connected to the terminal because there is no title or introductory text on the case to explicitly link it.

"Your Museum, Your Stories" audio-visual terminal displays six Collective Conversations videos, which incorporate objects from the 'Living Cultures' collection, plus an introduction to the project making a total of seven films on display. The text plaque on the terminal locates the Collective Conversations project as a way in which local people participate in museum work:

> Collective Conversations is one way that communities and individuals contribute to the museum's work. Local people discuss what the Manchester Museum's collections mean to them and the conversations are filmed people's personal stories and experiences help the museum explain the collections from a wider range of viewpoints. The films you can see here invite you to think about the museum's collection. What would you say? What would your story be?[177]

The Collective Conversations project is further described in an introductory video in the "Your Museum, Your Stories" audio-visual terminal featuring Gurdeep Thiara, Curator of Community Engagement (Outreach). Thiara states in the video:

> The collective conversations project gives people an opportunity to go behind the scenes of the Museum and have a look at the collection that's held in store, and especially to handle the objects, have a look at them up close, to feel their weight, look at the texture and the way that they might have been constructed and used and to think about the meanings and the life that those objects may suggest. I'm now in one of the Museum's storerooms. We have over four million objects in storage because actually only a small fraction of the collection is on display. Opening up the collection to the public is very important because you have the right to come and see what's here. It's really important that people come in to talk about our objects. We need to find out what people know about them because we don't know everything – we may only know part of the story - so after some discussion, the final conversations are then filmed on a video setup like this one by trained Museum staff.[178]

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[177] "Your Museum, Your Stories" touch screen.

[178] "Your Museum, Your Stories" touch screen.

This introductory film was created to encourage participation in Collective Conversations. Leaflets are also located in the gallery inviting visitors to get involved in Collective Conversations (Figure 4-27).[179] It has been over a year since the exhibit was installed and Gurdeep Thiara who is the contact for this project has not been approached by anyone wanting to participate.[180] Thiara considers that the "Your Museum, Your Stories" exhibit would be more effective in encouraging further public participation if located in a space within the Museum dedicated to participation.[181] Visitors enter the "Living Cultures" gallery presented with a finished product, a completed gallery; they are not encouraged to question but to accept what is presented. Gurdeep Thiara's assertion reflects the fact that neither the 2003 "Living Cultures" redisplay nor the 2009 interventions create a gallery that generates a critical dialogue that encourages participation and questioning.

For Collective Conversations to function as a dialogue between the people from the museum and the participating people from the source communities it is critical that all of the people involved are acknowledged. Yet interestingly in the "Your Museum, Your Stories" terminal the Collective Conversations are listed detailing the object being discussed and the source community participant's names only. The curators involved in four of the videos and the artist facilitator present in one, who are in shot in the videos, are not named in the title slide on the audio-visual terminal:

> **The Future of collections** – Our Living cultures curator talks to Tracey Zengeni about the changing role of museums
>
> **About a Southern Sudanese hand spear** - this prompts Mohamed Bahari to relate a sad story from his own town Esuki
>
> **About the developing traditions of the Kenti cloth** – DR Anna Aggrey links the designs of the Kenti cloth to its traditional meaning

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[179] *Collective Conversations Your Museum, Your Stories* (Manchester: Manchester Museum, University of Manchester, 2009) leaflet.

[180] Thiara, telephone conversation.

[181] Thiara, telephone conversation.

> **About raised beadwork** – Kahente Horn-Miller from a Canadian Mohawk community talks about the skills used to make a beadwork hat
>
> **About the history of Benin** – Ebi Ozigbo, Ehinomen Oboa and Esima Kpogho discuss the rich heritage of the Benin kingdom
>
> **About the Jade Emperor and Empress** – the Wai Yen Chinese Women's Society explain how and why every family in China keeps such a statue[182]

Significantly Stephen Welsh is identified as "our curator of Living Cultures" in the video titled "The Future of Collections" but he is not actually named.[183] In the context of the ethnographic exhibition naming, as discussed earlier in the context of the 2003 redisplay, is a contentious topic, for the un-named signifies the authoritative voice, the named could be thought of as the invited voice, permitted to be heard by the institution. In "About a Southern Sudanese hand spear" the Manchester Museum Community Advisory Panel member who is featured on his own is named.[184] This inadvertently distinguishes him from the other Museum representatives and following the titling convention actively locates him as a local community member. The absence of the names of the Museum facilitators in the context of the ethnographic gallery is significant and perpetuates the notion that the Museum is the un-named authority. Naming these people and acknowledging their link with the museum in the title screen, i.e. curator, artist commissioned by museum, member of the Community Advisory Panel, would begin to reveal the complexities of the contact histories and the potential for contact relationships to transform. This omission actively ignores the contact histories and contact relations of the museum, as collector and collection, with the members of the source communities as collected.

Chuhan, the digital media artist who created Rekindle, features as a museum intermediary in the Collective Conversation titled "About the

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[182] "Your Museum, Your Stories," touch screen.

[183] "Your Museum, Your Stories," touch screen.

[184] "Your Museum, Your Stories," touch screen.

history of Benin".[185] He brings the objects to be discussed into shot; he handles them first, and presents them to the three participants, asking questions to prompt dialogue. The absence of his name in the introductory title screen locates him, through the titling convention, firmly within the Museum structure. In the 2003 redisplay, in Rekindle, the artist Chuhan is clearly identified, the authority of the artist is testified by his individuality. In 2009 the artist is presented as a museum representative and not an artist, his critical independence eroded. The authority of the Museum is testified by its silence.

Only one of the Collective Conversations on display in "Your Museums, Your Stories", "The Future of Collections", presents an active dialogue between the museum representative, Stephen Welsh, and the local person participating, Tracey Zengeni.[186] The other Museum representatives don't enter into a conversation or a dialogue and refrain from contributing discursive comments. Characteristically the participants' comments are summarized and a question is asked to instigate a further response; the Museum representatives' participation functions within the parameters of a facilitator in a position of control, not as an equal in conversation.

For Collective Conversations to actually function as a 'contact zone' in which relationships can develop, acknowledgement of the existing contact relations and contact histories are essential. Yet the distinction between local people from source communities and the Museum representatives remains clearly demarcated in both the "Rekindle" series and the Collective Conversations videos on display in the "Living Cultures" gallery. Stephen Welsh, observes:

> It's interesting that you have that level of again anonymity the institution presents the facts, the artist writes a verse or a poem and the community group is so called asked to remember it or to have some sort of emotional response to it. But we're moving around now, those roles are becoming less and less polemic and

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[185] "Your Museum, Your Stories," touch screen.

[186] "Your Museum, Your Stories," touch screen.

> we're encouraging personalities to come out, passions to be seen and to be demonstrable, we know this.[187]

In the 2009 "Living Cultures" gallery conflicting museum practices coexist reflecting the contradictory character of this period in regional museums of 1997 to 2010. The institution still presents the 'facts' whilst the community groups emote and remember, and the artist facilitates the location of the community presence in the Museum.

Conclusion: collecting living cultures

Collecting of objects in the 'Living Cultures' department at Manchester Museum through this thesis's period of study, 1997-2010, has largely stopped,[188] yet the collection of interpretations from source communities or living cultures has escalated through the "Rekindle" video series and the Collective Conversations project. These projects are important in the history of the collection. Both curators, Harris and Welsh, consider the active use of the collection as progressive, and Welsh points out that "Rekindle" and Collective Conversations contribute another layer of interpretation to the collection. [189] Collecting interpretations is, I would argue, a 'collecting' practice. It is, however, not analysed yet in this way. Instead it is incorporated into the government's rhetoric, associated with New Labour's cultural diversity and community cohesion agenda and the subsequent museum rhetoric of cultural diversity, outreach, audience development and public programming. This 'collecting' activity reflects the convergence of the cultural diversity agenda, increasing engagement of ethnic minority communities, with museums' work with source communities, informed by postcolonial issues surrounding the control and production of cultural identities. This convergence, combined with funding pre-requisites means

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[187] Welsh, personal interview.

[188] In the 2005 personal interview with Lisa Harris, curator of 'Living Cultures' (2004-2007), Harris pointed out that there was a moratorium on collecting and the collections policy was being re-written. In the 2010 personal interview with Stephen Welch, curator of 'Living Cultures' (2007-), Welch noted the department was not actively collecting and Malcolm Chapman, Head of Collections Management, was writing a new collections strategy.

[189] Harris, personal interview 5; Welsh, personal interview.

the ability to demonstrate access and engagement with people from source communities has become of paramount importance to the museum.

The series of redisplay case studies at Manchester Museum, discussed here, illuminates the growing emphasis placed upon the 'presentation' of local people from ethnic minority communities in the permanent ethnographic exhibits; this is in line with cultural diversity policies which demand the increase in visibility of diversity within all museum practice. In correspondence with the 1995 redisplay source communities input had been sought and considered. This included a period of consultation with the All Nations Forum, promoting the Native American Peoples of North America, and contact with members of the Mancunian organisation the Broad African Representative Council. This activity was, however, not detailed in the gallery for visitors to find out about. Within the 2003 redisplay, through "Rekindle", the contributions of members of the Community Advisory Panel were significantly displayed around the permanent gallery on a total of five touch-screens. By 2009 both the addition of the "Your Museum, Your Stories" exhibit in the "Living Cultures" gallery and the creation of "The Manchester Gallery" contributed to the visibility of diversity. As previously noted the large freestanding introductory plaque to "The Manchester Gallery" actively records the collaboration with the local community in the development of the exhibition, for all future visitors to see. This increase in activity is significant in the context of this thesis and provides evidence of the expectation, in this period, for cultural diversity practices to be embedded in museums.

Bhabha's notion of the containment of cultural difference is active in both "Rekindle" and Collective Conversations in the context of the permanent ethnographic gallery. For the distinction between local people from ethnic minority communities and the institution remains clearly demarcated in both the "Rekindle" series and the Collective Conversations videos on display in the "Living Cultures" gallery. Local people from source communities participating in "Rekindle" and Collective Conversations are notably named

in the respective exhibits this is juxtaposed with the prevalent institutional voice that runs throughout the gallery, which remains un-named. The interpretations contributed by the participants can be characterised as providing an emotional response that revolves around personal memories whilst the institution presents the 'facts'.

The artist Chuhan, through "Rekindle" and Collective Conversations, has facilitated the location of the community presence in the Museum, creating an audio-visual form of intervention. Importantly, in the 2003 redisplay, in "Rekindle", Chuhan is clearly identified as an artist, in 2009 he is presented as a Manchester Museum representative, a facilitator in the Collective Conversation he features in,[190] his independence eroded. By 2009 the artist is firmly absorbed into the Museum's processes to the extent that he now publically represents the Museum, presented as an un-named voice of authority. A significant shift in the context of the ethnographic exhibition from named to un-named.

The authority of the display of ethnographic collections is firmly based on the assumption that objects can reveal information about a collective identity. Problems with defining the identities of cultures from objects is readily considered to be a problem of interpretative method as opposed to a fundamental problem with the link between object and group identity.[191] This notion that the answer lies within the ascertainment of the perfect interpretative method seems to have been a particularly influential idea informing much of the activity surrounding the recent redevelopment of ethnographic displays. This case study shows that the dominant method over the period 1997-2010 at Manchester Museum has focused on the collection of source communities' interpretations. This activity is of value to the Museum because it enables them to demonstrate community

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[190] The Collective Conversation Kuljit Chuhan features in, is titled: About the history of Benin, see "Your Museum, Your Stories," touch screen.

[191] Sean Hides, "The genealogy of material culture and cultural identity," *Experiencing Material Culture in the Western World*, ed., Susan M. Pearce, (London; Leicester University Press, 1997) 12, print.

engagement and outreach work through its collection interpretations in the
permanent displays to both funders and communities.

Figure 4-1 The Manchester Museum designed by Alfred Waterhouse view from Oxford Road. Manchester: Manchester Museum. Postcard.

Figure 4-2 The Manchester Museum in 2005. Personal photograph. 11 Mar. 2005.
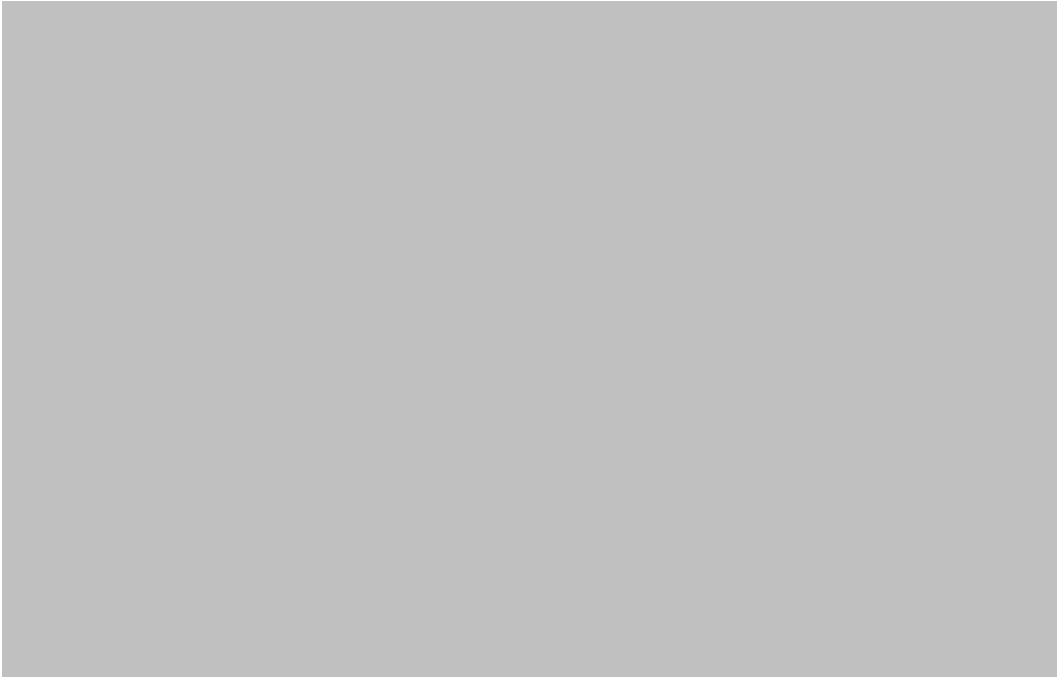
Figure 4-3 Colonial names were still in use prior to the 1995 redisplay, "Ceylon" is used to title the second case on the left. This photograph was taken in March 1993. "Ethnology Gallery." *Manchester Museum, University of Manchester*. Manchester. 1958-1995. Exhibition. Bankes "From Ethnology to Explorers and Encounters, 80.

Figure 4-4 "African Beadwork" exhibit circa 1970s. "Ethnology Gallery". Exhibition. The Manchester Museum, University of Manchester. JPEG file.

Figure 4-5 "People of Manchester" case created for the "Explorers and Encounters"
exhibition, 1995 redisplay. The gallery was placed under the title "Living Cultures"
in the 2003 redisplay. "Explorers and Encounters." *Manchester Museum, University
of Manchester*. Manchester. 1995-2003. Exhibition; "Living Cultures." *The
Manchester Museum, University of Manchester.* Manchester. 2003-. Exhibition.
Personal photograph. 11 Mar. 2005.

Figure 4-6 Football scarves are visible below the Tesco trolley which has an umbrella and hub caps in the basket; "People of Manchester" case on permanent display from 1995 to 2009. "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Mar. 2005.

Figure 4-7 Both the "Explorers and Encounters" exhibition from 1995 and the new gallery opened in 2003 are marked as number 11 under the title "Living Cultures" in the floorplan. *Gallery Floorplan*. Manchester: The Manchester Museum, 2005. Leaflet.

Figure 4-8 Nkamuhayo from Uganda performing a libation in 1995 at the opening of the "Explorers and Encounters" exhibition. *The Manchester Museum*. Manchester: The Manchester Museum, 1998. 4. Print.

Figure 4-9 The right-hand side of the first of the "Living Cultures" exhibitions, known as "Explorers and Encounters" prior to 2003. Dark wooden display cabinets, pale carpet and duck egg blue walls line the gallery. "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Mar. 2005.

Figure 4-10 The "Collectors and Collections" exhibit in the first of the "Living Cultures" exhibitions, previously referred to as the "Explorers and Encounters" gallery prior to 2003. "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 13 Mar. 2005.

Figure 4-11 Large Buddha seen from the main staircase located in the first of the "Living Cultures" exhibitions known previously as "Explorers and Encounters". "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Mar. 2005.

Figure 4-12 The wall behind the Buddha divides the first of the "Living cultures" exhibition spaces, previously known as "Explorers and Encounters". "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 14 Mar. 2005.

Figure 4-13 Entrance to the second of the "Living Cultures" exhibitions from the first. This doorway and the second gallery space was created in 2003. "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 14 Mar. 2005.

Figure 4-14 A view down the left hand-side of the second "Living Cultures" exhibition. Tall glass display cases with grey bases and tops line the gallery and fill the central spaces. "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11. Mar. 2005.

Figure 4-15 The first "Rekindle" touch screen in the "Cloth and Clothing" case about to be activated. "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 13 Mar. 2005.

Figure 4-16 The second "Rekindle" touch screen in the "Cloth and Clothing" case, video playing. "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Mar. 2005.

Figure 4-17 Large carved Benin elephant tusk shown to the right of the "Masks and Carvings" case. This image depicts the right hand-side of the exhibition from the entrance. "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 10 Mar. 2005.

Figure 4-18 Rolls of textiles from the Pacific Islands in the "Cloth and Clothing" case displayed along side a map, images that show manufacturing processes, and textiles in use. "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 6 Jul. 2010.

Figure 4-19 Manufacturing processes shown in the "Cloth and Clothing" case.
"Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal Photograph. 7 Jul. 2010.

Figure 4-20 Textiles from the Pacific Islands shown in use in the "Cloth and
Clothing" case. "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal Photograph. 7 Jul. 2010.

Figure 4-21 Native North American Plains clothing in the "Cloth and Clothing" exhibit, a dress is held in a cross shape. "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 7 Jul. 2010.

Figure 4-22 The "Cloth and Clothing" text panel, on the right, provides details on the 1833 expedition to North America in which the Plains Native Americans were studied. "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 7 Jul. 2010.

Figure 4-23 The central "Out of Clay" exhibit is shown with the "Rekindle" touch screens embedded either side in the case. "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 12 Mar. 2005.

Figure 4-24 "Rekindle" screen to the right of the central "Out of Clay" case. "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 12 Mar. 2005.

Figure 4-25 "Your Museum, Your Stories" exhibit was installed in 2009 in the remaining "Living Cultures" exhibition. The first of the "Living Cultures" exhibitions, previously referred to as "Explorers and Encounters," was replaced in 2009 with "the Manchester Gallery." "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 7 Jul. 2010.

Figure 4-26 The "Your Museum, Your Stories" area is carpeted which creates a visible connection between "The Manchester Gallery" and the "Your Museum, Your Stories" exhibit. "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 7 Jul. 2010.

Figure 4-27 *Collective Conversations* leaflet inviting people to participate in the project, presented by the "Your Museum, Your Stories" exhibit. "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Manchester: Manchester Museum, 2009. Print.

Figure 4-28 "The Manchester Gallery" text panel. "The Manchester Gallery."
Manchester Museum, University of Manchester. Manchester. 2009-. Exhibition.
Personal photograph. 9 Jul. 2010.

Figure 4-29 "The Manchester Gallery" 2009 redisplay. "The Manchester Gallery."
Exhibition. Personal photograph. 9 Jul. 2010.

Figure 4-30 Stopes a contributor to the Manchester Museum collection is depicted in "The Manchester Gallery", 2009 redisplay. Dotted lines and arrows connect her image, with the coal sample and text in the display. Twenty-one collectors feature in the Gallery. "The Manchester Gallery." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 6 Jul. 2010.

Figure 4-31 "Journeys" case. The mind-map arrows and hand written text are visible. "The Manchester Gallery." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 6 Jul. 2010.
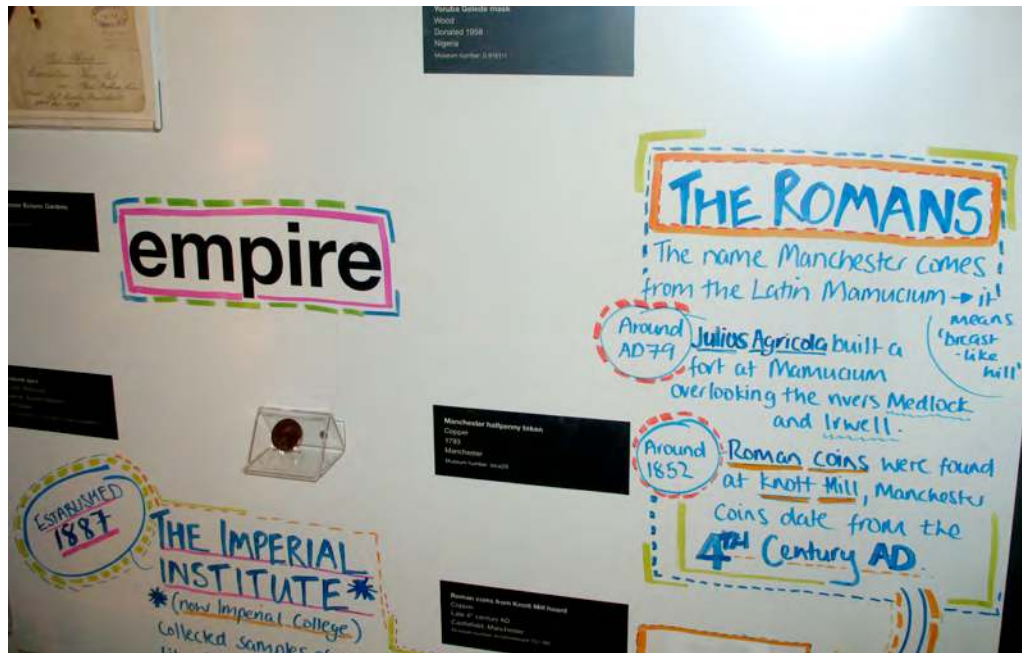
Figure 4-32 The word "Empire" is located next to "The Romans" in the "Journeys" case. "The Manchester Gallery." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 6 Jul. 2010.

Figure 4-33 Regular typed object labels are found alongside the mind-mapping hand drawn style. "The Manchester Gallery." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 7 Jul. 2010.

Figure 4-34 The object labels in the "Your Museum, Your Stories" display case do not work with the mind mapping technique used in "The Manchester Gallery", instead the labels are typed and located at the bottom of the case in line with the "Living Cultures" exhibition. "Living Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 7 Jul. 2010.

Chapter 5 : Art and identity

Introduction

Inviting artists to create, curate or facilitate in response to a collection, including ethnographic collections, is now commonplace in regional museums in England. In Autumn 2010 twelve out of fourteen museums[1] with Designated ethnographic collections were found to have worked with artists in the last sixteen months. The remaining two museums had both developed creative projects in this period.[2] Two of the twelve museums ran family friendly performances and workshops specifically led by artists, including the Pitt Rivers Museum's theatrical demonstration of Noh Theatre masks, followed by a Japanese mask workshop with mask maker Hideta Kitazawa, on 5 December 2009.[3] The Horniman Museum offers an extensive range of regular and one-off workshops, on the 28 October 2010 this Museum presented a Beta dance performance and workshop with performer Nzinga to mark fifty years of Nigerian independence.[4]

In three of the regional museums, artists were part of residency programmes, such as that taken up by artist Ansuman Biswas, who lived in Manchester Museum's gothic tower for forty days and nights from 27 June

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[1] The fourteen museums with Designated ethnographic collections are: Brighton Museum and Art Gallery; Bristol Museum and Art Gallery; Compton Verney; Durham University Oriental Museum; Horniman Museum; Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge; Pitt Rivers Museum; University College London, Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology; Manchester Museum, University of Manchester; University of Oxford, Ashmolean Museum; Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter; Sheffield City Museums; The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; Wellcome Trust ("Designated Collections," London: Museums, Libraries & Museums, PDF file).

[2] The two creative projects are: Sheffield City Museums', Graves Gallery's 'Great British Quilt' public participation project, which provides an opportunity to create a personal quilted image on specific workshop days in 2010, and Brighton Museum and Art Gallery's project titled 'Design for Life' in which a fashion designer worked with the museum's fashion collections, local school children and a parents group from 2009 to 2010.

[3] "Previous Exhibitions and Events," *Pitt Rivers Museum*, Oxford, Pitt Rivers Museum, 23 Oct. 2010, web.

[4] "What's on today," *Horniman Museum*, London, Horniman Museum, web, 23 Oct. 2010.

2009.[5] In one widely publicised instance the artist, Banksy, took curatorial control of the whole of Bristol Museum and Art Gallery from 13 June 2009 to 1 September 2009 with only three members of the museum staff knowing in advance.[6] A hundred pieces of artwork were installed into the Museum's galleries, seventy-eight of which were created for the exhibition titled "Banksy v Bristol Museum".

Eleven museums exhibited the work of their respective artists in a temporary exhibition. The work of these artists can be further divided into two categories: six artworks were generated that relate to material objects from the collection, and five responded to the institution itself. The exhibition "Kurt Tong: In case it rains in heaven" fits in to the first category. In this exhibition current and ancient Chinese burial traditions are explored. The online exhibition description states that according to Chinese belief, any material possession you want in heaven, from mundane domestic appliances to "money, cars and even ipods,"[7] needs to be sent with you when you die, signified in paper form. Artist Kurt Tong created a sequence of images showing the elaborate paper versions of the belongings of the deceased, which relatives had prepared as part of the burial ceremony. These images are juxtaposed with the ancient Chinese Bronzes held in the Compton Verney collection, "themselves once used for ceremonial offerings to the dead."[8] This juxtaposition simultaneously emphasizes the longevity of Chinese burial ceremonies and the changes in cultural practices, importantly representing Chinese culture as fluid, changeable and not fixed. Often when artists' work corresponds with the collections, meaning is added to the interpretative offering through a layer of narrative that conveys individuality or personality, a human account that encourages visitors to

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[5] "Past exhibitions," *The University of Manchester, The Manchester Museum*, Manchester, *The* Manchester Museum, University of Manchester, web, 23 Oct. 2010.

[6] Rebecca Cafe, "Banksy v Bristol Museum," *BBC Bristol,* 12 June 2009, Bristol, BBC, web, 23 Oct. 2010.

[7] "Exhibition: Kurt tong: In Case it Rains in Heaven," *Compton Verney*, Warwickshire, Compton Verney, web, 23 Oct. 2010.

[8] "Exhibition: Kurt tong: In Case it Rains in Heaven" web.

engage in the exhibition.[9] Interventions can effectively provide time for visitors to pause and reflect upon the frame of the museum, its effect on the objects placed within its walls, how meaning is made and not made. It permits multiple interpretations, which in turn encourages visitors to question the notion of a single truth implied through the un-named institutional voice, in the gallery space. The visitor is conceptually free to take elements of each of the interpretations, to agree with some parts and reject others. This supports critical thinking and discussion, thus artistic involvement addresses the curators' concern with dismantling single truths.

The remaining five artworks exhibited in the Designated museums were inspired by the museum as an institution, regarding its past and present roles as opposed to its collections. For example, Weimin He, the Ashmolean Museum's artist in residence, created drawings and prints on the development of the museum, exhibited from 4 November 2009 – 30 April 2010 in an exhibition titled "Building the New Ashmolean: Drawings and Prints by Weimin He".[10] In the exhibition at the Pitt Rivers Museum, "Time and Space", painter Dionne Barber "seeks to explore and record traces of her own existence, and of those caught within the Museum displays, to capture the power of the space, atmosphere and potency that makes the Pitt Rivers the experience it is."[11] Both Weimin He and Dionne Barber's artwork attends to the physical site of the museum, focusing on the characteristics of the space and its influence on the visitors. This artwork, which reflects upon the institution, contributes to a dialogue about the museum as a particular context; drawing attention to visitors' practices

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[9] See, for example Fred Wilson's use of sound recording that disrupts the quiet environment of the museum and literally gives a voice back to the repressed in *Colonial Collections* (1990) from "The Other Museum" (1990), where African masks, blind folded and gagged with French and British flags, appear to speak. Also see his oil painting audio interventions in "Mining the Museum" (1992) in which the barely visible African-American slaves depicted with their masters raise questions, triggered by visitors' movements. Wilson also uses titling and labelling to mobilize an individual human account in *Mine/Yours* (1995) from "Collectibles" (1995), and in *Friendly Natives* (1990), from "The Other Museum" (1990), where labels of human remains read someone's mother, someone's father, someone's sister, someone's brother.

[10] "Exhibitions current," *Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Oxford,* Oxford, Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Oxford, web, 23 Oct. 2010.

[11] "Previous Exhibitions and Events" web.

of looking and the assumptions made about the information presented in the museum.

Artists' work, within the context of the museum, has potential to function in a variety of ways. The work has the capacity to: develop additional layers of interpretation of collections through site specific artist installations; contribute reflective institutional critique upon museum practices; engage visitors, renegotiating practices of looking within the museum and ultimately produce, additional historical accounts.

Artists and their work are usually involved in museums on a fixed term project-by-project basis, which means the artwork is immersed within a pre-existing cultural agenda, with a specific notion of the project's audience. The role of the artist and their work is confined within this specific context; they are a guest invited into the museum. The position of artist curator, in part, contributes to a dialogue that addresses this power imbalance between artist and museum because it allows curatorial control over a particular exhibition, or sometimes an entire museum, as in the case of Banksy at Bristol Museum and Art Gallery. But, the fact still remains, the artist is given control by the institution. The negotiation of the level of autonomy, the artist has from the museum, is an important preliminary process that has to be agreed upon.

Previous chapters, especially 3 and 4, have examined how at least one strategy of New Labour's 'cultural diversity' agenda has been addressed through the use of artists' commissions. This chapter further investigates the relationship between the artist and the museum for, of course, artists were already intervening in museums before New Labour came into power. The practices discussed in this chapter provide further analysis of the changing role of artists in regional museums between 1997 and 2010 raised earlier.

This chapter comprises of three sections, the first of which focuses on artistic interventions in museums created prior to 1997, to provide important background, to the role of the artist in the museum. The contribution of artistic interventions into museum spaces during the 1990s, as part of an

institutional critique, is investigated through, in particular, Fred Wilson's reconstruction and mimicking of museum collection practices and exhibition conventions, that illuminate the power relationships implicit in classification processes. In the second section of this chapter, the commissioning of source community artists is discussed, with reference to the ongoing commitment of museums to authenticity, from the 19th century through to the 21st century. The third section of this chapter introduces the doctoral artwork created as a product of the observations made in the ethnographic galleries, and analysis of their meaning. This work attempts to address colonial power relationships and the museum collection together with display practices. It forms a critique of the construction of representation in the museum, that is, how people are displayed through objects, images, and text.

The art of intervention

The collection and interpretation of ethnographic objects has been the subject of much debate amongst anthropologists, museum studies scholars, curators and artists[12] who have sought, on the one hand, to reveal and, on the other, to resist colonial representations in contemporary museums. This chapter will focus on Fred Wilson's artwork, from the late 1980s to the early 1990s, which forms an institutional critique of the museum, demonstrating and re-appropriating the impact of colonial legacies upon museum collection and display practices of representing once colonised people.

Fred Wilson

Fred Wilson, artist, curator, gallery owner, and writer, is widely referenced when discussing artistic interventions in museums, and issues revolving

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[12] See for example, Susan Hiller's "Art and anthropology / Anthropology and art" (1977), "Dedicated to the Unknown Artists" (1978) and "An artist looks at ethnographic exhibitions" (1986) discussed in Barbara Einzig, ed., *Thinking about art conversations with Susan Hiller* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996) print; Susan Hiller, ed., *Myths of Primitivism* (London: Routledge, 1991) print; Eduardo Paolozzi "Lost Magic Kingdoms" (1985) detailed in Museum of Mankind, *Lost Magic Kingdoms and six paper moons from Nahuatl: an exhibition at The Museum of Mankind / Eduardo Paolozzi* (London: British Museums Publications, 1985) print; Fred Wilson's "The Other Museum" (1990) and "Mining the Museum" (1992) both of which are discussed in Gonzalez 64-119.

around race and representation in the museum.[13] His work, from the late 1980s and early 1990s, forms an institutional critique of the museum. He highlights the staging of meaning through museum exhibits demonstrating, for example, the specific use of colour in ethnographic exhibition spaces, notably reds and browns, in contrast to displays of fine art in white cubes.[14] Museum practices of display including: juxtaposition, labelling, periodisation, proximity of one object to another, the use of plinths, and the walk through, are manipulated by Wilson, to mimic museum display techniques in his work.[15]

Mimicry is a distinct tool Wilson utilises in his artworks; a considered re-appropriation of what Homi Bhabha refers to as "colonial mimicry."[16] Bhabha identifies mimicry as "one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge"[17] and considers mimicry in two distinct ways. Firstly, he emphasizes that colonised lands and people endure a process of colonial camouflage;[18] of alignment with coloniser through a process of "a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which 'appropriates' the Other as it visualizes power."[19] Mimicry according to Bhabha, informs the practice of colonial administration in the

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[13] See for example, Appiah; Maurice Berger, ed., *Fred Wilson: objects and installations 1979-2000* (Baltimore: Center for Art and Visual Culture University of Maryland Baltimore County, 2001) print; Corrin, "Artists Look at Museums" 388-397; Gonzalez 64-119; Ivan Karp and Fred Wilson, "Constructing the spectacle of culture in museums," *Thinking about exhibitions*, ed. Reesa Greenbery, Bruce W. Ferguson and Sandy Nairne (London: Routledge, 1996) 251-267, print; Richard Klein, *Fred Wilson: Black like me* (Ridgefield: Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, 2005) print; Malbert, "Artists as curators," 26.

[14] See for example the following Fred Wilson exhibitions regarding the manipulation of wall colour, "Rooms with a View" (1987), "The Struggle Between Culture and the Context of Art" (1990), "The Other Museum" (1991), "Primitivism: High and Low" (1991).

[15] See for example Wilson's *Metalwork 1793*-1880, in "Mining the Museum" (1992) for the use of juxtaposition; Friendly *Natives*, in "Primitivism: High and Low" (1991) for the manipulation of labels; and *Modes of transport 1788-90* in "Mining the Museum" (1992) for the use of periodisation.

[16] Bhabha, *The location of Culture* 122.

[17] Bhabha, *The location of Culture* 122.

[18] Jacques Lacan,"The Line and Light, Of the Gaze," in his *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis* (London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psych-Analysis, 1977) 99 qtd.in Bhabha *The location of Culture* 121.

[19] Bhabha, *The location of Culture* 122.

colonies, and contributes to the mechanisation of control. Secondly, Bhabha highlights how "[m]imicry is also the sign of the inappropriate [...] a difference or recalcitrance which coheres the dominant strategic function of colonial power, intensifies surveillance, and poses an immanent threat to both 'normalized' knowledges and disciplinary powers."[20] Mimicry, according to Bhabha, therefore, contributes to the undoing of colonial control, for the act of mimicry reveals the artifice, the construction of "'normalised' knowledges and disciplinary powers."[21] Wilson highlights the presence of colonial power relationships within the museums' collections and displays, whilst his use of mimicry also shows the artifice or the staging of meaning within the museum. Wilson identifies the permanent displays in museums as forming a specific point of view.

"Mining the Museum" is a seminal piece of installation artwork by Wilson exhibited from 1992 to 1993 on the third floor of the Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore. "Mining the Museum" was co-curated by Lisa Corrin the Director of The Contemporary Gallery in Baltimore, known as 'the museum with no walls'. The Contemporary Gallery had extensive experience of instigating site-specific projects and working in collaboration with artists and local people.

A key strategy of Wilson's "Mining the Museum" was to consciously work with museum methods of display, but introduce objects previously held in storage, that had been excluded from the permanent display and therefore absent from the Museum's interpretation of the local history. These objects, were selected for their ability to manifest and reflect Maryland's history of slavery and racial prejudice, when juxtaposed with objects found in the usual permanent display. In an exhibit titled *Modes of Transport 1770-1910*, Wilson placed a Ku Klux Klan hood in an antique pram. Whilst in a display titled *Metalwork 1793-1880*, slave shackles were located in a cabinet of decorative silverware. The juxtaposition in *Metalwork 1793-1880* of the slave shackles with ornate silverware contributes to the articulation of the

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[20] Bhabha, *The location of Culture* 122-123.

[21] Bhabha, *The location of Culture* 123. For further discussion on this subject area see "The politics of parody" in: Linda Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism* (London: Routledge, 1989) chapter 4, print.

formation of a historical legacy, which directly links slavery to the wealth in the area. The means of creating wealth, in the South, is emphasized through the inclusion of the shackles, producing another way of reading metals. It becomes impossible to perceive the silverware simply as objects of aesthetic beauty and craftsmanship.

The time periods included in the display titles mentioned in "Mining the Museum", *Metalwork 1793-1880* and *Modes of Transport 1770-1910*, relate to important historical moments in America's history. The *Metalwork* dates, 1793-1880, refer to the period in which slavery became abolished in the Americas. Jennifer Gonzalez in her study of Wilson's work identifies the years specified as referring to the "1793 Anti-Slavery Act of Ontario, Canada [… and] the abolition of slavery in Cuba in 1880."[22] The *Modes of Transport* dates, 1770-1910, could relate to the Boston Massacre in 1770 when British troops fired into a mob demonstrating at the customs commission. This event is considered to mark the beginning of the American Revolution. The first to be killed in the Massacre, and subsequently recorded as the first martyr of the Revolution, is Crispus Attucks an African-American, fugitive slave and merchant seaman.[23] In 1910 the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was established.[24] The addition of dates to the titling of the displays in "Mining the Museum" is a clear example of the different levels upon which Wilson's work can be accessed. Significantly, the periodisation acknowledges an African-American history that was largely absent in the Museum.

Both the installations mentioned function within the framework of a traditional museum display: objects on a plinth presented to visitors to observe. Wilson's exhibition at the Maryland Historical Society reflects the power of the juxtaposition of objects, to convey meaning and knowledge.

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[22] Gonzalez 85.

[23] Benjamin Quarrels, *The Negro in the American Revolution* (Williamsburg: University of North Carolina Press, 1961) print.

[24] "National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)," *The Hutchinson Dictionary of World History* ed. Jennifer Speake (Oxford: Helicon Publishing Ltd, 1993) 416, print.

He illuminates the Museum's existing interpretative framework in which slavery is conspicuously absent from the public displays, yet present in the collection held in private storage areas. Through "Mining the Museum" objects held in areas with restricted access become available for public view through Wilson's intervention.[25] He uses museum display processes, familiar to the visitor, to consciously create a different order of things. This in turn, leads to a different knowledge of things, instigating a shift in the visitors' understanding of the local history and the function of the Museum itself.

Museums become a stage upon which to argue for a different kind of knowledge. Simultaneously, as knowledge within the museum context is shown to be something that is staged, it demonstrates that it can therefore be re-staged. The location of the installation of "Mining the Museum" on the third floor of the museum provided visitors with the opportunity to revisit their respective perceptions of the museum as they walked down through the museum galleries to exit the building. Gonzalez, in *Subject to Display,*[26] reflects upon the importance of Wilson's installation, communicating the idea to the visitors, that the museum was not a neutral place exhibiting fact. But rather a site in which a specific point of view was presented, and presented so convincingly it seemed complete - "so complete that you don't even begin to think of other ways of seeing things."[27] This institutional point of view is a subject that Wilson further emphasizes through the integration of individuals' voices in to his exhibitions.

In Wilson's installation at White Columns, New York in 1990, titled "The Other Museum", he creates a fictional ethnographic exhibition, challenging the 'othering' of what would now be called, source communities. In one

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[25] Wilson's artistic strategies have been reproduced by a number of other artists, selecting objects from museum stores to then juxtapose with objects on permanent display to illicit new narratives or to emphasize the museum's and gallery's point of view. Including for example Hans Haake's contribution to the "Give and Take" exhibition 30 January – 1 April 2001 exhibited in the Serpentine Gallery titled *Mixed Messages*. For information on this exhibition and Haacke's contribution see, Leigh Markopoulos ed., *Give and Take 1 exhibition 2 sites* (London: Serpentine Gallery, 2001) print.

[26] Gonzalez 64-119.

[27] Gonzalez 96.

artwork, *Colonial Collection* (1990), a series of six Dan and Ibo masks from former French and British African colonies, were hung on a wall and either blindfolded or gagged with imperial flags. Gonzalez links the blinding and gagging of the masks with the colonialists' flags as a sign of the physical impact colonialism had on African peoples: "starvation, blinding, execution, silencing."[28] Wilson breaks that silence with an audio-visual intervention on one of the masks. Maurice Berger explains that one of the masks has:

> [A] video projection of moving lips synchronized to a taped voice that intoned: "Don't just look at me, listen to me. Don't just own me, understand me. Don't just talk about me; talk to me. I am still alive."[29]

Wilson, in a very literal sense, gives a voice to the people the masks are being used to represent, providing a clear break from the institutional voice.[30] This is a technique he has employed in a number of artworks.[31] The audio demands the viewer re-evaluates their perception of the masks and their relationship to them through the questions voiced, which ask for interaction, conversation and understanding. Gonzalez highlights the fact that "[t]he words challenged the complicity of the audience in maintaining a comfortable distance between the art object and the culture from which it was removed."[32] This challenge Wilson creates, to the comfortable distance maintained in museums between visitor and the collections, encourages the visitor to think about the construction of this distance, and the people and cultures the objects are being used to represent.

Fundamentally, Wilson's artwork renders the museum an important site of discussion, highlighting the construction of meaning in museums. His role as an artist, in relation to the museum, could therefore be considered, as stated in Chapter 1, as a contribution to the institutional critique of the

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[28] Gonzalez 69.

[29] Berger 11.

[30] Gonzalez 69.

[31] See Gonzalez 87, for Fred Wilson's lighting and audio, painting interventions in "Mining the Museum". The paintings he used include The Alexander Contee Hanson Family portrait (Robert Edge Pine, ca. 1787) and portrait of Henry Darnall III (Justus Engelhardt Kuhn, ca. 1710).

[32] Gonzalez 69.

museum prevalent in the 1990s. This function of artists in museums, discussed in Chapter 3, in relation to the 'World Art' collection at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery in 1995, has co-existed with the source community artists' work held in collections.

Commissioning source community artists

The commissioning of source community artists and makers has a long and established role within museum ethnographic collecting.[33] Chantal Knowles, Curator of Ethnography, National Museums of Scotland, writing in the *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, 2003, highlights:

> Commissioning items for collections goes right back to the first collectors: anthropological fieldworkers working within the theory of salvage ethnography, obsessed over collecting 'complete' or 'representative' collections and were frequent commissioners of items. The artefacts they procured may have been made in order to replicate an artefact that was already obsolete, or to acquire a 'pristine' or unused version of something they had seen, or even to obtain scale models of large items that they could not hope to ship home.[34]

The contemporary commissioning of source community artists, from local artists to Fred Wilson, can be considered in relation to this legacy. For many of the issues, pertaining to the early commissioning practices, apply to the recent activity involving source community artists and museums. The influence of the act of commissioning itself is therefore important to consider.

Knowledge of commissioning practices are informed by either traditional museum collecting, which always included commissioning makers to complete collections, or, new ideas and understandings of the socio-political theories of multiculturalism with the aim of presenting cultural diversity. What is striking, is that within ethnographic exhibitions, often the two influences co-exist, resulting in the juxtaposition of 19th century collecting practices and late 20th century notions of multiculturalism. In line

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[33] See for example Chantal Knowles, "Commissioning Art: Objects, Ethnography and Contemporary Collecting," *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, No 15 (2003): 57-66, print.

[34] Knowles 57.

with either practice, a demand can be created, for certain items or ritualistic performances, that might otherwise have slipped into obscurity because artists and makers respond to the external influence of the commissioner. Consequently, previously considered obsolete items and ritualistic performances can end up being publically displayed as common and illustrate, inaccurately, a living culture and a people.[35] Yet implicit in the commissioning practice, is the assumption of a substantial level of authenticity, manifest in both the commissioned product and the involvement with source communities. The work commissioned however can be more accurately considered as a product of the 'contact' between commissioner and maker, artist, or performer. This 'contact' stages a renegotiation of power relationships within the context of an existing 'contact history', that is, a history of trade, expansion and imperialism. The contact, in this context, is almost a therapeutic process, manifest in the preoccupation with 'living culture'[36] and 'intangible heritage'.[37] These concepts have entered into current museum practice and can be considered as an articulation of the 21st century commitment to and pursuit of authenticity. Interestingly, the search for authenticity is at once a 19th century mission and a 21st century preoccupation. The longevity and currency of 'authenticity' is illustrated in February 2009 in the *Museums Journal* article "Source Materials", in which Felicity Heywood states, "[i]t is clear that the main benefit to the museum in working with indigenous individuals or groups is to bring authenticity to the collections."[38] The very presence of indigenous people in the museum is considered to convey the

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[35] For further discussion of these issues see, Richard Bauman and Patricia Sawin, "The politics of participation in folklife festivals," Karp and Lavine *Exhibiting Cultures* 288-314; Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Objects of Ethnography," Karp and Lavine *Exhibiting Cultures* 386-443; Knowles 57-66; Christopher Wingfield, " 'Feeling the Vibes: Dealing with Intangible Heritage' – An Introduction," *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, No 19 (2007): 9-20, print.

[36] See, Kreps, *Liberating Culture* 149-152.

[37] For a discussion on intangible heritage see for example, Peter Davis, "New museologies and the ecomuseum," Graham and Howard 402-14; Littler 98; Logan, "Cultural Diversity, Heritage and Human Rights" 439, 441, 444; Sabine Marschall, "The heritage of Postcolonial Societies," Graham and Howard 347-364; Rana P.B. Singh, "The contestation of heritage: The enduring Importance of religion," Graham and Howard 126, 135-136; Wingfield 9-20.

[38] Heywood 27.

idea of authenticity and credibility, lending kudos to the collections and the museum.

Doctoral artwork

Throughout my doctoral studies I have been concerned with how museum interpretations are created. My interest in museums stemmed from two particular moments in 1999 and 2001, which has driven me to consider how it is possible to intervene in the museum and affect change in interpretations. On a visit to the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter in 1999, I observed a tour in the "World Cultures" gallery. When people were gathered by the large Burmese Buddha, the tour guide noted that it had been in the Museum for longer then it had ever resided in the temple from which it had been taken (Figure 5-3). This interesting point in the object's biography inspired me to think about the role of the museum, its relationship to colonialism and the construction of representations of people and cultures using colonial collections. In 2001, I returned to the same museum and this time noted the temporary exhibition cases titled "Sikhism in Exeter".[39] People who were practising Sikhs, living and working in Exeter, were presented here in the "World Cultures" gallery, alongside collections largely developed during the colonial era. I found this juxtaposition paradoxical; it appeared to perpetuate the objectification and 'othering' of people who were living in the city despite the assumption this was a progressive and inclusive practice (Figure 5-4). These two moments were the catalyst for my re-examination of regional ethnographic galleries.

The artwork I produce comes under the university label of visual arts. I am not focused on a particular medium as such, but with the circulation of meaning, within museums, through collecting, display and installation. The work I do could be categorised as working with found objects and described as site specific. In the case of this doctoral submission the found objects I work with are encyclopaedic books and the ephemera of empire including postcards. The site I am concerned with is the museum.

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[39] "Sikhism in Exeter," in World Cultures, *Royal Albert Memorial Museum*, text panel.

The following section discusses the way in which the artworks themselves directly take up the argument of the thesis. In the period of my study, between 1997 and 2010, I suggest that there is a process of re-evaluating colonial legacies that occurs at both Manchester Museum and Brighton Museum and Art Gallery. The commissioned artworks in the permanent ethnographic collections, I have studied, seem to have sought to supplant a negative, colonial legacy, with a positive one, through descendents of the colonised participating in the representation of their people and cultures; my artworks depart from this particular practice.[40] They encourage people to look at the construction of empire and museum collections and to confront histories rather than avoid them. In the context of the museum I am interested in the dispossession of people and their objects – with a very few objects standing for entire cultures and relegated to a lesser or exotic status, which contributes to the formation of a world in miniature. Consequently some of the strategies in my artworks have been to actually address inequality, not to instate equality but to re-evaluate difference.

I have chosen the artistic approach of the institutional critique, above all others, because of two particular characteristics of this method. The first characteristic rejects the notion of the museum and the gallery as a neutral site, and highlights the political nature of the institution. Internal politics, external politics and funders, amongst others, are acknowledged as having a part to play in the politics present in the museum, which can influence collection policies and displays.[41] The second characteristic of this approach, critically analyses certain museum practices to demonstrate the construction of meanings. This artistic genre has critical analysis at its core.

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[40] The process of commissioning artists within the case study museums is discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. Where possible the views of the people involved in the commissioning are referred to and the process, the outcome and the ongoing influence of this practice are discussed in detail.

[41] For further discussion on the artistic genre of institutional critique and specifically the critiquing of the museum as a neutral place see for example: Alexander Alberro, "Institutions, critique and institutional critique", *Institutional Critique: an anthology of artists' writing*, eds. Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2009) 4 and Pierre Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art,* trans. Susan Emanuel (Stanfod: Stanford University Press, 1996) 231.

Two renowned artists involved in the formation of institutional critiques have coined overlapping phrases, both used to title exhibitions, which refer to the paradoxes and contradictions that can be seen in museum and gallery practices. In 1993 Fred Wilson titled an exhibition: "Mixed Metaphors" at the Seattle Art Museum and in 2001 Hans Haake exhibited: "Mixed Messages" in the Serpentine Gallery as part of the "Give and Take" exhibition. Both of these exhibitions, engage in the process of the re-appropriation of museums practices of display and classification, to simultaneously subvert and question acts of meaning making in these institutions. For example, in one display in "Mixed Messages", in the early-20th century gallery Wilson exhibits a range of items from the collection including a Matisse bronze and a de Kooning portrait using display techniques usually reserved for the African and Native American collections exhibited on the floor below.[42] In the very large early-20th century gallery all the items on display were pushed together in one corner, creating a bustling and cramped exhibit, making it impossible for visitors to see individual objects clearly. [43] This exhibit emphasises the very different meanings that are constructed through display techniques in institutions – for the amount of exhibition space dedicated to an item clearly assigns a value. In a gallery in Hans Haake's "Mixed Messages" a figure of Christ on the cross is hung opposite a Burmese Buddha, a juxtaposition rarely seen, due to the usual separation of god-heads in museums and galleries. On viewing this striking display, Lisa G. Corrin chief curator of the Serpentine Gallery and a curator from the V&A's Asian art department agreed: "it was remarkable that god-heads across cultures are exhibited separately from one another when showing them together would say so much more about the human need for spirituality and our quest for faith."[44] This comment highlights the possible impact upon museum and gallery professionals that the institutional critique can have, and the potential of this approach to affect change.

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[42] Wilson "Silent messages" 29.

[43] Wilson "Silent messages" 29.

[44] Lisa G. Corrine, " A Speculative Introduction to a Speculative exhibition Give & Take", *Give & Take 1 Exhibition 2 Sites*, ed. Leigh Markopoulos (London: Serpentine Gallery, 2001) 9.

The artworks discussed in this chapter reflect upon the legacy of empire, visual colonialism and the question of the control of representations. They address: classification techniques, representations of empire, and ideas of looking prevalent within regional ethnographic collections and exhibitions. My doctoral submission includes three artworks exhibited in 2008 at the University of Brighton, exhibited under the title "World", and three artworks in 2009 shown at Hastings Museum and Art Gallery, exhibited under the title "The World in Colour". These artworks could be thought of as interventionist. They intervene in established museum methods of classification and display in order to raise questions about: the idea of truth in the museum, the concept of a world collection, and the relationship between museum visitors and museum collections and displays. The artworks are titled: *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008), *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008), *Creating India and Israel* (2008), *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009), *Postcards from Around the World* (2009), and *Our World in Colour, 1968* (2009). There are three main aspects that underpin the works: collecting, postcards, and mimicking; these elements are introduced next. The rest of this chapter focuses on the two doctoral exhibitions, in order of occurrence and the associated artworks exhibited.

Collecting

Collecting is an essential part of my art practice. The objects I collect often form an important part of the artwork. So I have developed the practices of collecting, not for personal reasons in order to accumulate a collection in my home, but actually as resources for artwork. The objects I collect can also be considered as a part of a previous collector's hold and therefore part of a once larger collection. Collecting within my art practice is an essential part of the process of understanding collecting itself and forms a strategy of critique. The rational behind the collection of postcards in the doctoral artwork: *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008) and the collection of books that claim to, in part, represent the world are addressed when discussing the respective artworks within this chapter.

Incorporated into each of the three components of the University of Brighton exhibition, are forms of material culture that actively construct

identities of people and place. *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008) features: a series of multi-view postcards from coastal towns in the south east of England, and a number of historic, view postcards of cities in India. The historic postcards include architectural landmarks from the Taj in Agra to the Brighton Pavilion. The two additional artworks exhibited, *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008) and *Creating India and Israel* (2008), incorporate texts that claim to represent the world. Children's world encyclopaedias, world antique guides, and world shopping guides are all featured. Collections of material culture, including picture postcards and world encyclopaedias, form evidence of particular constructions of cultural identities, and illuminate ideas in circulation informed by colonialism.

Postcards

The integration of the postcard, in this series of artworks, functions within a set of debates specific to museum souvenirs,[45] and a postcolonial reading of the representation of people and place in postcards as "ubiquitous souvenirs of imperialism."[46] Mary Beard's study locates the museum postcard as a museological mechanism; an integral part of the "the process of making sense of what is seen"[47] for the visitor. Through an analysis of the sales patterns of postcards at the British Museum over a period of four years, she "reflects on the 'museum experience' more widely"[48] for visitors. The high consumption of the picture postcard of the British Museum's façade, with its classical architecture and many columns shows, Beard states:

> [T]he importance of the museum as an institution in the visitor's experience […]. The Museum, that is, is commonly defined by visitors as the location of all the world's history – and its building signifies more than 'just a building'. It is the treasure chest itself,

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[45] Mary Beard, "Souvenirs of Culture: Deciphering (in) the Museum," *Art History*, Vol. 15 No. 4 December (1992): 505-532, print; Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1984) 132-150, print.

[46] Christraud M. Geary and Virginia-Lee Webb, eds., *Delivering Views: Distant Cultures in Early Postcards* (Washington: Smithsonian Press, 1998) cover note, print; and also see Mallek Alloula, *The Colonial Harem* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985) print.

[47] Beard 513.

[48] Beard 506.

> the (mystical) container of that totality, the frame that gives sense and order to the baffling array of the incomplete remnants of all the past civilizations that lie inside. The imposing façade on these cards is more than a picture of 'somewhere we have visited'; it is the museum visit; it is history.[49]

Beard's analysis of the museum postcard suggests that it acts as a signifier of the museum experience made manifest in hand held form. It also takes the form of a souvenir by means of an authentication of experience whilst it provides evidence of having visited a place.[50] The correspondence, suggested by Beard, between the postcard and the museum, that both can be read as a "souvenir of culture,"[51] will be explored.

Jacques Derrida's writings on the postcard might be worth considering here. His analysis attends to the potential of the postcard, as an address, or a calling card, "[w]hat does a postcard want to say to you? On what conditions is it possible? [...]. At the very instant when from its address it interpellates, you, uniquely you, instead of reaching you it divides you or sets you aside, occasionally overlooks you."[52] The postcard instigates a process of recognition, it calls upon a particular person, but does the receiver recognize the address in the call, acknowledging the part allocated to them? This line of thinking can be used to encourage reflection on the intended recipients of museum exhibits regarding the representation of the objects, people and culture on display. Does the recipient recognize themselves in the address?

Both museums and postcards are part of visual colonialism. Postcolonial analysis of the "souvenirs of imperialism"[53] refocus attention on the creation of the postcard and the colonialist gaze that propels its construction. The process of creating, and then disseminating, representations of colonised people and places in postcard form, on a mass scale, imbues the postcard with a colonial past. The role and formation of museums and postcards can

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[49] Beard 513.

[50] For further discussion about the souvenir see, Michael Hitchcock and Ken Teague eds., *Souvenirs: the material culture of tourism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000) print.

[51] Beard 505-532.

[52] Jacques Derrida, *The Postcard: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987) cover notice, print.

[53] Geary and Webb cover note.

usefully be considered as part of a similar set of processes. The postcards and the collections in the museums can be thought of as souvenirs and both contribute to the practice of visual colonialism; the reproduction of the colonisers' narration of the colonised. Mallek Alloula refers to "the machinery, or rather the machination, [that] is set in motion"[54] with regards to the production of postcards of Algerian women. He describes the postcard within this colonial context as a "distorting enterprise."[55] The contributors to *Delivering Views: Distant Cultures in Early Postcards* discuss the artifice of the colonial postcard in detail encompassing "common practices – such as artificial settings, costumes and props, colorization, and patronizing captions - that perpetuated racist, sexist, and romantic stereotypes."[56]

Both the historic postcard[57] and the modern museum were formed during Britain's colonial period and can be considered in relation to their contribution to the control of the cultural representation of the colonies by the colonisers. Interestingly both historic postcards and museums participate in the process of delivering a particular view of the colonies back to Britain. In both instances the view is a product of the colonial gaze, for objects were collected by: colonial administrators, traders, missionaries, explorers and donated to museums. The images featured on the postcards were usually taken by western photographers and the postcards produced and manufactured by European and American publishing firms. Considered as souvenirs, postcards and objects in museums can both be perceived as evidence of an experience, documentation of a visit, of travel, of collecting or of research.

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[54] Mallek Alloula, "From the Colonial Harem," *The Visual Culture Reader* ed., Nicholas Mirzoeff (London and New York: Routledge, 1998) 524.

[55] Alloula, "From the Colonial Harem" 524.

[56] Geary and Webb cover note.

[57] The term historic postcard is used in reference to postcards created between 1895 and circa 1912, which is the period identified as the golden era of the postcard. Howard Woody, "International Postcards," Geary and Webb 13.

The postcard industry was vast and complex with a number of different distribution patterns.[58] Howard Woody separates the industry into seven generations that span the period 1880 to 1920.[59] The largest European postcard publishers were in Germany[60] followed by England. Photographers would travel international trade routes taking images for postcards.[61] The images were sent to sponsors[62] or direct to publishers who would then construct the postcards and arrange the manufacture of them in Europe.[63] The publisher, depending on the size of the operation, would then distribute the postcards internationally, or to certain regions, or even to specific hotels, often distributing the postcards back to the vicinity the images originated from.[64] The market for postcards was distinctly western - sending and collecting postcards from the colonies was incredibly popular.[65] Through this activity postcards would frequently journey in a full circle, "sent or brought back from the farthest reaches of the empire to active metropolitan centres."[66] Nicholas Mirzoeff uses the term 'visual colonialism' to define this period of image production, which actively produced representations of the colonies. Within this category he groups postcards and museums in the same system:

> There was an immensely productive visual colonialism, ranging from maps, photographs and paintings to collections of indigenous arts and crafts. These objects were assembled in vast collections like those of the Musee de l'Homme in Paris, the Museum of Mankind in London, the American Museum of Natural History, the Musee du Congo Belge, Terveruen, and so on. Collectively, the visual culture of colonialism had a significant role to play in explaining, defining and justifying the colonial order.[67]

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[58] For more information on postcard distribution patterns see, Woody 30-31.

[59] Woody 30.

[60] For information on German Postcard Publishers see Woody 32-43.

[61] Woody 40.

[62] For more information on the role of sponsors see, Woody 30-31.

[63] See Woody 30-31.

[64] Woody 40-41.

[65] See Christraud M. Geary and Virginia-Lee Webb, "Introduction," Geary and Webb 2, and Woody 32.

[66] Geary and Webb, "Introduction" 2.

[67] Nicholas Mirzoeff, "Introduction to part three," *The Visual Culture Reader* ed., Nicholas Mirzoeff (London: Routledge, 1998) 474.

The juxtaposition, in the artworks produced, of books that represent the world and postcards, encourages viewers to see correspondences between souvenirs as views of the world and collecting, in their contribution to visual colonialism.[68]

Mimicking methods of museum display

The tools of museum practices of display including: labels, classification, order, proximity, cases, stands, and plinths are appropriated as part of my doctoral art practice. Aligned with Bhabha's inquiry into mimicry, discussed in relation to Fred Wilson's art practices, the very act of imitation contributes to the undoing of control of the dominant force. Bhabha refers specifically to the imbalanced power relationships of the coloniser and the colonised, noting that the act of mimicry reveals the artifice and highlights the construction of knowledge and disciplinary powers.[69] Through the mimicking of museological modes of representation, the viewer is encouraged to question the authority presented through the formal modes of display.

In the University of Brighton exhibition the artworks: *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008) and *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008), were encased in a free standing, tall, glass display cabinet, with a metal frame painted white, the top tier of which stood just below able bodied adult head height (Figure 5-5 - Figure 5-6). The case was one of four on display in the exhibition, all in the same institutional style. The display case also referred to as a vitrine has a distinct purpose, it constructs meaning; fundamentally, it conveys to those on the outside, looking in to the case, that the contents are of importance and worthy of contemplation and protection. In *Cannibal Tours*

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[68] The project to consider postcards as part of the visual culture of colonialism as part of its critique is developing. My postcards work is continuing and will be exhibited in the *Picture This: Postcards and Letters Beyond Text* conference in March 2011.The *Picture This: Postcards and Letters Beyond Text* conference, 24, 25, 26 March 2011 is at the University of Sussex supported with funds from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. This next postcard artwork mimics the medium of the glossy museum postcard depicting items from the collections sold in the Brighton Museum and Art gallery shop. With a focus on the World Art collection the series will address the Hindu Shrine display, highlighting some of the contradictions and issues surrounding it raised in Chapter 3.

[69] Bhabha, *The location of Culture* 123.

and Glass Boxes, the Anthropology of Museums, Michael Ames discusses the significance of those "boxed in"[70] in the context of the museum. He refers to the museums' methods that "impose academic classifications – our 'glass boxes' of interpretation – upon diverse cultures […]. 'freezing' others into academic categories."[71] He highlights the importance of analysing the concept of 'boxing in cultures' and the methods used to do this in museums through classification and display practices.

The use of cases can be seen in two particular works of art by Sophie Calle and Mark Dion respectively. Both, albeit differently, question the separation and categorisation of things through the use of display cases. In "Absent" (1994),[72] Calle's intervention, into the Boymans-van Beuningen museum in Rotterdam, places what we are led to believe are personal possessions into the permanent display cases with accompanying narratives; items include, for example, a red plastic bucket and a plain white coffee cup.[73] The items Calle locates in the cases bring into question the museums' systems of value. Her object interventions appear to be of no significant financial value but they are of personal significance, revealed through the narratives presented in the accompanying labels and in the audio accompaniment. In *Tate Thames Dig* (1999-2000), Mark Dion presents the findings of an archaeological dig in a large, free standing, dark wood vitrine with glass fronted cupboards on top of a series of drawers. The dig was carried out with a group of volunteers along the Thames River at low tide at two sites near to the two Tate galleries. Archaeologists cleaned and classified the findings. Objects from a range of periods are displayed side by side in *Tate Thames Dig* - plastic consumer goods alongside old bones.[74] The indiscriminate public presentation of all the items found, raises questions about the hierarchies of display regarding those objects - which of them

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[70] Ames, *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes* 140.

[71] Ames, *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes* 140.

[72] The official guide for Absent titled La Visite Guidee published by Museum Boymans-van Beuningen Rotterdam, refers to the exhibition as Absent. Please note it is also known as Absence.

[73] Sophie Calle, La Visite Guidee (Rotterdam: Museum Boymans-van Beuningen,1996) print.

[74] Putnam 40.

become part of the permanent exhibition, and which remain in store, in the reserve collection.

"World" 2008, University of Brighton

In 2008 three doctoral artworks were exhibited at the University of Brighton's Faculty of Arts and Architecture Centre for Research and Development's exhibition titled "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies".[75] The exhibition opened for a week, 10-14 March 2008, and featured a total of fourteen doctoral students' work, accompanied by a one-day public Symposium on the 12 March, and a gallery tour with artists' talks held from 12:15-1:00 on the same day.[76] The works I displayed, under the title "World", were *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008), *1960's World, 1980's World* (2008), and *Creating India and Israel* (2008). The Centre for Research and Development's exhibition had two main interconnected display sites in the University of Brighton city centre building, Grand Parade. These sites were on the ground floor and included a large foyer area called the Stairwell Gallery, and the main corridor running from the reception area to the foyer, referred to as the CETLD Corridor.[77] The foyer area forms the main intersection between the café, the main lecture theatre, the busy staircase of the north side of the building, and the Sallis Benny Gallery entrance. "World" was located near the entrance from the foyer into the main corridor in a freestanding glass cabinet and on the wall that runs the full length of the space (Figure 5-7). *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008) was shown on the lower tier of the freestanding display case and *1960's World, 1980's World* (2008) was exhibited on the top tier. *Creating India and Israel* (2008) was displayed on the wall facing the cabinet. Three cases interrupted the usual walk through in the foyer and funnelled people past the "World" series.

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[75] "1st Annual PhD Research Student Exhibition and Symposium," *Research News* 20 (2008): 26-27, print.

[76] See Appendix 3.1 to 3.6 for the leaflet created for the exhibition and symposium.

[77] CETLD stands for The Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning through Design, this Centre was located at the University of Brighton from 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2010.

The title of the artworks on display, "World," was chosen because of its colonial and postcolonial resonances. As I have noted, 'world' is a preferred current title of ethnographic collections and it is used in Brighton Museum and Art Gallery in "The James Green Gallery of World Arts".[78] "World" is also a straightforward description of the objects displayed in the University of Brighton Gallery. The word is present in the titles of the books that feature in, *1960's World, 1980's World* (2008) and *Creating India and Israel* (2008). 'World' is a common label within the commercial sector. 'World Music' is a label used in libraries, music and entertainment shops, and in music venues and festivals. 'World Cinema' is a category used in film festivals, in cinemas, in libraries and in music and entertainment shops. 'World Food' is a label used in supermarkets, grocery shops and health food stores. These 'world' labels articulate an homogenising practice, which conveys a Eurocentric perspective. They form a mass cultural 'othering.' This prevalent label and its homogenising effect is a key point of interest present in this art practice. The attention given to the term 'world' in the artworks alerts the viewer to the many worlds that exist, despite the claim of each book and postcard that this is 'the world' which suggests completeness. My repetition of the term in the titling of the work is intended to suggest that the world has been differently represented over time and that it is a relative concept. I will now discuss each component of "World" in the University of Brighton exhibition in turn.

Postcards from Abroad? (2008)

Postcards from Abroad? (2008) consists of a glass display cabinet and a collection of postcards. Two types of view postcards are integrated in to the work: multiple view photo-picture postcards of towns in the South east of England produced locally, and historical picture postcards from India produced by English and German postcard publishers (Figure 5-8). Both types of cards were collected in Brighton in postcard shops and second hand stores. The postcards are ordered and displayed in five individual rows with a label provided at the beginning of each row. The postcards are

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[78] 'World' also features in the titles of the following ethnographic galleries: "African Worlds" gallery at the Horniman Museum, London; "World Cultures" galleries at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery, Exeter; "World Cultures" gallery at The World Museum, Liverpool.

classified not by geographical area, age, or type but by a prevalent visual characteristic on the postcard itself. These elements are recorded on the respective labels as: "Beach", "Cat", "Dog", "Dome" and "Frame" (Figure 5-9 - Figure 5-10). The work introduces the idea of classification as ridiculous. In the preface to Michel Foucault's seminal text *The Order of Things an Archaeology of the Human Sciences* he lists a " 'certain Chinese encyclopaedia' "[79] which defines animals by dividing them into "'(a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) sucking pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs.' "[80] Foucault argues "[i]n the wonderment of this taxonomy, the thing we apprehend in one great leap, the thing that, by means of the fable, is demonstrated as the exotic charm of another system of thought, is the limitation of our own, the stark impossibility of thinking *that*."[81] The ridiculousness of my labelling system, the impossibility of 'cat' as a museum label for a postcard, calls into question all systems of labelling and classification.

"Cat IX-XV" and "Dog L-LIII"

The multiple view photo-picture postcards of Bognor Regis, Brighton, Littlehampton, and Midhurst have postal dates spanning the 1940s, 50s and 60s. Images of cats and dogs appear to be used with some regularity on the cards. The cats and dogs are used to separate the four town-scapes presented on each of the cards, of the East and West Sussex towns (Figure 5-11 to Figure 5-16). Out of the 10 postcards on display, in the second row labelled "Cat IX-XV" and the third row labelled "Dog L-LIII", four of them have horseshoes framing the animals, accompanied by the caption "Good Luck from" followed by the name of the respective town (Figure 5-14). Five of the six cats shown are black, one of which is wearing a bow tie, and the only grey cat is in a tea-cup, with the caption "Just my cup of tea Bognor Regis" (Figure 5-15). The same photograph of a black cat appears on two separate postcards for two different towns, Bognor Regis and Littlehampton, and the identical image of a dog is used for both Brighton

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[79] Foucault XV.

[80] Foucault XV.

[81] Foucault XV.

and Bognor Regis (Figure 5-16 and Figure 5-17). No narrative is provided on any of the postcards that alludes to any explanation for the presence of the cats and dogs.

"Frame LXI – LXIV"

In the fifth row labelled "Frame LXI – LXIV", elaborate decorative frames surround a series of four photo-picture postcards that have all been coloured with a similar tonal palette. Two cards have identical metallic gold frames with embossed detail and oval peephole frames (Figure 5-9). Both are titled with small, red, typed font; one reads "Kaisl Bridge on way to Chakrala," the other "Troops leaving, Chakrata." There is a title on one of the other framed postcards, which also uses a small, red, typed font, and reads "Chakrata from Kailana Neck." In the exhibit no information was provided about the visual motifs and patterns that appear in order to raise more questions, for the viewer, than answers about the use of classification in the display.

"Beach XX-XXII" and "Dome I-VI"

In the first row labelled "Beach XX-XXII" and the fourth row labelled "Dome I-VI", photo-picture postcards produced in the early 20th century of Brighton, England and four cities in India are exhibited. India was chosen because of its standing as a previous British colony and the frequency with which postcards of India appeared through the collecting process. In "Beach XX-XXII" waterfront views of Brighton beach and riverside views of the Hughly River in Calcutta and the Ganges in Benares (Varanasi) are juxtaposed (Figure 5-18 - Figure 5-19). In "Dome I-VI" significant architectural sites with domed roof structures in Brighton, Agra and Delhi are exhibited. Two different views of the Brighton Dome and the Brighton Pavilion are shown. Different perspectives of the Dome and the Pavilion are revealed through the postcards on display; they differ in colouration and in the detail conveyed through the captioning (Figure 5-20 - Figure 5-21). In contrast, only one view of the Taj Mahal in Agra, and Emperor Humayon's Tomb in Delhi are shown (Figure 5-22 - Figure 5-23).

The local connection

The postcards of Brighton were selected to animate an immediate engagement between visitors to the exhibition, located in Brighton, and *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008). The use of cats and dogs in rows two and three, to, in part, represent local towns and cities, appears somewhat surreal and humorous to a contemporary local population. These postcards are juxtaposed with multiple perspectives of significant landmarks in Brighton including: the Dome, the Pavilion, and the beach through historic postcards in rows one and four. Therefore, through this local connection, the artifice and the inconsistencies in the process of representing cultural identities, in the postcards of Brighton, are demonstrated. It is intended that this understanding will impact the visitors' viewing practices, when looking at all of the postcards on display, to encompass the postcards of people and places in India. This artwork aims to encourage a perception of representations of people and place as fluid and a product of a particular time; a theme throughout all the artworks.

The demonstration of the construction of representations, of people and place, is an important theme mobilized throughout the artworks. The impact of colonialism on this process is also significantly considered. This manifests in the deliberate emphasis on the representation of ex-colonies,[82] and the world as a readily consumable entity.[83] Historical postcards, maps, and books that claim to represent the world form the evidence of the impact of the visual culture of colonialism in these artworks.

Character labels

Each row was labelled highlighting the visual character, noted above, and accompanied by Roman numeral markers to imply the postcards were part of a larger series inferring an ongoing practice of the construction of identity. Object type, dimensions, origin, date, and collector were also

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[82] The doctoral artworks that explicitly feature ex-colonies include: *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008); *Creating India and Israel* (2008); *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009); and *Our World in Colour, 1968* (2009).

[83] The doctoral artworks that explore the presentation of the world as a readily consumable entity include: *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008); *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008); and *Postcards from Around the World?* (2009).

detailed on the label mimicking museum practice (Figure 5-1). The origin repeated as "England" throughout locates all of the postcards on display as a Western product.

Cat IX – XV

Object type: Machine printed postcard
Dimensions: H88mm x W138mm x D0.33mm
Origin: England
Date: Mid 1900s
Collector: Nicola Ashmore, 2007

Dog L – LIII

Object type: Machine printed postcard
Dimensions: H88mm x W138mm x D0.33mm
Origin: England
Date: Mid 1900s
Collector: Nicola Ashmore, 2007

Figure 5-1 Labelling in *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008). "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." *University of Brighton.* Brighton. 2008. Exhibition.

Postcards from Abroad? (2008), literally and physically draws attention to the way in which museum methods of classification and display form meaning through the juxtaposition of arguably arbitrary objects. Applied to the postcards, a level of questioning is animated by this museum practice through this artwork's mimicking of established labelling and classification conventions. The title of the work: *Postcards from Abroad?* is there to encourage the viewers to look critically at the postcards to, think about both the familiar visual representation of place - beaches and architectural tourist attractions, and the abstract - use of black cats with bow ties and grey cats in tea-cups. *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008) contributes to a dialogue on the construction of the representation of place by putting the familiar picture-postcard literally on display, asking visitors to look again.

1960s World, 1980s World (2008)

In the "World" exhibition *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008), was displayed in the case above *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008) (Figure 5-5). *1960s*

World, 1980s World (2008) consists of a collection of six books displayed closed and upright, held in a plastic stand at approximately 60 degrees. Each book has a label to accompany it located just in front, in a small plastic stand also at 60 degrees. The books all claim to represent the world in their respective ways, paralleling the museum's claim to represent the world in miniature. Books were collected because of this characteristic and the presence of the word 'world' in their respective titles. The collection includes three encyclopaedias published in the 1960s, displayed in order of publication with the oldest at the far left[84] and three books on collectables from the 1980s, also displayed by order of publication date.[85] The books are all published in England this is significant because it links this collection and the constructions of the world mobilised to a specific place of production. They were collected from charity shops, second hand stores, and online book sellers between 2006 and 2008. Working with familiar forms of material culture in an unfamiliar context uses the artistic strategy of rendering the familiar strange.[86] The familiar objects can initially attract visitors whilst the process of making strange can encourage questioning and also some level of anxiety that highlights to the visitor the need to look again.

The juxtaposition in the vitrine of the collection of postcards, which illuminates the construction of identity, with books that claim to represent the world, is significant. It mobilizes the practice of constructing identity, as opposed to reflecting it as static and permanent, which display cases in museums so often convey.[87] The collection of books from the 1960s and

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[84] The books from the 1960s collection are: W.G. Moore, *Around the World in Colour* (London: Paul Hamlyn, 1960) print; Euan & Kate Sutherland, *Our World in Colour* (London: Ward Lock limited, 1968) print; Richard K. Trevor, ed., *The World in Colour* (London: Paul Hamlyn, 1966) print.

[85] The books from the 1980s collection are: Rene Lecler, *The World Shopping Guide* (London: Macmillan London Limited, 1983) print; Anthony Livesey, *A Treasury of World Antiques* (London: The Hamlyn Publishing Group Ltd, 1982) print; Derek Wilson, *The World Atlas of Treasure* (Fakenham: Book Club Associates, 1981) print.

[86] For example Sophie Calle's "Absent" integrates a red bucket and a coffee cup amongst a number of other familiar objects, which are made strange displayed in the permanent galleries of the museum. See this chapter "Mimicking methods of museum display" for further description of "Absent".

[87] See for example, Ames, *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes* 140.

1980s clearly shows that ideas about the world are not fixed but viewed through the concerns of each decade. The encyclopaedic books from the 1960s can be characterized as an attempt to understand different cultures. In contrast, the 1980s books focus on consuming the world, providing details of treasure, antiques, and shopping. The assumption implicit in this artwork is that the visitors will recognize the books from the 1960s and 1980s and see them as kitsch, but will not recognize the world presented in these books as theirs. This will help show the representation of the world as constructed and particular to a specific time period and culture.

Only the outer covers of the books were visible in the exhibit (Figure 5-6 - Figure 5-24). The visitor, quite literally, had to judge the respective books by their covers. The curation of the collection exercised deliberate control by showing just the covers, communicating a restricted representation of the collection, which itself embodies a series of restrictive representations of the world. The covers of the books show wear and tear, which demonstrates to the visitor that they have been in use.

Viewed from the left, the first three books in the series published in the 1960s appear to communicate an understanding of different cultures from a position of authority. A sense of adventure and discovery is expressed through the first book titled *Around The World - In Colour,* published in 1960. The font used for the words "Around The World" makes visual reference to the type used in Hollywood Westerns on signs and 'Wanted' posters. A clear connection to the adventures mobilized in Hollywood's depiction of the Wild West is made here (Figure 5-25). The description of the book at the bottom of the front cover emphasizes the notion of discovery, a concept associated with colonial endeavours. It states, "[a] pictorial journey of discovery through many lands" (Figure 5-26). The second text in the series, *The World in Colour,* promises on the front and back cover "[a] living panorama of the world and its peoples in full colour" clearly claiming the ability to represent the world and its "peoples."[88] The third book from the 1960s displayed articulates both the ability to represent and possess the world through its title, *Our World in Colour.* Through the

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[88] Trevor front and back covers.

content of the photographic imagery shown on the covers of both *The World in Colour* and *Our World in Colour*, anthropological interests can be identified, which include farming activity, fishing, selling fresh produce at market, spinning wool and ceremonial activity (Figure 5-27 - Figure 5-28). These themes have not departed greatly from 19th century representations of 'others' which focus on rural depictions of people including agricultural practices of farming, distribution of produce and ceremony, which perpetuates a sense of a pre-industrial, pre-modernised 'other' in the 1960s.[89]

The three texts from the 1980s predominantly focus on consuming the world. Both *The World Atlas of Treasure* and *A Treasury of World Antiques* mobilize the idea of treasure - that the riches of the world are there for the taking. The photographic imagery on both the covers shows a close-up shot of potential bounty (Figure 5-29 - Figure 5-30). The third book from the 1980s is *The World Shopping Guide* a Harpers & Queen book; on the back cover it states, "[t]he only book for the discerning shopper and traveller."[90] This message is reinforced on the front cover with the words "what to buy and where to buy it" which is shown on a red banner at an angle on the bottom right hand corner, reminiscent of a high street shop sales sticker (Figure 5-31).

The labels, in front of each of the books, follow a museum format in style and content and include the following information: object type; dimensions; origin; date; and collector, following the pattern established in *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008). Each book label has a title that states the year of publication and then the word 'world', for example, "1960 World" (Figure 5-2). This emphasizes the historical and cultural specificity of the individual book's representation of the world providing further emphasis on the construction of cultural identities prevalent through out the "World" exhibition.

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[89] See Coobes, *Reinventing Africa* for further discussion on the representation of the African 'other' through the use of themes and types in exhibitions.

[90] Lecler back cover.

1960 World

Object type: Machine printed colour manuscript

Dimensions: H340mm x W265mm x D9mm

Origin: London, England

Date: 1960

Collector: Nicola Ashmore, 2008

Figure 5-2 *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008) labelling. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Creating India and Israel (2008)

In the "World" series, *Creating India and Israel* (2008), was exhibited on the wall opposite the display case, which presented *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008) and *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008) (Figure 5-6). *Creating India and Israel* (2008), consists of a total of six framed A4 documents (Figure 5-31). The frame surrounds are white in colour, each document is placed between two pieces of glass, and so it appears to float, held in suspension, making visual reference to the display case opposite in the exhibition. The first three frames feature one A4 sheet each showing a page scanned, resized, and reprinted from a section on India from the book *Our World in Colour* displayed as part of the *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008) collection (Figure 5-32). The page duplicated features both text and image; the document produced includes a scan of the front cover of the book from which the page was copied. The book cover is located on the document in the lower left corner. Following the labelling convention used in the previous two artworks , positioned underneath the image of the front cover, the following details are provided about the document created: object type, dimensions, origin, date and collector. A label is integrated into each of the framed documents; it appears in between the A4 sheet and the wooden frame in the bottom left, suspended (Figure 5-32 - Figure 5-33). The word 'World' appears in each of the labels followed by Roman numerals to imply that these documents are from a much larger collection. The India documents are labelled: "World XXII", "World XXI" and "World XXIII". The remaining three frames incorporate a page scanned, resized and reprinted on Israel taken from the book *The World Shopping Guide,* also shown in the *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008) collection (Figure 5-34). This page comprises of text and the heading "Israel". As per the previous document

the cover of the book used is shown, to help the visitors see the connection with the books displayed in *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008). The labels that accompany the Israel series are: "World LXXVII", "World LXXVIII" and "World LXXVI". India and Israel were selected because of the dominant role Britain played in constructing the actual physical borders of the two nations that now exist.

Each of the framed documents has been marked and worked into. In the first of the documents in the India sequence a shape has been cut out of the page forming an outline of India and creating a hole in the document. The displaced cut out piece is positioned to the far left of the document parallel with the hole left behind (Figure 5-35). This was done in order to highlight the physical construction of the borders of India. The second document in the India sequence has also been cut. Parts of sentences have been removed from the text leaving incomplete passages, as well as the displacement of sections of the image. The cut out pieces are then relocated on the page. This intervention makes reference to the editing and authoring process involved in the construction of a nations narrative, privileging one perspective over another (Figure 5-36). In the third document in the series the resting places of a cup of tea are shown. The ring stains have been left behind as a visual and conceptual reference to the growth and export of tea from India to Britain (Figure 5-37).

The Israel documents repeat the cutting, displacement and staining evident in the India series. The first of the Israel documents shows a hole in the shape of an outline of Israel (Figure 5-38). The second of the framed pages shows the removal of sentences from the text leaving incomplete passages (Figure 5-39). In the third Israel document stains from the bottom of a glass of orange juice are shown, signifying the contested citrus plantations, that supply juice internationally, responsible for massive depletions of water in Palestine (Figure 5-40).

The physical interventions in the documents in *Creating India and Israel* (2008) intentionally highlight the artificial creation of the representations, of both India and Israel in the books from which the pages came. In part they

also refer to the colonial administrators' construction of the nations borders. The interventions in the reprints were destructive; incorporating cuts, marks and stains, which consciously introduce a number of interpretive layers to the work. However, the meanings of the layers were not declared in the display, so that viewers had the opportunity to project their own interpretations on to the markings. Following the artist's talk on the 12 March 2008, a visitor shared her shock and association with the Israel and India documents. This had reminded her of when she was living in Saudi Arabia: certain words and reports were not permitted, resulting in sections of foreign newspapers being meticulously cut out.[91]

The work on display in "World" had maintained the museological practices of conservation, for no physical interventions were made into the actual books and postcards in the collection. In *Creating India and Israel* (2008) the original pages of the books had been reprinted and resized, rather than working with the real pages. Through the display practices used, the items were encased and framed which prohibited visitors from physically handling the objects. In direct contrast, both the medium of the postcard and the book are designed to be hand held. Postcards in particular, as souvenirs, are scaled down, pocket-sized items. Susan Stewart notes, the souvenir "reduces the public, the monumental, and the three-dimensional into the miniature, that which can be enveloped by the body, or into the two-dimensional representation, that which can be appropriated within the privatized view of the individual subject."[92] The artwork produced following the "World" exhibition departed from the practices of preservation and worked directly with the books, in the collection. The interventions became increasingly invasive and destructive - I cut up books, in order to create artworks. The gesture can be interpreted as one that is opposed to the techniques of conservation used in the museum, or even as a form of vandalism.

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[91] The Gallery tour and artist talks occurred on 12 March 2008 from 12:15-1:00.

[92] Stewart 137-138.

"The World in Colour" 2009, Hastings Museum and Art Gallery

In 2009 four artworks were exhibited under the title "The World in Colour" at the "Indian Summer" exhibition at Hastings Museum and Art Gallery, 11 September – 6 December. These were *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009)*, Postcards from Around the World?* (2009), *1960's World, 1980's World* (2008), and *Our World in Colour 1968* (2009). Three of the pieces produced in 2009 refer to the names of the books, featured in the artworks, in the titles. The "Indian Summer" exhibition had two display sites in the Hastings Museum; on the ground floor, a dedicated temporary exhibition space housed the majority of the exhibition and on the first floor, in the permanent ethnographic gallery, two pieces were exhibited. The open submission for artists for the "Indian Summer" exhibition described it as, "a contemporary and a historical response to the magnificent spectacle of colonial India."[93] The historical component was a display of Indian Miniature paintings on loan from the Sainsbury Centre of Visual Arts; these were exhibited in the Large Exhibitions Gallery alongside the contemporary element, which included the exhibition of the work of circa fourteen contemporary artists. Susan Faulkner, Exhibiting Officer, at Hastings Museum and Art Gallery, curated the "Indian Summer" exhibition.

The submission asked for artists to send in proposals for the inclusion of existing work, or artwork near completion. Specific themes were identified by the Museum for the exhibition. The open submission explained:

> Using the magnificent hand-carved Durbar Hall at Hastings Museum & Art Gallery as a springboard and nucleus, the museum is planning an exciting visual and educational programme in response to this unique colonial legacy. We are looking for work that has been influenced by an element of cultural fusion, traditional motifs and legends, orientalism & collecting and / or perhaps a contemporary response to Hindu / Muslim heritage.[94]

Of the more than twenty works in the exhibition, mine alone addressed the museum as an institution. In the submission, I used existing work to demonstrate the type of artwork I could produce, including those pieces

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[93] Susan Faulkner, "Indian Summer open submission for artists," message to the author, 11 April 2009, email.

[94] Faulkner email.

exhibited in 2008 detailed in this Chapter. I went on to create work that responded to the Museum; in particular to the colonial legacy of the hand-carved Durbar Hall located in the Museum. The Hall was commissioned for the "Colonial and Indian Exhibition", in south Kensington in 1886.[95] Casper Purdon Clarke designed it and two Indian craftsmen, Muhammed Baksh and Muhammad Juma, created it.[96] The Hall was designed to be a "reproduction of an Indian Palace, intended to represent a typical royal residence."[97] The ethnographic collections of the Hastings Museum are displayed in the upper floor of the Durbar Hall, which came into the possession of the Museum, through the Brassey family. Lord Brassey, a commissioner of the "Colonial and Indian Exhibition", purchased the Hall shortly after the "Colonial and Indian Exhibition" closed. It was used as a smoking room and a museum in his home at 24 Park Lane, London.[98]

My artworks *1960's World, 1980's World* (2008), and *Our World in Colour 1968* (2009) were exhibited in the Upper Durbar Hall, located on the right hand side on entering from the main stairwell (Figure 5-41).

Around the World in Colour, 1960 (2009)

Around the World in Colour, 1960 (2009) and *Postcards from Around the World?* (2009) were presented in the Gallery downstairs at the Museum, on the right hand side by the entrance (Figure 5-42). The work was exhibited on a floating plinth attached to the wall, positioned at a 45-degree angle, offering itself to the visitors. A magnifying glass was supplied to encourage people to look closer at the artwork. A plastic postcard dispenser held *Postcards from Around the World?* (2009). A descriptive label accompanied the work, also mounted on the wall.

Around the World in Colour, 1960 (2009) is an interventionist piece that manipulates the text, integrating three maps and two theatre books into a

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[95] "Durbar Hall," *Hastings Museum and Art Gallery,* Hastings, Hastings Museum and Art Gallery, 4 Jan. 2011, web.

[96] "Durbar Hall" web.

[97] "Durbar Hall" web.

[98] For more information on Lord Brassey and the Durbar Hall see, "Durbar Hall" web.

copy of *Around the World in Colour*. A copy of this book features in the *1960s World, 1980s World* collection, displayed upstairs in the Museum in the Durbar Hall. The book is a children's encyclopaedia, published in 1960, with many hand drawn illustrations. Within this series of artworks exhibited at Hastings Museum and art Gallery I am concerned with the construction of the idea of empire and then by implication, the constructed nature of cultural identity.

Maps

In *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009) the end papers of the actual book are maps of the world (Figure 5-43 - Figure 5-44). The northern hemisphere is at the top of the map and Britain is in the centre, as per nearly all world maps in circulation in Britain. *McArthur's Universal Corrective Map of the World*, created in 1979, rejects this orientation and depiction of the world. McArthur's Map is identified as important in the history of modern maps by Jeremy Black in his text *Maps and Politics.*[99] This map locates the southern hemisphere at the top of the world map and Australia in the middle. The reversal calls in to question orthodox views of the world. As a conceptual link to McArthur's Map, a copy of the world map shown in the front end page[100] was reversed, folded, and fixed to the subsequent page. This involved the relocation of the illustrations, framing the map, so they related to the appropriate region, the reorientation of the names of nations, continents and seas (Figure 5-45). These detailed alterations were made to reinforce the message to the visitor that this arrangement of the world map is a legitimate way to view the world.

The collection of material culture that defines identities has continued, and is incorporated into the artworks that were displayed at the Hastings Museum and Art Gallery. The postcard shown in Figure 5-46 is an original postcard dated by the postage at 1904. It was purchased in 2009 from a postcard dealer in Brighton, and an enlarged copy of the postcard was

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[99] For more information on McArthur's map see, Jeremy Black, *Maps and Politics* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 1997) print.

[100] The phrase end page is a book binding term, which refers to the paper, which attaches the front board and the back board (the cover of the book) to the book block (the pages). The front end page is located at the beginning of the book.

integrated into the artwork *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009). The postcard shows a world map, with the regions of the British Empire in red and the all-British telephone cable system coloured in bold black lines, laid out around the world. The countries shown as part of the British Empire on the postcard have all been marked in the book *Around the World in Colour* with a red tab on the outer edge of the page. The tab sticks above the text block and book cover, reminiscent of the inserts on a filing system or in an index, providing a conceptual link to the administration of the colonies (Figure 5-47).

A reprint of the 1904 British Empire postcard features in *Around the World in Colour, 1960* on the Australia page. As you can see in Figure 5-48 an enlarged copy of the 1904 postcard is glued and folded into the left hand side page of the Australia section. This intervention contributes to the animation of the connection between the British Empire and the construction of representations through forms of visual colonialism. The Australia page was selected because of its status as an ex-colony of Britain, and the fact that on the British Empire postcard, Australia is located as the most central colony on the world map (Figure 5-46).

On the right hand side page of the Australia spread is an enlarged version of the British Empire postcard with the addition of illustrations taken from the book *Around the World in Colour,* which have then been positioned on a red background (Figure 5-49). This illustrated map has been folded and glued into place. Only nations identified on the 1904 postcard as part of the British Empire are shown with illustrations. This intervention emphasizes the construction of the representations, by the hands of individuals, through the hand cut and collaged treatment of the illustrations; visually demonstrating the fact that these are human creations. The placement of the illustrations on the red background, and then on to an enlarged copy of the 1904 postcard, links the nations to the British Empire.

Mapping is a fascinating and provocative medium, which directly engages with issues of power and representation. Maps clearly show biases

invariably towards the nations or regions in which they are published.[101] This series of map interventions seeks to encourage questioning and discussion on the issues surrounding representation and perceived facts of geography and by association culture. The label accompanying this piece of work was added to confirm to the viewer how the work could be read. It encourages the visitor to question the political significance of the artificial construction of maps, commonly perceived as facts, and asks visitors to reassess their own practices of viewing, altering their perception of maps:

> Around the World in Colour, 1960
>
> Artist: Nicola Ashmore
>
> Many different world maps are in circulation today, each revealing a great deal about the time in which they were created and the nation within which they are sold. A number of world maps have been integrated into the book Around the World in Colour. There is a map from a 1904 (Edward VII) postcard; it shows the British Empire in red and Britain twice. The world appears different from the perspective of different nations. This exhibit asks visitors to think about maps as representations rather than descriptions of a fixed geography.[102]

A magnifying glass was included in the display to alert visitors to the practice of looking, which could also be used to take in the detail on the maps (Figure 5-50). These issues highlighted, were further mobilized, by the introduction of two other interventions, in *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2008*)* in the form of two theatre books (Figure 5-51 - Figure 5-52).

Theatre books

The name 'theatre book' is a bookbinding term,[103] which refers to a book with two spines or sides, to both of which pages or layers are attached (Figure 5-51 - Figure 5-52). In *Around the World in Colou*r, *1960* (2008) the images used to represent India and Pakistan and Britain were cut from an additional copy of the publication and inserted following the convention of the theatre book. Each set of images forms a different layer, which introduces a sense of depth and action to the imagery. Red tabs are

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[101] Black 40.

[102] Around the World in Colour, 1960 (2009). "Indian Summer" exhibition.

[103] Sue Doggett, *The Bookbinding Handbook* (Tunbridge Wells: Search Press Ltd, 2008) 150-155, print.

attached to the pages of the work to guide the visitors to the interventions (Figure 5-47). Visitors are able to interact with the theatre books as with all the other elements of the artwork, which allows them the freedom to touch as well as look. The theatre books are intended to draw attention to staging and also to display.

This series of artworks exposes the legacy of empire, not just in terms of its content but in reference to some of the strategies of empire, that at the time produced a sort of spectacle through accounts of the colonised on a large scale, including: exhibitions, museums, fairs; and on a more intimate scale in postcards and stereoscopes. The artistic strategy taken in this series of work functions in opposition to the trend evident in the Manchester Museum and Brighton Museum and Art Gallery artist commissions, which omit a discussion on the legacy of empire. It seems apparent, in these case studies, that the legacy of empire is the subject of embarrassment and avoided, thus not debated. Instead, the preferred techniques add additional layers to the museum interpretation through the integration or engagement of source communities' presence or voices.

Postcards from Around the World? (2009)

Postcards from Around the World? (2009) is a participatory postcard artwork. The cards were exhibited next to *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009) in the ground floor Gallery in a plastic dispenser attached to the wall. The image on the front of the postcard uses the map from the 1904 postcard, combined with the illustrations from the children's encyclopaedia, with the addition of the title from the book, which reads, "Around the World – in colour" (Figure 5-49). This is the same image used on the right hand side of the Australia page in the artwork *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009). On the back of this postcard the visitor is given two instructions, the first, "Describe a place you have visited," and the second, "Please sign and return." These instructions require participants to actively engage in a process they have been asked to view and think about, through the juxtaposed artwork. This activity necessitates the construction of the identity of place, through personal memories and descriptions, of which they are asked to take ownership, by signing the postcard. Through the

replication of imagery from the book *Around the World in Colour*, combined with the 1904 postcard, the visitors are encouraged to see the relationship between the construction of a view of the world, in the book, and the empire postcard, with the process of describing place in a postcard.

Out of a total of a hundred postcards, all were taken and five were returned. The large proportion of cards kept reflects the ongoing popularity of the postcard, as a souvenir of the museum experience. It also raises questions about visitor engagement beyond the museum's walls that will be discussed in more detail in the conclusion of this chapter.

The geographical places featured on the returned cards, in response to the first instruction, "Describe a place you have visited," include: Hastings, India, Mexico, Bear River Nova Scotia - Canada, and Venice. Of the postcards that were returned three out of the five were signed. Four out of the five cards reacted directly to the first statement and described a place they had visited. However, one of the participants did not and wrote in black capital letters: "HASTINGS – FOR MY BIRTHDAY – I PUT THIS IN MY POCKET AND FORGOT ABOUT IT!" Followed in red capitals, just underneath, with "AND FORGOT TO POST IT!" (Figure 5-53). Even though a place is not described in this reply, the postcard has been used to mark a significant occasion, the participant's birthday, celebrated with a trip to Hastings and Hastings Museum and Art Gallery. This information is recorded in the postcard.

Two out of the four postcards that did incorporate a description of a place made reference to the cityscape and landscape. Annabel Tilley writes in a poetic style of her trip to The Venice Biennale in 2009, "[w]ater everywhere, crumbling palaces, blue skies, sunshine, bells ringing. The luxury yachts of collectors lined up alongside the dockside and art everywhere" (Figure 5-54). Another contribution describes Bear River, Nova Scotia as "a tiny community in wooded hills with a marvellous craft/art gallery and an artistic community. There was a small organic food unit when we visited and a market type sale of Nxcriae (native peoples) smocks," (Figure 5-55). The postcard sender also draws attention to the tourist marketing strap line given to Bear River by the town's people at the beginning of the card: "Bear

River, Nova Scotia Canada. Describes itself as the 'Little Switzerland of Nova Scotia'." Interestingly this strapline assumes that the people who visit the town will have knowledge of the landscape of Switzerland, which will enable them to appreciate the reference. The content of this postcard therefore incorporates the town's own self-imposed referential place description along with the visitor's own memories of the town.

The postcard which mentioned two visits to India, did not refer to specific places visited, but spoke about the personal impact of the trips in general terms:

> I have visited India twice and both times it had a huge impression and impact on me. The smells, the sounds, the sights, the feel of the place were so strong, my senses were on information overload all the time! (Figure 5-56).

In the second half of the entry the sender refers to being "a keen photographer." Statements are then made which characterize India and the people inline with the act of viewing and visiting: "everyday was a visual feast for me. I enjoyed the 'rough and ready' feel of India as well as the warm welcome and curiosity of its inhabitants. Everyday was a surprise…"(Figure 5-56).

The remaining postcard referred directly to the artwork *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009). The sender explains having just been to Mexico they looked up the country's entry in the book and notes, "I noticed how much space was given to 'pulque' and thinking such attention to alcohol would be unimaginable in more recent publications aimed at families & children in our neo-puritanical times" (Figure 5-57). The entry prompted the disclosure of a particular evening spent in Mexico where their Mexican hosts took them to a pulqueria. A vivid description of the bar then follows:

> Our Mexican hosts took us to a pulqueria, certainly not a place any of us would have ventured into on our own. Everybody looked decidedly dodgy, if not slightly menacing – a young man in our group nearly ended up in a scrape. An illuminated Virgin Mary on the wall next to the ignored 'No Smoking' sign –& not only tobacco being smoked, a urinal in the middle of the room and in constant use by wild-eyed toothless customers, strange slimy bits locating in the cloudy liquid. At the time we focused on the alcohol & tried to

take pictures, in the dim light to record what in retrospect becomes an 'authentic' experience (Figure 5-57).

The analysis of the event in the last sentence is important it highlights the fact that the evening's activity only became appreciated as "an 'authentic' experience" in retrospect. The content of the postcard therefore significantly links the artwork on display to a visit to a particular place, to a memorable event and on to a process of reflection on the status and documentation of the experience.

Our World in Colour, 1968 (2009)

Three out of the four artworks exhibited in the "Indian Summer" exhibition, work with texts from the collection I developed, including: *Our World in Colour, 1968* (2009), *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009), and *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008). This series of artworks combines the book with the collection, the empire and the museum. The ideas I have examined through this body of work coalesce around *Our World in Colour, 1968* (2009). This piece, was exhibited in the Upper Durbar Hall, on a dark wooden table, already in the Hall. The table was elaborately carved, the top of which appeared to rest upon a solid, wooden camel's back (Figure 5-58). The artwork, *Our World in Colour, 1968,* was shown alongside the collection of six books that claim to represent the world in: *1960s World, 1980s World.* They were presented in a dark wooden, glass topped, coffin vitrine (Figure 5-59). The book used in the artwork *Our World in Colour, 1968* is a duplicate of a text shown in the vitrine.

Like *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009) this next artwork, *Our World in Colour, 1968* (2009), is an interventionist piece of book art. However the impact of this intervention is more profound; it irrevocably changes the previous form (Figure 5-60). The book no longer exists in the same way, it cannot be closed at all, or transported with the same ease, or stored on a bookshelf in the same way. Conceptually and physically the intervention has stopped the book from appearing and functioning as a neat, portable, easily storable book, demanding more time and consideration. *Our World in Colour, 1968* (2009) develops the idea of the book, as the world, by cutting and folding the pages into maps, relating to individual nations. Each region

is distinguished through the cuts and folds that use a traditional map fold configuration. All the maps are tied in place in their folded form using red ribbon. The nations, colonised by the British, are bound with three times as much ribbon as the others and then sealed with wax (Figure 5-61). The ribbons echo ideas of colonial administration, through their dark red colouring and the use of wax seals to emanate a further level of processing and a higher level of acknowledgement. The individual maps are uniform in length and width but not in depth. Nations in the book with lengthier entries push out against their bindings. Through the transformation of the book into a series of maps, the work draws attention to the artificial construction of the nation, further communicated in the label that accompanies the work. The label encourages visitors to reflect upon the pieces of paper that contribute to how a country is defined:

> Our World in Colour, 1969
>
> Artist: Nicola Ashmore
>
> Nations have been cut and folded into maps. Visitors are free to open some of the maps to see the contents of the book but are prohibited from opening others by their bindings. This exhibit draws attention to the edges of paper that define the limits of the nation, inviting visitors to consider questions of control over the nations as a representation and a real place.[104]

Our World in Colour, 1969 (2009) is free to be handled, the ribbons are simply tied into bows. These bows can be undone causing the map folds to loosen, revealing the pages to the visitors. Similarly, the wax seals can be broken using some force but after just under three months on display no wax seals were broken, although ribbons and pages had been unfolded (Figure 5-60).

The juxtaposition of *Our World in Colour, 1968* (2009), and *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008), in the ethnographic display at Hastings Museum and Art Gallery is significant. There is a tension between the two artworks. The collection of books is preserved, intact, under glass, in a vitrine in line with conventional museum practice. *Our World in Colour, 1968* is, in contrast,

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[104] *Our World in Colour, 1968* (2009). "Indian Summer" exhibition.

cut and bound and free for visitors to handle. The two artworks in reality are just as contrived and constructed as each other, and yet one appears to be more truthful, in line with museum display practices, presenting the facts. The juxtaposition of these two artworks in the ethnographic display illuminates the artifice of the representation of cultures within ethnographic exhibitions, highlighting the historic and cultural specificity of the representations through the books which all claim to represent their world from the 1960s and 1980s.

Conclusion

The examination of *Our World in Colour, 1968* (2009) at the "Indian Summer" 2009 exhibition is an appropriate place to draw this chapter to a close, since the ideas I have explored through this body of artwork coalesce around it. It follows on from the previous artworks focus on the world in miniature through the close attention to books that claim to represent the world in *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008), *Creating India and Israel* (2008) and *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009). The cutting up, staining, marking and stamping, of duplications of pages in *Creating India and Israel* (2008) has evolved to another level in *Our World in Colour, 1968* (2009) intervening directly into the text in a way that renders the original form now impossible in function, storage or transportation. The role of empire and colonialism is once again referred to in this artwork as in *Postcards from Abroad* (2008) *and Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009) connecting collections, world maps, postcards, museums and claims to representations of the world to the legacy of empire highlighting a range of power relationships present in the museum. The ethnographic collections colonial legacy is refocused upon through these artworks, which encourages the visitor to acknowledge the ethnographic exhibition as a place where politics is rife and the gallery is far removed from a neutral state. In this regard the doctoral artworks contribute to the critical discussion regarding the impact of the colonial collection upon the interpretation of objects brought into the permanent ethnographic gallery. Which in turn adds to the critique of museum practices that have actively sought to increase the visibility of diversity within the context of the ethnographic exhibition.

Throughout this series of doctoral artworks, attention is given to paper forms that communicate how people see the world, encouraging visitors to look again. This promotion of looking more than once supports a different kind of viewing practice; one that instigates a move away from a passive wander through a museum in which objects and interpretations are accepted as uncomplicated fact without question.

All of the doctoral artworks exhibited at Hastings Museum and Art Gallery in "Indian Summer" 2009 call people to look a number of times, involving visitors in a process of re-examination, to question what they see within the museum, to not accept things at face value, to pause and reflect. *Postcards from Around the World?* (2009) asks visitors to continue this engagement beyond the walls of the museum through the act of writing about a place they have visited, on the postcard, and then signing and returning the card in the mail. This is to directly engage visitors in the act of constructing an identity of a place. As noted only five postcards out of a hundred were in actual fact posted back. It is quite possible that the lack of response may mean that visitor participation is what happens in the museum, and the relationship is in that moment rather than afterwards when the visitor has left. So although people want to take away a memory of their experience – a souvenir - they do not want to reactivate the engagement. It might be that visitor involvement has to happen in the moment of the visit and not beyond it. This could also in part help to explain the total lack of response to the invitation in the "Living Cultures" gallery at Manchester Museum to contribute to the Collective Conversations project.

Figure 5-3 The Burmese Buddha had been in the Museum's collection longer than it had ever been in a temple. "World Cultures." *Royal Albert Memorial Museum*. Exeter. Circa 1997 – 2007. Exhibition. Personal photograph. 1999.

Sikhism in Exeter

About this exhibition

This exhibition has been put together as a cooperative effort between the Sikh community in Exeter and staff at the museum. It was inspired by initial responses to the World Cultures Galleries in 1997. Daler Singh Kasba attended a meeting of local people to discuss the proposed content of the new galleries; he asked why there was nothing about Sikhism. The response was that we had very few Sikh objects in the collection. As a result of this exhibition, we hope that we will be able to increase our coverage of Sikhism in the Asian section of the World Cultures galleries.

The Sikh community

"I was born in India and have been a Sikh all my life. I came to Exeter in 1966 as a student at Exeter College. Unfortunately, I was involved in an accident in 1967 which resulted in my having both legs amputated above the knee, so I had to leave college for a while. After several months learning to walk again, I enrolled at St Loyes College studying electronics.

Daler Singh Kasba

"I went to India to get married in 1969, then returned to Exeter with my wife. I qualified in television and radio repairs, and commuted to Plymouth for two years, after which I was made redundant. I got another job working in Somerset, so I commuted again. In 1975 I became self employed and opened a shop in Well Street, which I still run as a family business.

Nirmal Singh Kasba, Daler Singh Kasba and Guljar Singh Kasba

"We have a Sikh temple in Exeter which is open every Sunday from 11am to about 2pm. It is open to anyone who wishes to come and pray, whatever their religious beliefs."

Daler Singh Kasba

Today most of the Sikhs outside India live in Britain. For most people, Sikh men are easily recognised by their turbans. However, not all men who wear turbans are Sikhs (they may be Hindus or Muslims).

Service to the community (sewa) is an important part of Sikh life. They should be prepared to give their time and energy (and sometimes money) to those around them.

The gurdwara is the focus of Sikh life. There are now well over 100 British gurdwaras. The gurdwara is not just a place of worship, it is also a meeting place which serves the needs of the community.

Sukhkiran Raj Singh

"I was born and bred in Exeter and am now 18. I work at the Inland Revenue, as a part-time supervisor in a clothes shop, and in Daler's shop. I like Exeter and enjoy going out with my friends. They have no problem with me being a Sikh – wearing a turban, not cutting my hair or beard, things like that. There's no racism or anything, at school or in the shop."

Sukhkiran Raj Singh

An Exeter viewpoint

"When 'the Indian shop' opened in the 1970s it really was something new and unusual for Exeter. Suddenly there was a range of exotic foodstuffs that we'd never been able to access without travelling out of the city. On top of that - you always got friendly and helpful advice about what to do with anything unfamiliar. I think a lot of Exeter households must have started eating more adventurously!"

A customer

The aim of this exhibition is to highlight the contribution made by the Sikh community of Exeter to life in the city.

Figure 5-4 "Sikhism in Exeter" text panel for the temporary exhibition of the same name. "World Cultures." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 2001.

Figure 5-5 *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008) exhibited in the top tier of the display case and *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008) presented on the lower tier. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 10 Mar. 2008.

Figure 5-6 *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008) and *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008). "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." *University of Brighton*. Brighton. 2008. Exhibition. Personal photograph. 10 Mar. 2008.

Figure 5-7 The two tier case and six frames, mounted on the wall, near the double doors, form the three artworks exhibited in 2008. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 10 Mar. 2008.

Figure 5-8 Multi view and historical postcards on display in *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008). "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 10 Mar. 2008.

Figure 5-9 Labels mark the beginning of each row of *Postcards from Abroad?*
(2008), highlighting an unusual feature of the cards. "PhD Research Students Arts,
Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition. Personal photograph.
10 Mar. 2008.

Figure 5-10 *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008). "PhD Research Students Arts,
Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition. Personal photograph.
10 Mar. 2008.

Figure 5-11 In *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008) in the row labelled "Cat IX - XV", cats feature in the centre of the postcards, used to divide the four townscapes. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-12 Black cat with bow tie in "Greetings from Bognor Regis" card in *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008). "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-13 In *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008) in the row labelled "Dog L-LIII", dogs feature in the centre of the postcards, used to divide the four townscapes. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-14 "Good luck from" is a phrase used along with the horseshoe shape in a four of the postcards in *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008). "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-15 In *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008) the "Just my cup of tea" postcard features a grey kitten and not a black cat, unlike all the other postcards in the "Cat IX - XV" row. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-16 In *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008) the same image of a dog appears in both postcards for Bognor Regis and Brighton. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-17 "Greetings from Brighton," *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008). "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-18 In *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008) in the row labelled "Beach XX-XXIII", two historic postcards of Brighton beach are juxtaposed with two water fronts in India including the Hughly River, Calcutta and the Ganges in Benares (Varanasi). "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-19 The Hughly River, Calcutta in *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008). "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-20 In *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008) the Dome in Brighton is shown in colour in the row "Dome I – VI". "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-21 In *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008) the Dome in Brighton is also shown in black and white with an extended caption in red in the row "Dome I – VI". "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-22 In *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008) one image of the Taj in Agra is shown in the row "Dome I – VI". "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-23 In *Postcards from Abroad?* (2008) one image of the Emperor Humayon's tomb in Delhi is shown in the row "Dome I – VI". "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-24 *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008) close up, side view of the artwork. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 10 Mar. 2008.

Figure 5-25 In *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008) the title of the first book, on the left, is written in a font similar to a Hollywood studio Wild West 'wanted poster.' "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-26 In *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008) the first book on the left, titled *Around the World – in Colour*, is described on the front cover as "A pictorial journey of discovery through many lands." "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-27 In *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008) the second book in from the left, published in the 1960s, *The World in Colour,* has a cover with an anthropological focus. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-28 In *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008) the third book in from the left, published in the 1960s, *Our World in Colour,* also has a cover with an anthropological focus. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-29 In *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008) the fourth book in from the left, published in the 1980s, *The World Atlas of Treasure,* features a damaged but valuable looking golden head. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-30 In *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008) the fifth book in from the left, published in the 1980s, *A Treasury of World Antiques,* has a cover with eight antiques grouped closely together. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-31 In *1960s World, 1980s World* (2008) the sixth book in from the left, published in the 1980s, *The World Shopping Guide,* has a cover filled with objects. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-32 *Creating India and Israel* (2008). "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 10 Mar. 2008.

Figure 5-33 *Creating India and Israel* (2008) the three India documents. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 10 Mar. 2008.

Figure 5-34 *Creating India and Israel* (2008) the three Israel documents. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 10 Mar. 2008.

Figure 5-35 *Creating India and Israel* (2008) mapping India document. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

The Dravidians, the original in-habitants of India, were a primitive people,

The result, which is in part a religion and in part a social system, we call Hinduism.

The men dressed in red shirts are porters.

source is in Tibet. For most of its length it flows through West Pakistan, which, though separated from East Pakistan by about 1,100 miles of Indian territory, is nevertheless part of one and the same state, the Republic of Pakistan. Both countries were once part of an area known as the Indian Empire, which was ruled by Britain until 1947.

The river Sindhu gave rise to the words 'Ind' and 'Hind', names applied to 'the land beyond the Indus'. From these words we get 'India' and 'Hindu'. whose religion was based on the worship of nature gods. In about 2,000 B.C., India was invaded by the Arians, a tall, fair people from the North who superimposed their way of life upon the Dravidians. One of the effects of this was that the religion of the Arians, which is described in an ancient book known as the *Rig-Veda*, was mingled with the Dravidians' religion. As a religion it is very tolerant, respecting the faiths outside Hinduism

A colourful scene at a railway station in India.

OUR WORLD IN COLOUR
EUAN & KATE SUTHERLAND

Object type: Inkjet colour printed paper
Dimensions: W210mm x H297mm 170gsm
Origin: Germany
Date: 2007
Collector: Nicola Ashmore, 2007

Figure 5-36 *Creating India and Israel* (2008) cut India document. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-37 *Creating India and Israel* (2008) tea stained India document. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

ISRAEL 81

ISR

STATUS: Republic
AREA: 7,850 square miles (20,769 sq... ...lometres...
POPULATION: 3.7 million
CAPITAL: Jerusalem. Other cities: T... ...iv, Haifa

THE ...PING SCENE

The controversial country by d... ...on, Israel seems to thrive on argument – both inside and out. However... ...he most tremendous appeal, emotional to say the least, for all those... ...the past of man and, indeed, for his faiths. Tiny as it is, it is... ...of the world for Christians, Jews and Muslims and it never le... ...t it. Israel is often upsetting and contrary but never dull. One's... ...le is a su... ...ssion of monstrous modern concrete architectur... ...nst... ...ost pregnant antiquities, with a Red Sea coast that... ...desert that looks the way the moon does. From Tel... ...d from Safed to King Solomon's Pillars, Israel is a ve... ...f personal impressions where change is always at... ...koning and one gets the distinct Reminders of the past... ...ll miss a vital part of the jigsaw of feeling that if one misses... ...a restful country. One cannot just the Holy Land. It is not, for... ...dislike Israel but you cannot be be in Israel – one must... ...ich cannot be said of all countries. indifferent to it, and this is s...

The feeling of having had a... ...s experience is heightened by one's meeting with the people (in thi... ...means the Jewish Israelis of course). The atmosphere is electric wit... ...n, energy and never-ending activity. This applies to shopping too, or... ...looking at things. Israel does not have its own arts and crafts but those... ...ty-four countries and the spectacle is dazzling in variety.

Being a small country, most of... ...hat is produced in one part of Israel is available in the next place and Te... ...Aviv is a case in point since everything ends there sooner or later and a walk along Dizengoff will easily convince you that this small nation can produce and if it cannot produce something, it invents something else which takes your mind away. Shopping is relatively limited, due to the small population but what there is for the traveller is more than worth looking at – it's worth buying. In Tel Aviv itself, I would swear there are more art galleries than in any other city of similar size. Then there are the artists' colonies and in Israel this does not have the slightly peculiar and overwhelming meaning it may have elsewhere. Here it just means a place where artists like working close together. You should not miss Ein Hod, just south of Haifa, or indeed glorious Safed in northern Galilee. And if you missed the reconstructed part of old Jaffa, with its dozens of craft shops, you would surely regret it. Then there are the Arab souks and bazaars where mountains of rubbish rise next to the two or three things that are really worth bargaining for. Try especially the Old City of Jerusalem and Acre – a place in a thousand.

Antiquities
As befits a land which has been inhabited for 8,000 years, Israel is not short of items under this category though naturally the best are museum treasures. There are however lots of bits and pieces around (more are being dug up every day) But they are only genuine if they are sold with a certificate from the Department of Antiquities and the trader must issue a document of authenticity. By far the best shop is The Collector in Jerusalem, which also has some branches in hotels. Magnificent things but naturally expensive.

AEL

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...and the next... ...nt the n...
...looks like Florida and a...
...Aviv to the Dead Sea an...
...itable kaleidoscope...
...your elbow, pullin...
...re everywhere bec...
...his or that one w...
...most traveller...
...do. You can...
...mething wl...
...tremendo...
...case one...
...creatio...
...nerely...
...of fit...
...w!

harpers

THE
WORLD
SHOPPING
GUIDE
by RENE LECLER

what to buy and
where to buy it

PAPERMAC

Object type: Machine printed manuscript
Dimensions: H230mm x W130mm x D14mm
Origin: London, England
Date: 1983
Collector: Nicola Ashmore, 2007

Figure 5-38 *Creating India and Israel* (2008) mapping Israel document. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Israel seems to thrive on argument –

Israel is often upsetting and contrary

It is not, for most travellers, a restful country.

The feeling of having had a tremendous experience is heightened by one's meeting with the people (in this case one means the Jewish Israelis of course).

Then there are the artists' colonies and in Israel this does not have the slightly peculiar and overwhelming meaning it may have elsewhere.

ISRAEL 81

ISRAEL

STATUS: Republic
AREA: 7,850 square miles (20,769 square kilometres)
POPULATION: 3.7 million
CAPITAL: Jerusalem. Other cities: Tel Aviv, Haifa

THE SHOPPING SCENE

The controversial country by definition, both inside and out. However, it has the most tremendous appeal, emotional to say the least, for all those who care for the past of man and, indeed, for his faiths. Tiny as it is, it is the centre of the world for Christians, Jews and Muslims and it never lets you forget it. but never dull. One's travelling life is a succession of monstrous modern concrete architecture and the next instant the most pregnant antiquities, with a Red Sea coast that looks like Florida and a desert that looks the way the moon does. From Tel Aviv to the Dead Sea and from Safed to King Solomon's Pillars, Israel is a veritable kaleidoscope of personal impressions where change is always at your elbow, pulling you this way and that way. Reminders of the past are everywhere beckoning and one gets the distinct feeling that if one misses this or that one will miss a vital part of the jigsaw of the Holy Land. One cannot just be in Israel – one must do. You can dislike Israel but you cannot be indifferent to it, and this is something which cannot be said of all countries.

The atmosphere is electric with creation, energy and never-ending activity. This applies to shopping too, or merely looking at things. Israel does not have its own arts and crafts but those of fifty-four countries and the spectacle is dazzling in variety.
Being a small country, most of what is produced in one part of Israel is available in the next place and Tel Aviv is a case in point since everything ends there sooner or later and a walk along Dizengoff will easily convince you that this small nation can produce and if it cannot produce something, it invents something else which takes your mind away. Shopping is relatively limited, due to the small population but what there is for the traveller is more than worth looking at – it's worth buying. In Tel Aviv itself, I would swear there are more art galleries than in any other city of similar size.
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By far the best shop is The Collector in Jerusalem, which also has some branches in hotels. Magnificent things but naturally expensive.

Harpers
THE WORLD SHOPPING GUIDE
by RENE LECLER

what to buy and where to buy it

PAPERMAC

Object type: Inkjet colour printed paper
Dimensions: W210mm x H297mm 170gsm
Origin: Germany
Date: 2007
Collector: Nicola Ashmore, 2007

Figure 5-39 *Creating India and Israel* (2008) cut Israel document. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

ISRAEL 81

ISRAEL

STATUS: Republic
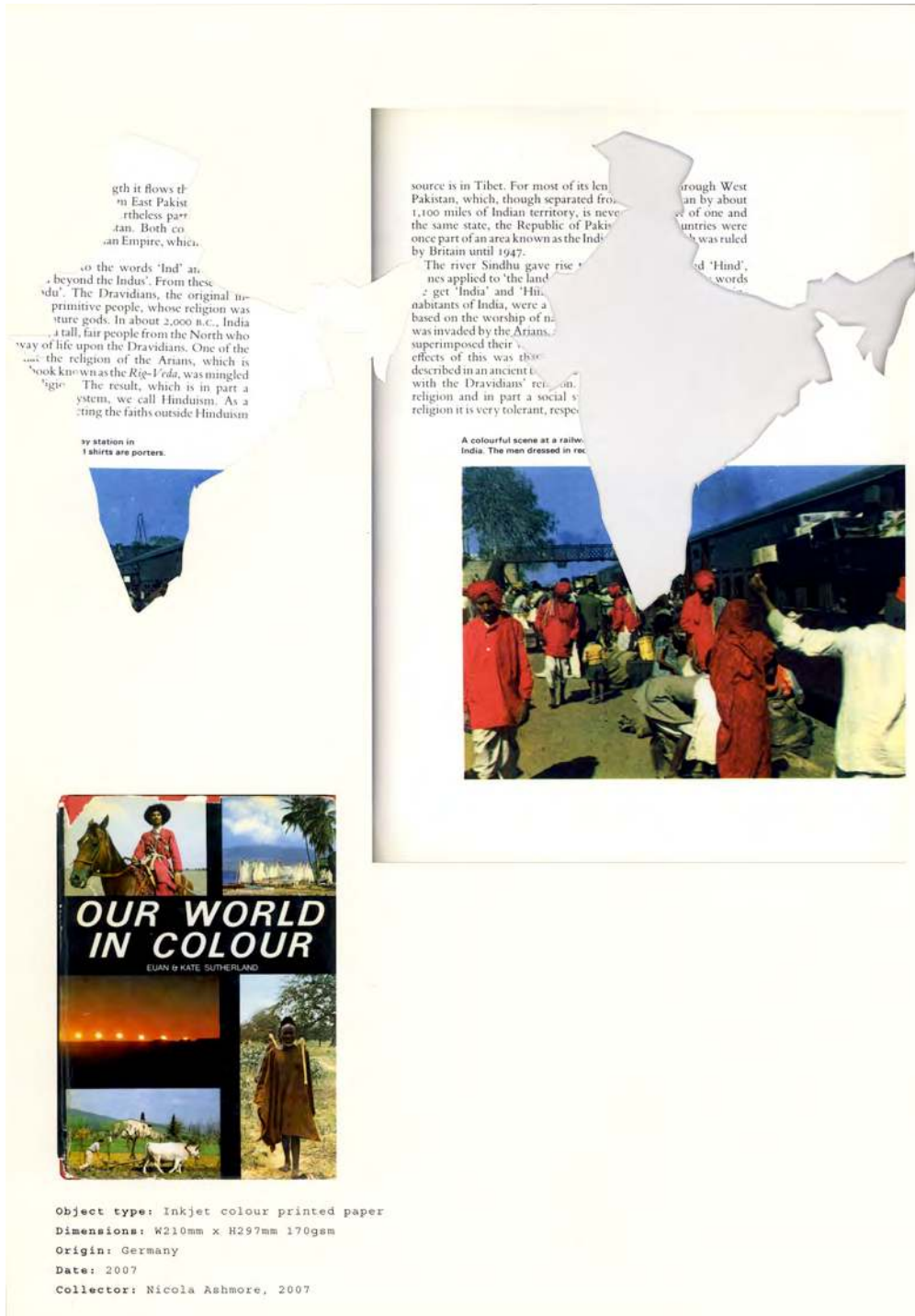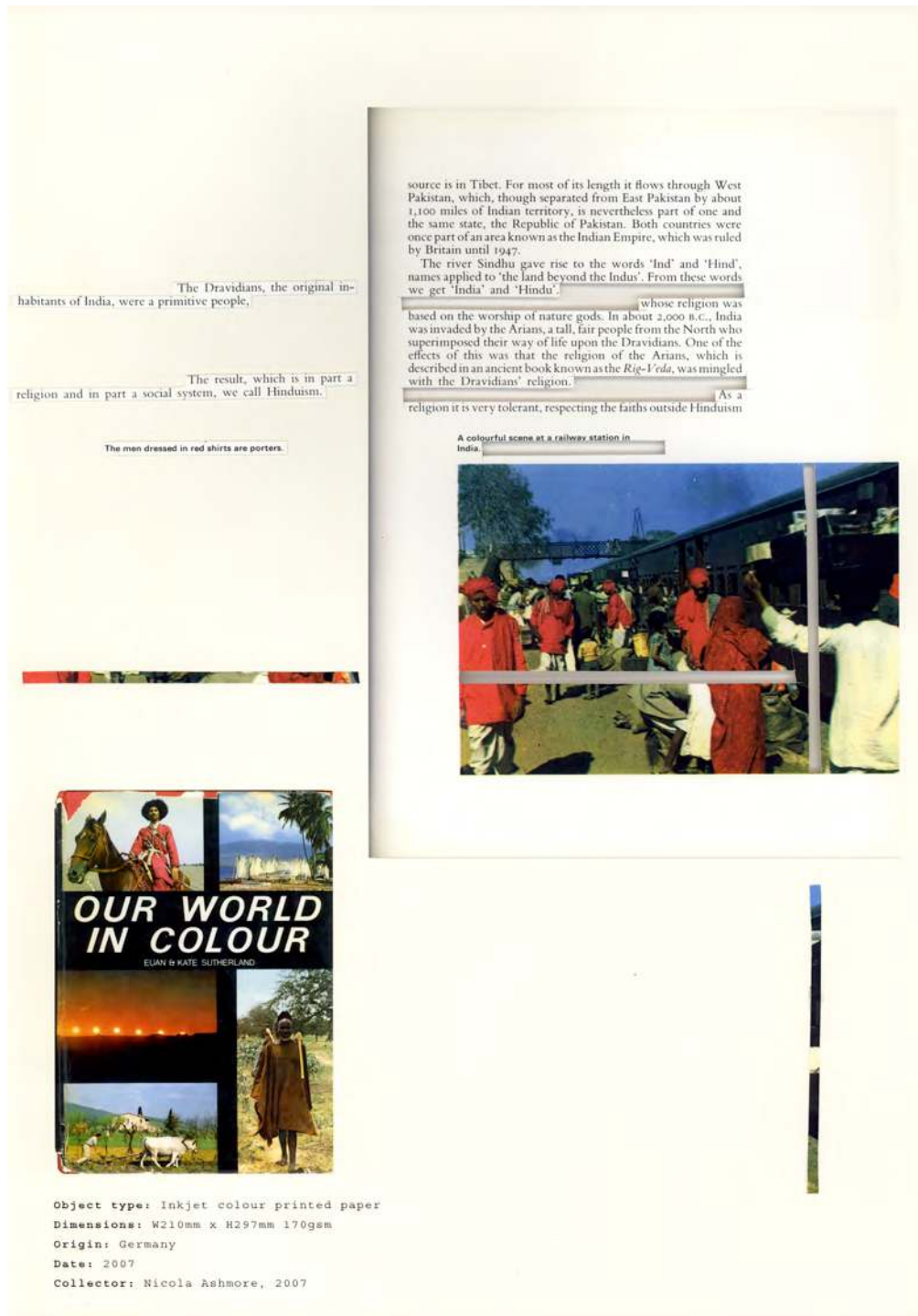AREA: 7,850 square miles (20,769 square kilometres)
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Object type: Inkjet colour printed paper
Dimensions: W210mm x H297mm 170gsm
Origin: Germany
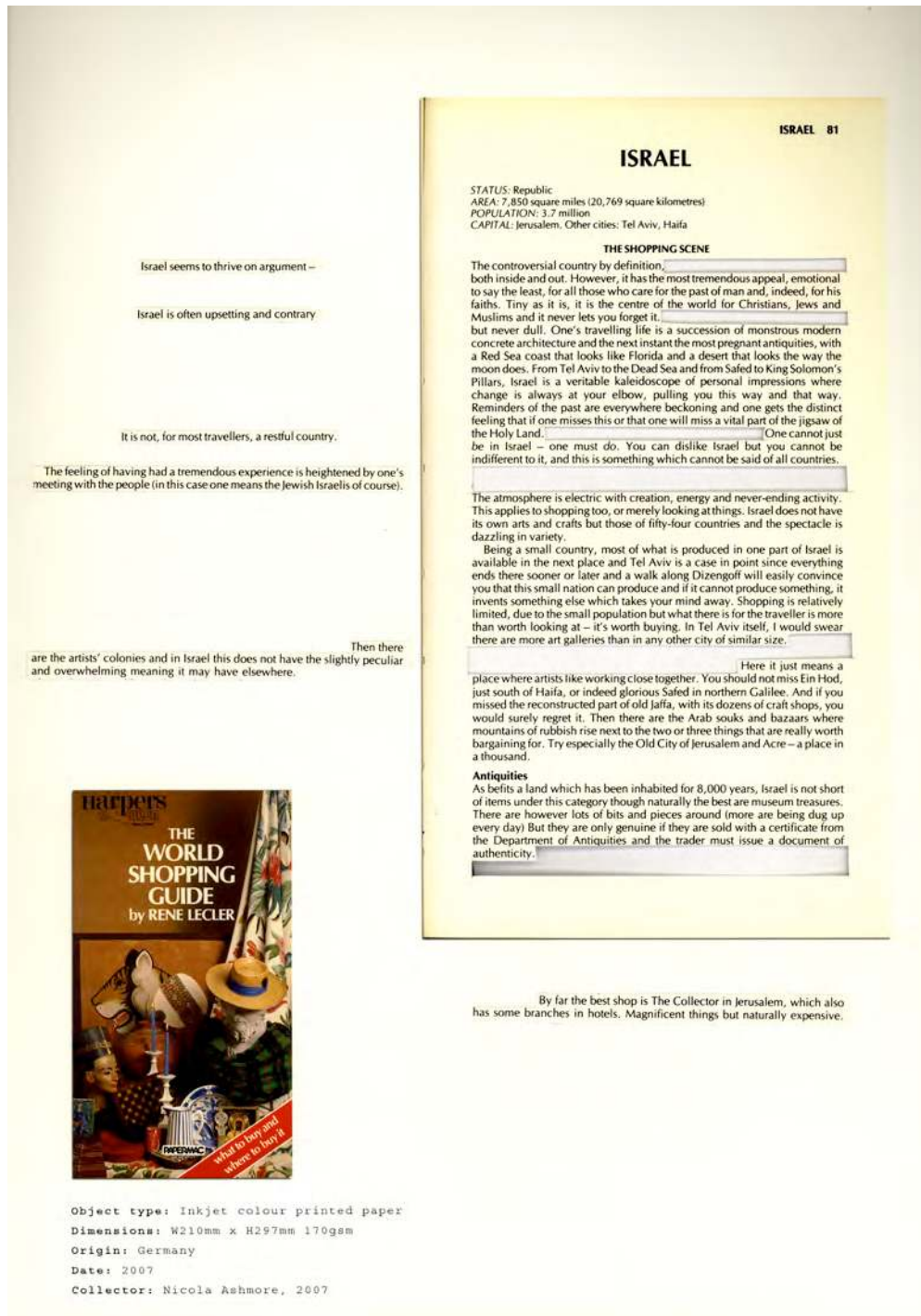Date: 2007
Collector: Nicola Ashmore, 2007

Figure 5-40 *Creating India and Israel* (2008) orange juice stained Israel document. "PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies." Exhibition.

Figure 5-41 *Our World in Colour, 1968* (2009) and *1960s World, 1980s World* (2009) are located in the ethnographic gallery in the Upper Durbar Hall; the woman on the right is looking through the artwork. "Indian Summer." *Hastings Museum and Art Gallery.* Hastings. 2009. Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Sept. 2009.

Figure 5-42 *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009) and *Postcards from Around the World* (2009) are located on the right in the fore ground of the 'Large Exhibitions Gallery.' "Indian Summer." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Sept. 2009.

Figure 5-43 *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009) illustrated world map located in the end pages of *Around the World – In Colour*. "Indian Summer." Exhibition.

Figure 5-44 *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009) close up of world map illustrations located in the end pages of *Around the World – In Colour*. "Indian Summer." Exhibition.

Figure 5-45 *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009), reversed illustrated world map installed in the book. "Indian Summer." Exhibition.

Figure 5-46 In *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009), this 1904 'British Empire' postcard was manipulated and integrated into the artwork. The countries marked in red are part of the Empire. Britain is shown twice, on the left and the far right, in this world map. "Indian Summer." Exhibition.

Figure 5-47 *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009), red tabs were used to indicate where the interventions were in the book and to highlight the countries marked in red on the 'British Empire' postcard. "Indian Summer." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Sept. 2009.

Figure 5-48 *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009), 'British Empire' world map interventions installed into the Australia pages. "Indian Summer." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Sept. 2009.

Figure 5-49 *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009), 'British Empire' world map intervention using illustrations from the *Around the World – In Colour* book. "Indian Summer." Exhibition.

Figure 5-50 *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009), 'British Empire' world map intervention, close up of New Zealand viewed through the magnifying glass that accompanied the artwork. "Indian Summer." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Sept. 2009.

Figure 5-51 *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009), theatre book made from the illustrations of Britain in a copy of the book *Around the World - In Colour*. "Indian Summer." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Sept. 2009.

Figure 5-52 *Around the World in Colour, 1960* (2009), theatre book made from the illustrations of India in a copy of the book *Around the World - In Colour*. "Indian Summer." Exhibition. Personal photograph. 11 Sept. 2009.

Figure 5-53 *Postcards from Around the World* (2009), Hastings. "Indian Summer." Exhibition.
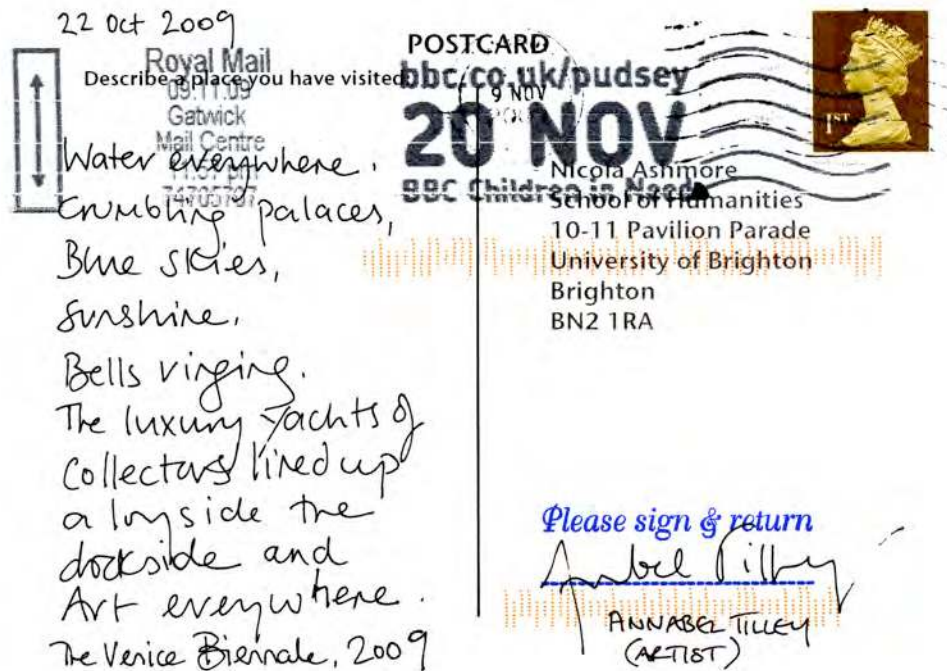

Figure 5-54 *Postcards from Around the World* (2009), Venice. "Indian Summer." Exhibition.
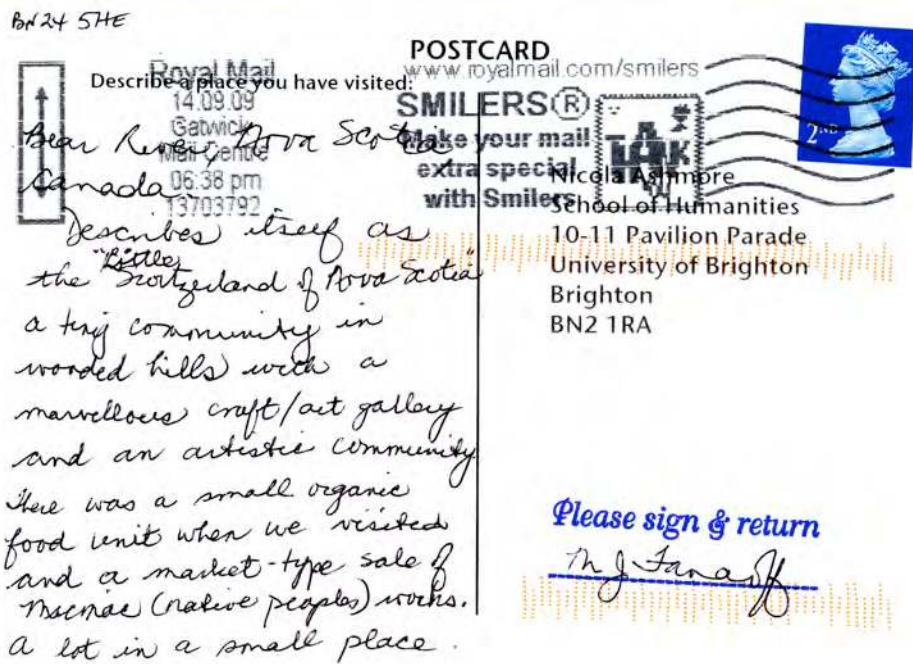
BN 24 5HE

Describe a place you have visited:

Bear River, Nova Scotia Canada

Describes itself as the "little Switzerland of Nova Scotia" a tiny community in wooded hills) with a marvellous craft/art galley and an artistic community there was a small organic food unit when we visited and a market-type sale of Micmac (native peoples) works. a lot in a small place.

POSTCARD
www.royalmail.com/smilers
SMILERS®
Make your mail
extra special
with Smilers

Royal Mail
14.09.09
Gatwick
Mail Centre
06.38 pm
13703792

Nicola Ashmore
School of Humanities
10-11 Pavilion Parade
University of Brighton
Brighton
BN2 1RA

Please sign & return

Figure 5-55 *Postcards from Around the World* (2009), Bear River, Nova Scotia, Canada. "Indian Summer." Exhibition.

Describe a place you have visited:

I have visited India twice and both times I had a huge impression and impact on me. The smells, the sounds, the sights, the feel of the place were so strong, my senses were on information overload all the time! I am a keen photographer and every day was a visual feast for me. I enjoyed the 'rough and ready' feel of India as well as the warm welcome and curiosity of its inhabitants. Every day was a surprise...

POSTCARD
www.royalmail.com/smilers
SMILERS®
Make your mail
extra special
with Smilers

Royal Mail
15.09.09
Gatwick
Mail Centre
06.54 pm

Nicola Ashmore
School of Humanities
10-11 Pavilion Parade
University of Brighton
Brighton
BN2 1RA

Please sign & return

Figure 5-56 *Postcards from Around the World* (2009), India. "Indian Summer." Exhibition.

In Hastings, I looked up
Mexico in "Around the world" **POSTCARD**
because I had just been
Describe a place you have visited:
there at a storytelling conference
this summer. I noticed how much
space was given to "pulque"
and thinking such attention to
alcohol would be unimaginable
in more recent publications
aimed at families & children
in our neo-puritanical times.
Our Mexican hosts took us to
a pulqueria, certainly not a
place any of us would have
ventured into on our own.
Everybody looked decidedly
dodgy, if not slightly menacing —
a young man in our group nearly
ended up in a scrape. An illuminated
Virgin Mary on the wall next to
the ignored 'No Smoking Sign',
& not only tobacco being smoked,
a urinal in the middle of the
room and in constant use by
wild-eyed toothless customers.
Strange slimy bits floating in the
cloudy liquid. At the time we focused
on the alcohol & tried to take pictures
in the dim light to record what in retrospect
becomes an "authentic" experience.

Nicola Ashmore
School of Humanities
10-11 Pavilion Parade
University of Brighton
Brighton
BN2 1RA

Please sign & return

Figure 5-57 *Postcards from Around the World* (2009), Mexico. "Indian Summer."
Exhibition.

Figure 5-58 *Our World in Colour, 1968* (2009) exhibited in the Upper Durbar Hall on a carved wooden table in the shape of a camel. "Indian Summer." Exhibition.

Figure 5-59 *1960s World, 1980s World* (2009) was displayed in the coffin vitrine next to *Our World in Colour, 1968* (2009) in the Upper Durbar Hall. "Indian Summer." Exhibition.

Figure 5-60 *Our World in Colour, 1968* (2009) exhibited in the Upper Durbar Hall. "Indian Summer." Exhibition.
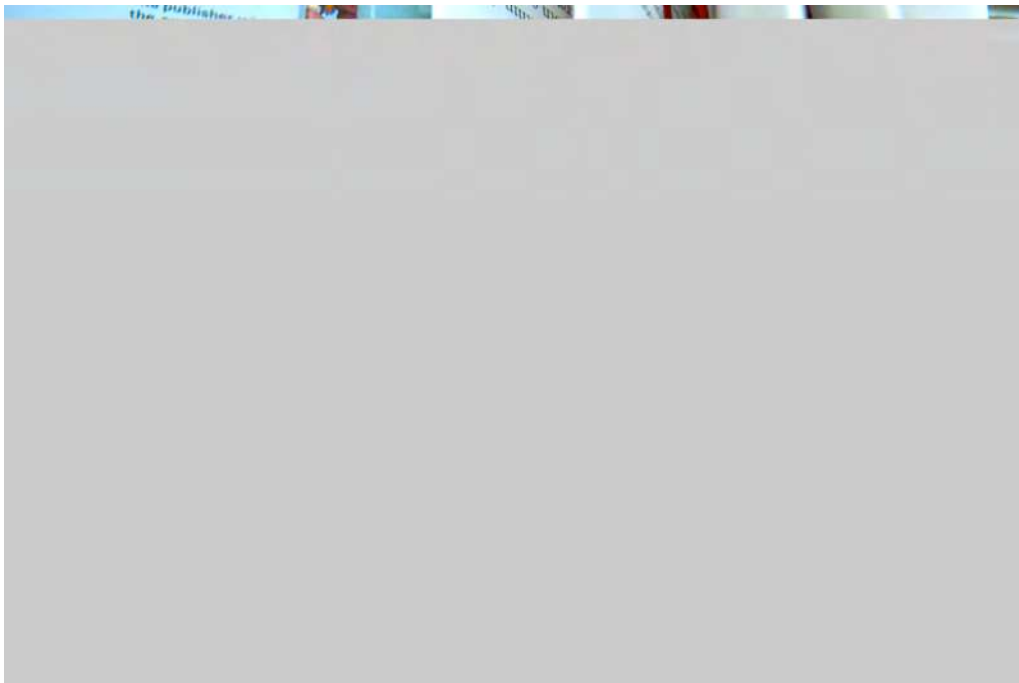

Figure 5-61 *Our World in Colour, 1968* (2009), close up of wax seals and ribbons*.* Exhibited in the Upper Durbar Hall. "Indian Summer." Exhibition.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

Cause and effect: New Labour, 'cultural diversity' and museums

Despite the significance of funders' prerequisites, few studies have shown their impact on actual displays. Frequently, policy is analysed, and regularly exhibition space is studied, but the relationship between the two is rarely examined. The complex interplay between government and culture, of which museums are a central part, is present in both the cause and effect of change in gallery space. The focus on the redisplay of the 'World Art' collection at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery and the 'Living Cultures' collection at the University of Manchester, Manchester Museum, reveals the series of translations that occurs between Government notions of cultural diversity and how they find their way into permanent collections. Interpretations that promote ethnographic value, delivered by the un-named institution, now co-exist with the presentation of people from local source communities interacting with the collections: from dressing the Hindu shrine at Brighton, to videos of people talking to objects from the collection in Rekindle at Manchester. This study rejects the trend for reports on the relationship between the museum and source communities, to focus on the benefits of this interaction and ignore the difficulties and paradoxes evident in this type of work.[1]

The five redisplays studied demonstrate that interpretation of policy and guidance varies from institution to institution and is profoundly affected by this context and informed by individual museum professional's viewpoints. The close examination of changes to gallery space shows that the understanding and manifestation of cultural diversity changes within individual museums over a period of time. Practices transform in line with staffing changes, reflecting alterations in management and individual professional's preoccupations. At Manchester Museum, the keeper system, in place for over a hundred years, has been phased out since 2001. This has impacted upon the process of conducting a collection redisplay.

---

[1] Peers and Brown, "Introduction" 10.

Exhibition redisplays, once the responsibility of a single keeper, are now largely developed by a committee incorporating museum staff, members of Manchester Museum's Community Advisory Board, and an external gallery design firm reducing the curator's over all control over the redisplay. The actions of the designers in the 2003 redisplay at Manchester Museum eroded the curatorial approach to elevate the voice of the source communities within the gallery. The curator, George Banks, was not able to get the quotes he had included in the large text panels reinstated following the design company's removal of them. The specific institutional context alongside how different museum professionals have taken up broader debates on cultural representation can be seen to influence the ways in which interpretation and display are shaped.

Throughout the previous government's administration, from 1997 to 2010, museums have noticeably changed. The funding made available to the sector through the Single Regeneration Budget, Renaissance, the Designation Scheme, and the Heritage Lottery Fund, provided support for existing projects that already addressed colonial legacy to expand through the further engagement of source communities. Funds were also made available for the creation of new outreach initiatives and for large-scale museum redevelopments, responding to New Labour's call for community cohesion, and reflecting local authorities' budgetary focus on urban regeneration. Jobs were created in museums which specifically focused on developing outreach and social inclusion programmes. In 1997, a community researcher was employed at Brighton Museum. The assistant keeper of non-western art appointed in 1996 and co-funded by government money, was responsible for conducting outreach activity with the local Indian community.[2]

This community engagement activity has been realized in a way that has been both influenced and limited by the scope of the previous government's cultural diversity policy. The problem, in the promotion and recognition of

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[2] Martin 83.

cultural diversity, is the continued classification of people by ethnicity and race, and as minority and majority, which creates essentialised cultural identities. While ever the focus is on defining and describing minority groups the majority is identified by what it is not. Through this system of difference the majority and those classified as minorities, will always be segregated from each other. This form of organising people is problematic. For if we accept, as Malik argues, that the notion of ethnicity and race are in fact constructs, it is important to recognize that race and ethnicity are not fixed but, as he insists, a particular way of knowing and understanding people, with a specific political and cultural context. [3] The categories do not then exist as objective realities. However, 'cultural diversity' policy at a political level, which has translated into museums, uses 'ethnicity', 'race', and 'minority' as if they functioned as neutral ways to group people. This activity consequently perpetuates this problematic practice of classification because it uses these divisions. Therefore the potential of any projects, initiatives, outreach programmes and practices that work with these categories, are limited from the outset. They are undermined by the essentially divisive categories used to describe difference that inform the principles of cultural diversity and community cohesion discussed in this thesis. So instead of amending colonial processes they are seemingly contributing to their continuation.

Artistic practice and museums

Artists working with museums throughout the 1990s including Fred Wilson, discussed in Chapter 5, and Sonya Boyce, who exhibited in the ethnographic galleries at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery, contributed to an institutional critique of collections and their reflection of an imperial past. Implicit in this artistic genre is a critical approach towards the site of the museum as both a place where meaning is constructed, and politics, both internal and external, play out. By the 21st century this practice has been appropriated widely this form of artistic intervention has been reshaped and altered by the museum through its commissioning practices, to promote

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[3] Malik, *The Meaning of Race* 71-100 and 149-177.

cultural diversity, departing from the role of critical intervention. Art commissions involving source communities, displayed in permanent ethnographic galleries, are used to demonstrate the respective museum's commitment to the promotion and recognition of diversity to funders, visitors, and source communities themselves. The output of the commission can be seen to be valued for its manifestation of source communities' input and interpretation. This reflects the current preoccupation in collecting practice with living cultures in the 21st century, which like 19th century practices show a preoccupation with authenticity. As shown, the presence of source communities in the permanent gallery space is considered to lend authenticity and credibility to the exhibitions.[4] Source communities are represented through quotes, photographs, artwork, and display decoration in "The James Green Gallery of World Art" and through videos, quotes, photographs, and digital media artwork in the "Living Cultures" gallery. However policy is translated or mediated it may work imperfectly in the actual gallery space and the traditions of the museum including the older displays, which emphasise ethnographic value, still function and overshadow. So when the work created through artist commissions is added into the permanent display it seems to become dominated by the colonial collection, which impacts upon the artworks ability to produce a meaningful critique. No matter how carefully written policy is or guidance these things occur within spaces that have a colonial history and this cannot be completely undone. As a consequence at Brighton Museum, the Ganesh statue, donation box, and carved domes created by Balvendra Elias, in consultation with people from the local Gujarati community who decorated the Hindu shrine, appear to all intents and purposes as artefacts on display, as opposed to interventions that broaden the interpretations on offer. This is exacerbated by the fact that the Hindu Shrine Project participants' contribution to the identification of previously unknown deities are absorbed into the institutional offering and not acknowledged. Although the "Rekindle" art commission present in the "Living Cultures" gallery at Manchester Museum might not be considered

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[4] Heywood 27.

part of the conventional collection as it appears in the Gallery, the source community interpretations sit alongside the labels and text panels which privilege ethnographic value. Consequently, this juxtaposition could be construed as an endorsement of the dominant ethnographic approach mobilized in the Gallery that displays the colonial collection, whilst, it does not actively contribute to the critique of the institution's presentation of the 'facts'. And in "Rekindle", as highlighted, the members of the Community Advisory Panel are restricted to emoting and remembering – seemingly not involved in the contribution of facts, which is reserved for the Museum.

The artistic practices discussed in this thesis, which include engagement of source communities and institutional critique, do not automatically displace or replace each other, they co-exist. However, I would seek in this thesis to position them as different in the sense that there are tensions between these two approaches. For the institutional critique criticises the museum and highlights paradoxical display techniques but offers few solutions, except perhaps to be aware of the power of the institution, whilst the other through engagement of source communities tries to improve upon interpretations through collecting living cultures but without addressing the limitations of the museum. Notably artists, in this period of study, have also been, in part, commissioned for their ethnicity to facilitate a connection to a particular ethnic group. So sometimes they are operating in two ways at the same time: as an artist and as a representative of a community. In addition the attempt to incorporate artist commissions, in the case studies discussed, into the permanent collection can also be seen as actually an acceptance of criticism pertaining to interpretation and collection strategy, whilst it does not really address the problem.

The promotion of 'looking again' is paramount in all of the doctoral artworks produced. The work encourages visitors to think about classification, the

presentation of 'the world,'[5] and the appearance of facts within the context of museum display practices, all of which involve the visitor in looking more than once. The visitor was explicitly incorporated into the creation of the most recent artworks exhibited at the Hastings Museum and Art Gallery in 2009, *Postcards from Around the World*, *Around the World in Colour, 1960,* and *Our World in Colour, 1968*. Each piece requires the visitor to animate the work. In *Around the World in Colour, 1960* someone needs to turn the pages of the book, to lift the theatre books, to turn to the pages with red tabs, to look with the magnifying glass at the small print on the 1904 map postcard. The attention is deliberately placed upon the visitor to bring the work to life, to interact with the material presented, and to pause and reflect upon what it is they have encountered.

The doctoral artworks submitted as part of this thesis address the possibility of revealing the limitations and problems of ethnographic collections and their histories. The call from critical curators throughout the 1990s evident in the contributions to *Exhibiting Cultures* (1991) and the associated text, *Museum and Communities* (1992) was, after all, for self-reflection. This commentary, positioned the museum as an important site of analysis and discussion, regarding the formation of cultural representation. As shown, this form of critical curatorship was also present in Charles

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[5] The term 'world' as a form of classification is in regular use. As part of the 'London 2012 Cultural Olympiad' museums, libraries and archives in: England, Northern Ireland, Wales, and Scotland are involved in a major project entitled: Stories of the World. The term 'world' in this current example continues to perpetuate the homogenising practice and Eurocentric perspective characteristic of this label, forming a mass cultural 'othering.' The project is described as: "an exploration of stories of collections that have come from all over the world. But there's a difference. Instead of the traditional curators' or historians' view, audiences will hear stories from the viewpoint of people from diverse cultures, now living in the UK. Objects once bypassed for being reminders of our imperial past will now be examined and given more relevance to contemporary Britain" (MLA, *Stories of the World* (London: MLA, 2010) 1, pamphlet.) This quote embodies a very familiar and clumsy rhetoric implying diverse cultures in the UK are recent phenomena, through the phrase "diverse cultures, now living in the UK." Whilst the author is identified as part of the core, majority distinguished from the peripheral, and minority through the reference to "our imperial past." Of relevance to this study the next redisplay of the 'World Art' collection, at Brighton Museum, due to open in 2012, is part of the Stories of the World project (Harriet Hughes, personal interview, 8 Mar. 2010; Praveen Heart, personal interview, 8 Mar. 2010).

Saumarez Smith's contribution to Vergo's 1989 anthology *The New Museology.* If we return to critical curation, twenty years on, it is clear this is a call yet to be addressed. This investigation begins to attend to this question anew, through a critical and creative practice.

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Appendix I Archival material

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History Centre. Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton and Hove.

The Royal Pavilion & Museums Review.

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Outreach case studies.

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Appendix II Example of interview questions and prompts

Questions and prompts posed to museum professionals at the case study museums

1. How long have you been working in the museum sector for?

2. Could you please talk about your role at the museum?

Prompts

Job title

Start date

Day to day activity

Collection research

Involvement in gallery redisplays

3. What has been your experience of the changes to this role within museums?

Prompts

Influences on changes

Resistance to changes

Contact with visitors

Contact with communities

Involvement in gallery redisplays

Collection development / strategy

Internal working relationships

4. Can you remember when the following terms started to be used in museums and in what context: cultural diversity, access, social inclusion, social exclusion?

Prompts

Funding prerequisites

New Labour influence

DCMS agenda

MLA focus

MA focus

Your response

Colleagues' responses

5. How have you in your role responded to the call for cultural diversity, access, and social inclusion?

Prompts

Use of community engagement

Use of commissioning artists

Development of collections

Notable projects

Notable practices

Impact on the permanent display of the ethnographic collections

6. What is your perception of the purpose of the artist commissions present in the permanent ethnographic exhibition?

Prompts

Value

7. How do you think it actually functions?

Prompts

Interpretation provided in the gallery

Presence amongst the colonial collection

Representation of people from the local community

Visitor response

Appendix III Exhibition interpretations

Centre for Research and Development, University of Brighton, 10-14 March 2008.
"PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture and Historical and Critical Studies."

This text was presented on an A4 panel and installed in the 2008 exhibition by the work to introduce the themes and questions addressed in the research and artworks. The three pieces of work were exhibited under the title 'World':

World

The authority of the **museum** rests on its claim to represent the world.

The work on show begins to explore and illuminate some of the mechanisms used by museums to construct authoritative representations. Display and classification systems are so engrained in the museum environment it seems thay are rendered invisable to many.

My work brings into question **practices of viewing**,

challenging the acceptance of 'truth' exhibited in museums and engaging in the debate surrounding the construction of meaning.

I am exhibiting one part of my visual practice, **collecting**. I collect

books which claim to represent the world, and postcards. Through these collections I am exploring the construction of representation.

Researching the impact of **multicultural politics** on the role

and functioning of ethnographic exhibitions in England is at the centre of my project. The debates and issues surrounding the construction of cultural

identity, which infuse the curating of ethnographic exhibitions are central to my thesis. The politics of multiculturalism has had a profound impact on the display and function of objects collected in colonial times and on how

Britain's colonial past is now documented within

museums;

to what effect is a focus of my research.

Research questions

- Can a visual language be developed that questions practices of viewing whilst mobilizing issues surrounding the construction of representation in ethnographic exhibitions?
- How does the focus on difference, inherent in the politics of multiculturalism affect the role and functioning of ethnographic exhibitions?
- Have the cultural strategies and political initiatives of recent successive governments distorted the reading of Designated ethnographic collections?

**Hastings Museum and Art Gallery, 11 September to 6 December 2009.
"Indian Summer."**

This text panel was shown alongside the artwork exhibited in the two
galleries in the Hastings Museum and Art Gallery. The four pieces of work
were presented under the title 'The World in Colour':

The World in Colour
Artist: Nicola Ashmore

The authority of the museum rests on its claim to accurately represent the
world. The World in Colour explores and illuminates some of the
mechanisms used in museums to make their representations convincing by
showing exhibits as if they are simply facts. My work asks visitors to think
about how they look at museum exhibits.

The World in Colour is part of a larger project that explores the power of
representations in museums, investigates the role of the collector and how
collections, often assembled at the height of the British Empire, map the
world.

Appendix IV Exhibition leaflets

Figure Appendix 3- 1 *PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture & Critical Studies.* Brighton: Centre for Research & Development, University of Brighton, 2008. Front cover. Leaflet.

Symposium:

Wednesday 12 March, 2008 10:00–17:00
Grand Parade

CETLD, G5

10:00 Coffee and pastries

10:30 Introduction: Dr Christopher Pierce, Research Student
Division Leader

10:45 Verity Clarkson
The Cold War 'émigré' exhibit in Britain: Cultural exchange,
diplomacy and trade c.1945–75
Supervisors:
Prof JM Woodham, J Pavitt, Prof C Breward

11:30 Emma Stibbon
Glaciers and aerial views: Observation and recording in the field
Senior Lecturer, School of Arts & Communication
Emma has three drawings in the exhibition. Her work often
addresses environments that are in a condition of flux or
change, focusing on how the apparently monumental can be
so fragile.

12:15 Gallery tour with artists' talks

13:00 Lunch

14:00 Cathy Gale
A semiological study of the letter/sign "X": A studio-based
exploration and articulation of its unique multiplicities of
reference and signification
Supervisor:
Prof G Hardie

14:30 Dr Sally Miller
Traumatic memory: The process of researching and writing
a PhD
Lecturer, School of Arts & Communication
Sally has studied photography and comparative literature and is
now a lecturer in critical theory. Her research interests include
psychoanalysis, the image, trauma and memory.

Figure Appendix 3- 2 *PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture & Critical Studies.*
Brighton: Centre for Research & Development, University of Brighton, 2008. 1.
Leaflet.

15:20 Katie Arbuckle
Socioeconomic factors influencing and influenced by Japanese mobile phone design
Supervisors:
Dr PJ Maguire, Prof JM Woodham

16:10 Deirdre O'Mahony
New ecologies between rural life and visual culture in the west of Ireland: History, context, position, and art practice
Supervisors:
P Seddon, T Wilson

17:00 Drinks Reception

Welcome by **Karen Norquay**,
Head of the School of Arts & Communication

Figure Appendix 3- 3 *PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture & Critical Studies.* Brighton: Centre for Research & Development, University of Brighton, 2008. 2. Leaflet.

Exhibition:

Monday 10 March – Friday 14 March, 2008
Ground Floor, Grand Parade

Naser Al-Rifaei
Aesthetics of design in the art of Moroccan woodwork as a source of inspiration for contemporary artistic applications
Supervisors:
P Seddon, Dr PJ Maguire

Nicola Ashmore
Visualising the identity crisis: Multiculturalism and the ethnographic exhibitions in England from 1997–2007
Supervisors:
Dr L Purbrick, Prof L Aggiss

Anna Dumitriu
A practice based investigation into the relationship of normal flora microbiology to philosophical notions of the sublime
Supervisors:
Prof C Hooker, T Hickey, Dr J Paul

Shelley Fowles
Conjuring fragments: The Golem as an aspect of the uncanny in European and American illustrators, film-makers and artists from 1900
Supervisors:
Dr P Jobling, M Huber, V Alexis

Vikki Haffenden
The innovative application of existing digitally controlled, Flat Bed Weft knitting, to fashion knitware for the individual three dimensional body shape of women, particularly those outside UK standard sizes
Supervisors:
Prof L Taylor, Dr T Katz

Jane Hattrick
The life and work of Norman Hartnell: Issues of design, business, royal patronage and consumption in British society 1924–1990
Supervisors:
Prof L Taylor, Dr L Purbrick

Figure Appendix 3- 4 *PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture & Critical Studies.* Brighton: Centre for Research & Development, University of Brighton, 2008. 3. Leaflet.

Sarah Haybittle
*Fugitive tales from the edge of memory: A visual interpretation
of female narratives, 1900–1939*
Supervisors:
M Huber, Dr P Jobling, Prof L Taylor

Laura Jackson-Willis
*The beach hut as an English retreat: A studio based project
that documents the structure, interior design and location of the
beach hut and its relationship to the occupant*
Supervisors:
Prof G Hardie, Dr L Purbrick, J Katz

Claudia Kappenberg
*The Body as site beyond purpose: A studio-led investigation
into the use of uselessness, or the paradox as operational
strategy in contemporary performance practice*
Supervisors:
Prof C Hooker, T Hickey

Sandra Lim
*Illusion and anti-illusion: Being in time and space in the
everyday, through video practice*
Supervisors:
Prof JM Woodham, M Hartney

Megha Rajguru
*Worship and value: A critical observation of ritualistic practices
surrounding Indian religious objects in temples in India and
museums in the UK*
Supervisors:
Prof JM Woodham, C Atha

Mike Sadd
*The migration of form: Addressing the paradox of emergence
in design*
Supervisors:
C Rose, Prof JM Woodham, Prof C Hooker

Figure Appendix 3- 5 *PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture & Critical Studies.*
Brighton: Centre for Research & Development, University of Brighton, 2008. 4.
Leaflet.

Mikey Tomkins
Urban agriculture: Food, architecture and urban energy consumption
Supervisors:
A Viljoen, Prof A Church

Jo-Chieh Yao
From the map to the journey – six aspects of transfer between dimensions, represented in book form
Supervisors:
C Rose, Prof GM Hardie

Organised by the Research Student Division,
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Gez Wilson

For information about postgraduate research study at the
University of Brighton, Faculty of Arts & Architecture, please visit
http://artsresearch.brighton.ac.uk

Images: 'from the edge of memory' (work in progress)
by Sarah Haybittle

C | R | D Centre for Research & Development

Figure Appendix 3- 6 *PhD Research Students Arts, Architecture & Critical Studies.* Brighton: Centre for Research & Development, University of Brighton, 2008. Back cover. Leaflet.

Figure Appendix 3- 7 *Private View of Indian Summer*. Hastings: Hastings Museum & Art Gallery, 2009. Front cover. Leaflet.

above left: detail from Water Buffalo (Yama's Steed) 2009, by Russell Webb www.russellwebb.eu
bottom left: detail: Kinetic Shiva in Red Sanctum, installation by Megha Rajguru.
right: detail, Sultan Jamshid Qutb Shah of Golconda, c.1680 Golconda, Deccan, India. UEA 537.
Robert & Lisa Sainsbury Collection. University of East Anglia. Photo: James Austin.

Figure Appendix 3- 8 *Private View of Indian Summer*. Hastings: Hastings Museum & Art Gallery, 2009. 1. Leaflet.

Figure Appendix 3- 9 *Private View of Indian Summer*. Hastings: Hastings Museum
& Art Gallery, 2009. 2. Leaflet.

Figure Appendix 3- 10 *Private View of Indian Summer*. Hastings: Hastings
Museum & Art Gallery, 2009. Back cover. Leaflet.