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Teaching Museology, Understanding the Museum. On the Increased Need for Dialogue, Listening, and Observation (Voice From Łódź)¹

The title of the conference organised by the Association of Open-Air Museums in Poland, where I had the pleasure of presenting the paper that forms the basis for the reflections presented below, was *Współczesne problemy zarządzania w muzeach. Edukacja. Dobór wykształconych kadr* (Contemporary Problems of Museum Management. Education. Selection of Trained Staff). Each time I recalled this title while planning and outlining my presentation, the word “problem” struck me as the most significant term in this conference concept. The fact that staff selection is sometimes a challenge in today’s museums is a sentiment echoed by many museum professionals in various institutions. As a teacher partly responsible for educating potential candidates for work in museums, especially ethnographic ones, I decided to address some of the issues from my perspective. The second factor influencing the perspective I adopted was the conference’s location – the Museum of the Masovian Countryside – and the substantive focus of the organiser, the Association of Open-Air Museums in Poland. Ethnographic

¹ This article is an extended version of the paper presented at the Museum of the Masovian Countryside during the conference *Współczesne problemy zarządzania w muzeach. Edukacja. Dobór wykształconych kadr* (Contemporary Problems of Museum Management. Education. Selection of Trained Staff) organised by the Association of Open-Air Museums in Poland on February 27 – March 1, 2023.

open-air museums have their unique characteristics within museology. Can academic didactics in the spirit of museology remain indifferent to these specifics?

What is the perspective from which I view things? I have been teaching or co-teaching museology at the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Łódź (IEiAKUŁ) for over 20 years, although the subject's name has changed as the curriculum evolved. The current name is "Anthropologist in the Museum". The number of hours allocated to this subject has also changed. Currently, it comprises 30 hours of lectures and 30 hours of tutorials, including study visits to museums.

However, in line with the adopted "problematization", I do not intend to delve into genealogical issues concerning the history of museum education in the Łódź ethnological centre. I will only mention that the founder of the Department of Ethnography at the University of Łódź, Professor Kazimiera Zawistowicz-Adamska, had a close association with museum matters [Nadolska-Styczyńska 2011]. Despite successive changes in the curriculum, a course dedicated to museology has been its constant element for three decades, even though there have been interruptions in this regard in some academic centres in the country.² For several years, museology was taught here by Prof. Jan Święch and Prof. Prof. Anna Nadolska-Styczyńska, both of whom have extensive practical experience. The majority of the current research and teaching staff at IEiAKUŁ have published on museology or collecting [Kaniowska 2014; Kępiński 2007; Krupa-Ławrynowicz 2019; Kuźma 1998; Białkowski, Latocha 2020; Nowina-Sroczyńska 2007; Orszulak-Dudkowska 2021; Piątkowska 2007] and collaborate on various levels with numerous ethnographic museums in the country. The Institute's formalised cooperation with the Archaeological and Ethnographic Museum in Łódź, including educational initiatives, is governed by an appropriate agreement. Graduates of Łódź ethnology find employment in museums not only in Łódź but also in institutions located in Bełchatów, Bytów, Gdańsk, Grudziądz, Krasnogruda, Kutno, Nieborów, Opoczno, Radom, Radomsko, Rawa Mazowiecka, Sieradz, Toruń, Wdzydze Kiszewskie, Wieluń, Zduńska Wola, and Zgierz.

Of course, from a certain perspective, it would be advantageous to address the issue in the spirit of promoting individual ethnological centres with the slogan "We provide excellent education – choose us!". After all,

² For more, see articles by Anna Weronika Brzezińska and Stanisława Trebuni-Staszal in this volume.

it can be assumed that the readers of the material presented will include decision-making museum professionals, i.e. employers. However, the Sierpc meeting was neither an education fair nor a job fair. Therefore, I believed it was worthwhile to seize the opportunity to highlight the complexity of the problem of museum education and staff selection, as I understood it was encouraged by the conference organisers.³ The matter of the history of museological education in the Łódź ethnological centre should await a more comprehensive study.

In the following paragraphs, however, I will attempt to assess certain concerns, dilemmas, or doubts that trouble me as an ethnologist and educator, and then I will endeavour to systematically organise these threads and draw positive conclusions.

While discussions about training museum staff focus on the role of undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate studies in museology (an autonomous field of study), as well as the preservation of cultural assets or the cultural heritage protection [Majewski 2018: 9-12], it has always been my belief that museology, when taught as part of ethnological studies, has a special, even symbolic, significance in the context of ethnographic museology, particularly that represented by the majority of open-air museums in Poland. After all, collecting folk art lies at the foundation of Polish ethnography, although it should be noted that originally this activity was not linked to material culture. “The field of interest of amateur folklorists mostly covered verbal folklore, while collecting activities were aimed at learning about the national tradition inherent in the native folk culture” [Barańska 2004: 48]. Collectors returned from their fieldwork with filled notebooks rather than chests or trunks. Only 10-12% of Oskar Kolberg’s printed works are devoted to the material aspects of life [ibid.].

Leaving sentimentality aside, whenever we discuss among IEiAKUŁ staff the practical preparation of ethnology graduates for work in any institutions, two positions always clash. Namely, it is argued that the transfer of practical skills, or at least the linking of teaching with some sector of employment, is crucial for the interest of matriculated youth in the field of study and determines the recruitment to the university, and thus the functioning of the Institute. On the other hand, there are resounding voices that the university is not a vocational school and that the primary concern

³ Thus, the text presented here does not essentially lose the character of a narrative characteristic of a conference speech.

here should be to develop and teach scientific theory. Both positions are supported by sound arguments, with the latter being hardly surprising. After all, we have certain research and theoretical ambitions and, moreover, in the current system, we are primarily accountable for this type of activity. Regardless of how well we educate in the field of ethnology, our very existence depends on our scientific achievements, the research projects we carry out, and the appropriate number of employees declaring themselves in a given discipline. In fact – in extreme formalist terms – the only thing that would push us towards the museum is the requirement of cooperation with the so-called external environment.

Never during the introductory classes have I communicated to the students in a way that would make them think that these classes would prepare them completely for work in the museum and that they would be able to cope well with the museum reality if they were to be employed in such an institution. Instead, I inform them that in this course they will learn what an ethnologist working in a museum does. The aim of the course is rather to indicate what a candidate for work in a museum needs to be prepared for, not to provide full and comprehensive preparation for one task or another. A subtle difference in wording, but nevertheless important in conceptual terms. I always emphasise that this is only a rehearsal, a fitting, a reconnaissance.

The classes I teach are entitled, as I mentioned, “Anthropologist in the Museum”, and one could, after all, read the intentions of these classes as dealing with anthropological reflection on the museum – and this is certainly a far cry from the perspective of “education [facilitating] the selection of trained staff”. Because a museum facility needs good, i.e. responsible and active, employees. Does the ability (or willingness) to engage the museum in anthropological reflection align with the criterion of competence? I do not think so, although it may be part of it. Can a newly graduated museum professional be independent in the sense that they are right away entrusted with the task of working directly with artefacts? I do not think so either, and I would even consider it not very responsible on the part of their superiors. Since I have been conducting such classes, I still feel and I am sure I will always feel that dissonance whereby when I enter the field of praxis I worry that theory suffers and vice versa – when I try to embrace the museum with anthropological reflection (e.g. by developing the context of heritage, multiculturalism, identity, or the influence of particular

currents of anthropological thought on museums), I feel like I might neglect the practical side and waste valuable time that could be spent better preparing students, even if only slightly, for their eventual encounter with the museum as a workplace.

Why do I feel this unease? I think it is related to the distance that (still) separates contemporary anthropological theory from ethnographic museology practices and, consequently, to the ambiguous position of the Institute of Ethnology (any Institute of Ethnology) in the context of training museum professionals. This is a matter of circumstances on which much has already been written [Barańska 2004: 62-64; Czachowski 2007; Piątkowski 2007; Robotycki 1993 *et al.*]. From the perspective of the selection of personnel for museums – especially open-air museums – radical changes within the bosom of the discipline of ethnology itself were arguably disadvantageous. Considering the establishment dates of the first department of ethnography on Polish soil (1910) and the Ethnographic Museum in Kraków (1911) as the turning points that initiated the academy-museum relationship in the field of ethnography, then, in principle, until the end of the 1970s, the scope of interest and objectives of both remained the same and common. These objectives can be defined as follows: the protection of monuments of folk culture, the scientific study of these monuments, and the popularisation of knowledge about this culture. The relatively modest appeals and realisations regarding workers' culture, with the Łódź ethnographic centre at the forefront, represented only a minor departure from the prevailing paradigm in which both academic and museum ethnography were immersed, according to which the basic circle of interest of the representatives of this discipline included the so-called traditional folk culture preserved in its unchanged form [Barańska 2004: 59]. From today's perspective, it can be said that the change was sudden and radical. It involved, among other things, a consistent and perhaps too hasty elimination of this traditional ethnography from the curricula of ethnology institutes (in some cases including a course in museology), distancing oneself from the notion of folk culture, and its radical revision. However, this was a condition for breaking with the old paradigms (with historical materialism at the forefront), for catching up with the enormous theoretical backlog. Let us recall how thirsty we were for other, new, invigorating themes and perspectives. There is no doubt that the output of domestic socio-cultural anthropology of the last 30 years is enormous. These are great researchers and theorists and their excellent

works. The problem for ethnographic museums was that the activities of these institutions came under the magnifying glass of anthropologically oriented researchers and theorists. The problem for the academia, on the other hand, was the lack of museological representation (expository visualisation) of the discipline's material scope, which was also more readily referred to as cultural anthropology, as if in opposition to museums. Metaphorically speaking, the wheels of academia started turning faster, driven by the rapid transmission of concepts, notions, and ideas. Meanwhile, the museological wheels continued to turn at the old pace, clearly burdened by their own long-standing output and century-old mission. This is how Katarzyna Kulikowska and Cezary Obracht-Prondzyński described the consequences of this divergence of academic and museum paths:

It was said that we should work together, complement each other, read each other's texts, and meet at conferences. So much for declarations. When we tried to go deeper in our conversations, it turned out that this depth was not there. We do not usually work together, we do not complement or read each other, etc. If we do meet (after all, there have been quite a few conferences with the intention of bringing academics and museum professionals together), we often don't understand each other. Museologists are usually out of touch with academic ethnology (...). Moreover, a wall of resentment (or perhaps "only" distrust?) has developed between museologists and academics. Despite the reluctance, distrust, and also the sense of marginalisation diagnosed in the research, museum professionals expect academic ethnology to be the one to show the way forward for ethnographic museums. The paradox is that, at the same time, they do not seek answers from it themselves [Kulikowska, Obracht-Prondzyński 2014: 63].

Another dilemma over personnel training lies in the very structure of ethnographic museology. Certainly, museology classes would be different if we knew in advance the type of museum a graduate would be employed by and whether the graduate would be interested in working in a museum. However, this is not something we know. Was it ever different? Yes. When we moved the Institute of Ethnology in Łódź to new premises a dozen or so years ago, we had the opportunity to go through accumulated papers, documents, and correspondence. In one of the folders, we found a letter from the competent ministry to the Department of Ethnography from the 1980s. The letter referred to the need for a certain number of people to take up ethnographic studies in Łódź because, five years later, there would be

as many vacancies for ethnographers in museums and other institutions. We passed this letter from hand to hand. It was incredible to the younger generation to what extent the training process could be integrated into the employment process. Let us leave aside the question of the sensibility and efficiency of central planning, but surely that situation then offered the possibility of a much more efficient, effective, and rational adaptation of the curriculum to the needs of the labour market, regardless of academic trends. Those days are unlikely to return, but the question remains. What kind of possible job in what kind of museum are we talking about? Of open-air or pavilion type? A large ethnographic one or a local one with two full-time specialists? Perhaps a historical one with a department of urban culture? National, local government, private? Or should we be trying to prepare the student to “go it alone” and set up their own establishment to display personal collections? We know of such cases [Pajak 2014: 149]. Can we adequately prepare the student in a course of several hours for each of these eventualities?

Secondly, the activities of museum professionals have become increasingly complex. As Piotr Majewski points out:

Museums have evolved into multi-discipline workplaces. They now demand a wide range of qualifications from their employees: a university education in the relevant discipline represented by the museum, complemented by specialised museological knowledge acquired through practical experience and study in foreign institutions, not to mention the moral qualities that hold significance in any profession [2018: 6–7].

Yes, today, the role of an ethnographer in a museum demands a diverse skill set and a continual focus on numerous distinct aspects. This is influenced by an increasing number of regulations, the necessity to secure funding from various sources and adhere to specific rules for its allocation, the obligation to professionalise offerings such as exhibitions, education, and publications, and the need to engage with and collaborate with subcontractors. As a result, many ethnographers find themselves functioning more as project managers than mere implementers, adding another layer of complexity in the form of interpersonal tensions, with a constant, sometimes abrupt, and therefore chaotic expansion of skills and competencies. Additionally, new technologies and various pressures, including political ones, further contribute to this complexity. Whether and how to teach finding one’s

way through this chaos? Museum professionals could likely compile an extensive list of often unexpected factors that complicate their work and, at the same time, make it challenging to determine how to adequately train newcomers for their roles. In principle, a 30-hour course might only provide enough time for a comprehensive study of the Museum Act with in-depth discussions of the concepts it contains.

Finally, what about the demands of academic anthropologists for changes to the collecting programme or exhibition offerings of ethnographic museums in relation to contemporary culture? In the literature on the subject, the example of the Toruń exhibition *Pamiątka z wojska Opowieść o życiu prawdziwego mężczyzny* (A Souvenir From the Army. A Story About the Life of a Real Man) is often cited because there were no other projects breaking established patterns. For several years now, cases like *Wesele 21* (Wedding 21) in Kraków or the inter-museum project *Dzieło-działka* (Work-Allotment) have been used as examples, even though these are otherwise excellent projects that are now long overdue. Of course, there are more and more instances of museum activities in line with contemporary anthropology, but they still appear to be relatively rare. They often do not concern permanent exhibitions and, let's admit it, are even less frequently linked to the activities of open-air museums. Collections of objects beyond the canon of folk culture are being painstakingly built up, but even in this context we often revert to well-known examples. Who has not heard of Tomasz Dzikowski and his collection of DIY agricultural tractors, which is considered a "gem" in the collection of the Radom Countryside Museum [Dzikowski 2011] or Mirosław Kuklik and his dedication to expanding the museum's collection of rebar ornaments [Kuklik 2011]?⁴

Perhaps, museological education in institutes of ethnology should instead focus on the functions and possibilities of multi-departmental pavilion museums. These museums are located in university towns, closer to the institutes, and are better equipped, both in terms of exhibition infrastructure and a more flexible collection profile, to address the new challenges posed by the development of ethnology as a discipline. It seems that open-air museums, due to their pro-tourist character and strongly profiled collections, can observe the evolution of the discipline from a greater distance. But should they? To some extent, yes. For if an open-air ethnographic

⁴ Several recommendations regarding the modern collecting policy of an ethnographic museum were proposed by Janusz Barański in *Etnografia Nowa* [2013].

museum aspires to be more than just a repository of wooden architecture and archaic equipment, and if it aims to include subsequent decades of rural cultural change and the phenomena occurring in this area in its sphere of interest, then all the issues of contemporary anthropology discussed at universities today will “knock” on the museum’s gates with the impetus with which they burst into local communities in the second half of the twentieth century.

Naturally, as someone partly responsible for personnel training, I cannot help but adopt a critical perspective on museum trends. I mention this because it raises a logical and ethical issue. Specifically, would an educator who critically evaluates a museum be willing to educate individuals suitable for such an institution? If an employee identifies staffing requirements and the educator disagrees with certain aspects of how the museum operates, such as collection strategies, development vision, exhibitions, etc., then they should have the right and the courage to refuse to prepare graduates in a way that might lead them to replicate the mistakes and shortcomings of potential superiors. This educator may also feel compelled to share their concerns with their students. It poses both a logical and ethical dilemma, but represents a real-life situation. However, in such cases, there is a clear need for increased dialogue and mutual observation between the museum and academia.

There is one more issue that I must candidly address. Museum professionals who take on students often lack optimism. Sometimes they view the students’ visits as an opportunity to vent frustrations, albeit subtly. They may mention the significant financial sacrifices associated with working in a museum. Unfortunately, it is also common for museum staff to be frustrated by current organisational, administrative, or personnel problems. I must admit that I usually – instead of being relaxed – tremble when I take students to a museum, and more often than not, my concerns prove to be justified. At times, it appears as though the image I portray of museums during my classes at the institute, as potentially good places to work, doesn’t align with the reality conveyed by the museum professionals themselves. This makes me feel like some of my efforts are in vain. When I return to the university, I find myself having to rebuild the image of a welcoming museum institution from scratch. Or maybe it just seems to me that the students pick up on this museum bitterness because I am aware of it myself? I hope this is the case. If our interaction with museums

is limited to conference settings, we will primarily hear presentations from directors and department heads, often delivered in the presence of their superiors. Typically, they discuss accomplishments and successes. In such situations, it is difficult to form a comprehensive view of the organisation. However, when we conduct reconnaissance among rank-and-file employees, we sometimes uncover a different reality – one filled with frustration, discouragement, and a sense of powerlessness.

Everything I have discussed so far might be perceived as an attempt to absolve myself, akin to Pontius Pilate washing his hands of responsibility: claiming uncertainty about the course's focus, insufficient hours, or students not envisioning a future in museums (which is their sacred right). Perhaps this reflects exaggerated teaching concerns or even professional burnout on the part of the author – a not unlikely scenario.

However, now that I have laid out the puzzle pieces of these issues, I will attempt to assemble them with a slightly more optimistic outlook. I will present the arguments that this system does indeed work, or at the very least, has the potential to work. In other words, I will emphasise that “the glass is half full”, and only a few additional factors need attention. I will address the points I raised earlier, so to speak.

The training of museum staff at the Institute of Ethnology must be considered in a comprehensive manner. The courses through which students acquire the competencies and knowledge they can apply as museologists in Łódź are, in my opinion, impressive. I will mention by name only some of these diverse subjects, ranging from lectures to conversation classes to project-based practicals: Material Culture; Methods of Ethnographic Research; The Profession of an Anthropologist; Fundamentals of Scientific Workshop; Local Community – Heritage Management; Visual Anthropology; Folk and Non-Professional Art; Folklore and Popular Culture; Ethnographic Research: Tools, Techniques, Methods; Anthropology of Materiality (Anthropology of Design); Anthropology in Action; Anthropology of Space; Practical Anthropology; Cultural Heritage – Protection and Design; Verbal, Musical and Dance Folklore.

Finally, there are institutional traineeships. Each year in Łódź, out of the small number of student groups, someone always gets the opportunity to intern at the Archaeological and Ethnographic Museum, as well as other Łódź institutions such as the Central Textile Museum and the Museum of Art, or to museums in the region – in Sieradz, Piotrków Trybunalski, and Zgierz.

I assume a priori that the majority of employees of ethnology institutes in Poland have not previously worked in non-academic institutions (I am leaving aside grant and project activities or even occasional freelance contracts). This raises an uncomfortable question: do we possess the competence to impart practical skills for work in one place or another? This issue extends beyond museums alone. After all, most academics are typically associated with their home university or another academic institution – straight out of their master's or doctoral studies. But this is why we do not just get further training, but also have contact with museologists independent of teaching visits with students. While museology classes foster contacts, these encounters and relationships can also develop on a personal level, making them particularly valuable. We know museums and museologists, museologists know us. The idea is that those who do not conduct such classes should also maintain such contact. They should be willing to look at their own classes (those without the museum in their names) as ones that can be of use to the future museologists. I think it would be an excellent idea to organise regular meetings between museums and academic. Let us leverage membership in the Polish Ethnological Society, which encompasses various communities and has a museological section.

Regarding the perception of academic ethnology as less aligned with the needs of museums today, one can also adopt an alternative perspective. Firstly, traditional issues are returning, albeit approached with different paradigms that place identity and heritage at the forefront. Ethnologists no longer find it difficult to form opinions about the need to return to certain topics in their teaching. A few years ago, Anna Deredas and Alicja Piotrowska published an article with a thought-provoking title: *Po co i jak współcześnie nauczać o budownictwie ludowym? – przyczynek do rozważań o miejscu kultury ludowej w dydaktyce antropologii kulturowej* (Why and How to Teach About Folk Architecture Today? A Contribution to Reflections on the Place of Folk Culture in the Teaching of Cultural Anthropology). In this article, we find the following passage:

To paraphrase Bystron, it can be said that the contemporary culture studied by anthropologists includes content from folk culture. This leads to the conclusion that in order to understand contemporary culture, to understand contemporary man, it is necessary to familiarise oneself with, assimilate, and also understand the folk culture content inherent in it (...). Teaching anthropology without familiarising

oneself with popular culture brings us back to teaching philosophy starting with Kant's Copernican Revolution, without pointing to the philosophical concepts that preceded it (...). Comprehensive knowledge of human activity, which is the resource of every humanist, should not be limited to the prevailing fashion of the moment for a particular theory or phenomenon, but should also include (even if only in partial form) content left on the margins – but nevertheless still in circulation [2018 83, 86].

The authors argue that classes on folk architecture allow the teaching of observation and description. They also list several levels of cooperation between the museum and academia: spatial studies, ecology, local and regional identity, glocalization, ethnodesign.

Secondly, the teaching formula of fieldwork prepares people to work in museums, not only as part of winter and summer trips included in the timetable. At the IEiAKUŁ, various subjects are taught in parallel, where students are required to “go into the field”, meet people, and engage in conversations. The vast majority of bachelor's and master's theses written in the Łódź centre are based on field material obtained independently by the author of the thesis. Isn't it also the “daily bread” of a museologist?

Careful observation and dialogue should be a two-way street for the sake of progress. After all, contemporary academic ethnology offers valuable insights for museums. Namely, it attempts to diagnose human expectations, tastes, and even desires. It strives to answer the question of what modern people – and therefore also recipients of the museum offer – are like. University anthropology gathers data that museums can use to create a message (in the broad sense of the word) that corresponds to the visitors' expectations. One in which the visitors “finds themselves”, which some consider to be fundamental to the museum-visitor relationship.

I would like to conclude by recalling a few opinions that I believe are extremely pertinent. They were formulated quite some time ago but have not lost their relevance. They were articulated in the pages of *Zbiór Wiadomości do Antropologii Muzealnej*. I have deliberately chosen the insights of museologists, and I frequently revisit their texts:

Both the realm of theoretical reflection and research practice, encompassing historical collection research and contemporary projects, should inherently foster collaboration and mutual support in the interaction between ethnographic museums and academic ethnology. We are, in essence, allies – we are playing for the same team. Various

forms of cooperation and mutual aid are conceivable, including co-curricular endeavours in the area of collection management, shared research funding, backing for academic community initiatives, and collective introspection within thematic groups. The museum should, to some extent, be a field of applied ethnology for students even their studies [Bartosz 2014: 30].

Regarding the interface between academia and museums, I believe that an ethnographic museum should remain attuned to contemporary trends in ethnology and cultural anthropology. Similarly, academics must not overlook the support they can receive from museums. When constructing broader theoretical frameworks in our field, we must anchor them in the realm of description, detail, monuments, and artefacts. Museums undeniably provide this level, and they rightfully retain the label of “ethnographic”. Collaboration between both sides can only yield mutual benefits (...). Our field should continue to develop through a feedback loop, as theory and practice should perpetually go hand in hand. Those scholars who recognise this and cooperate with museums understand how much such cooperation can bring. The distinction between ethnography, ethnology or cultural anthropology should not imply automatic valuation. Ultimately, both description and theoretical analysis aimed at capturing a universe serve the same purpose: advancing our knowledge and understanding of people and their cultures [Blacharska 2014: 51–52].

One may wonder what we will find in this empty space [between the museum and the university] and is it a place worth meeting in? In my opinion, this space represents the practical dimension that ethnology/cultural anthropology can explore within the museum. Museologists must take a step forward and open up to the reality in which the cohesion of cultural structures is not necessarily bound by ethnographic regions. Conversely, university ethnologists can step back and reevaluate what they might have overlooked (...). A great benefactor would be one who would create a platform for the exchange of ideas and discussions between the two environments. Such discussions could revolve around identifying contemporary cultural issues and spaces that could form the basis for a new paradigm in modern ethnological and anthropological museology [Piaskowski 2014: 143–144].

As one of the authors put it, “we are playing for the same team”. Expanding on the sports metaphor – we are forming a team. Not everyone excels at scoring goals with bicycle kicks or dribbling, but as a team, we must understand each other and pass accurately. Otherwise, we have little

chance of winning any tournament, such as one where public trust and acceptance of the discipline practised in academia, as well as respect for the ethnographic profession of the museologist are at stake.

What do I think a candidate for a job in an ethnographic museum should be like? One who can tell the difference between a harrow and a plough, but who is also willing to uphold a professional ethos that nurtures valuable standards of honesty, responsibility, creativity, diligence, professional ethics, and solidarity. What kind of museum would I like them to work in? One where their anthropological ideas for building a collection or making use of the existing heritage are not hindered by the “glass ceiling” of ignorance among superiors and officials. In such a museum, they will get a chance to realise their potential, refined through meaningful, multi-faceted discussions with their colleagues, satisfied with their work environment.

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Damian Kasprzyk**Wykładać muzeologię, rozumieć muzeum. O wzmożonej potrzebie dialogu, słuchania i obserwacji (głos z Łodzi)**

Autor artykułu wychodzi z założenia, że muzeologia wykładana w ramach studiów etnologicznych ma wymiar szczególny i symboliczny w kontekście muzealnictwa etnograficznego – jest ważna i potrzebna. W tekście wskazano jednak szereg problemów i dylematów towarzyszących wykładaniu tego przedmiotu. Z perspektywy doboru kadr dla muzeów zapewne niekorzystne okazały się radykalne zmiany w łonie samej dyscypliny etnologicznej w ostatnich dekadach XX w. Aktywność muzeów etnograficznych była krytykowana przez antropologicznie zorientowanych badaczy i teoretyków. Do dziś programy kolekcjonerskie i narracje wystawiennicze często nie odpowiadają nurtom współczesnej antropologii. Kolejny dylemat z kształceniem kadr tkwi w samej strukturze muzealnictwa etnograficznego – jest bardzo zróżnicowana, dodatkowo aktywność muzealników ogromnie się skomplikowała. Wobec zatrudnionych w nich ludzi zwykło się formułować bardzo szerokie wymagania kwalifikacyjne. Zdaniem autora na kształcenie kadr muzealnych w instytucie etnologii trzeba spojrzeć kompleksowo. Zajęcia, w ramach których student pozyskuje kompetencje i wiedzę możliwą do spożytkowania jako muzealnik powinny być wykładane w ramach różnych przedmiotów o różnym charakterze. Ważne też, aby jak najwięcej dydaktyków zechciało spojrzeć na prowadzone przez siebie zajęcia (te bez muzeum w nazwie) jako takie, które mogą przydać się przyszłemu muzealnikowi. Dobrym pomysłem byłoby organizowanie regularnych spotkań muzealno-akademickich. Korzystajmy z możliwości członkostwa w Polskim Towarzystwie Ludoznawczym, integrującym środowiska i posiadającym w swoich strukturach sekcję muzeologiczną.

Słowa kluczowe: Uniwersytet Łódzki, etnologia, muzeologia, dydaktyka akademicka, instytucje kultury

Abstract

The Author of the article assumes that museology, when taught as part of ethnological studies, holds a special and symbolic significance in the context of ethnographic museology – it is important and necessary. However, the text highlights several problems and dilemmas associated with teaching this subject. From the perspective of the selection of personnel for museums, radical changes within the discipline of ethnology itself in the last decades of the twentieth century have arguably been detrimental. The activities of ethnographic museums have faced criticism from anthropologically oriented researchers and theorists. To this day, collection programmes and exhibition narratives often do not correspond to the currents of contemporary anthropology. Another dilemma with staff training lies in the diverse nature of ethnographic museology, and the activities of museum professionals have become increasingly complex. Very broad qualification requirements used to be formulated for the people employed there. In the Author's opinion, the training of museum staff at the Institute of Ethnology should be approached comprehensively. Competencies and knowledge relevant to museologists should be imparted across various subjects with different themes. It is also important for educators to recognise the potential value of their own classes (those without the museum in their names) for future museologists. It would be a good idea to organise regular meetings between museums and academia. Let us leverage membership in the Polish Ethnological Society, which encompasses various communities and has a museological section.

Keywords: University of Łódź, ethnology, museology, academic teaching, study programs, cultural institutions

