Culture Unbound:

Journal of Current Cultural Research

Thematic Section:

Theorizing Copies

Edited by

Eva Hemmungs Wirtén, James Meese, Johanna Dahlin and Kristin Wagrell

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Culture Unbound Vol. 9 Editorial

By Eva Hemmungs Wirtén, James Meese, Johanna Dahlin & Kristin Wagrell

2017 promises to be an exciting year for Culture Unbound. We have four very interesting issues planned for volume 9, and this year also marks the end of one of our projects and the start of another. In late 2016 we learned that *Culture Unbound* would receive funding from The Joint Committee for Nordic Research Councils in the Humanities and Social Sciences for 2017–2020. We are enormously grateful for this grant, as it secures the journal's Gold Open Access profile and ensures the absence of any author fees for the next few years. Our overall goal is to maintain an open, inclusive and truly interdisciplinary perspective across the journal while at the same time identifying and developing the distinctive tone, approach and choice of subjects that have emerged over the years since *Culture Unbound* was founded.

The editorial team has been expanded with the editorial assistant Kristin Wagrell. Eva Hemmungs Wirtén remains as editor in chief and is joined by James Meese as associate editor and Johanna Dahlin as executive editor. The editorial team members are based on different continents but are looking forward to convening in Norrköping to set out future directions for the journal. We would like to invite to our readers to take part in the improvement of Culture Unbound by suggesting changes, contributing articles and proposing thematic sections for the coming years. We will continue to embrace diversity, stay alert and keep our minds open to accommodate emerging fields of research.

Each of volume 9's planned issues contains a thematic section which promises creative and stimulating reading. Due to unforeseen circumstances the publication of our first issue was postponed from the spring to the autumn of 2017. This first issue contains the thematic section *Theorizing Copies* which departs from the notion of copying as a fundamental part of being human. Copying refers to cornucopia, the horn of plenty, and thus to abundance, fertility and life. On the other hand, however, copies and copying also refer to the lack of originality and authenticity, to dishonesty, forgery and fakeness. In an age of digitization and new media,

new theories and understandings of authenticity need to be developed. This thematic section argues that copies and copying practices are, and always have been, fundamental to the creation of authenticity, uniqueness and originality. Making copies means creating cultural value. The issue will present a selection of studies which all aim at investigating a field of cultural production where copying takes place and is – the authors argue – vital to how notions of value, authenticity and uniqueness are being created, negotiated and, at times, contested.

Issue 2 will contain the thematic section *Spotify and Digital Methods.* The section presents a collection of articles, which all offer a substantive account of emerging streaming cultures by analysing the music streaming service Spotify through an innovative methodological approach based on the reverse engineering of Spotify's algorithms, aggregation procedures, metadata, and valuation strategies. The thematic section provides a new perspective on Spotify as a platform and also stands as a major contribution to digital methods research.

Issue 3 will contain the thematic section *Mediatization, Mobility and New Methods of Knowledge Production.* This issue stems from the network *The Everyday life of research in the medialisation era*, of which *Culture Unbound* has been a part for the past two years. This network will hold its final workshop 'Publishing and mediatization' in Norrköping on June 21, 2017, and we are looking forward to this opportunity to discuss the role of scholarly publishing.

 Issue 4 will contain the thematic section *This Season of Discontent: Understanding Student Movements in Neoliberal Times*, which aims at bringing together contributions from countries currently in the throes of student movements the world over; from Brazil to South Africa and India. Increasing repression of institutions of higher learning, and what is now commonly identified as the commercialisation of higher education, has led a wave of student protests. This thematic issue is an attempt to tackle the larger question of how we may, as scholars, educators and ethnographers, engage with and elucidate these student movements.

Together with Open Humanities Press, *Culture Unbound* has received a grant from *The Seed Box*, an international environmental humanities collaboration headquartered at Linköping University in Sweden, for a three-year project addressing the cultural impacts of climate change. The project is focused on new languages, forms and images of climate change through a series of "Living Lab" workshops; and aims to develop new practices of scholarly communication in the recognition that major environmental changes are placing new demands on existing forms of knowledge and dissemination. Year 1 is themed *The Digital Rhetorics of Climate Change*, and the lab "Mutating Epistimes" was held in Sydney at the University Technology of Sydney library in May 2017. The lab opened with a keynote from Lissa Holloway-Attaway from the University of Skövde. Researchers from Australia and Sweden then shared their research interests through a series of

"lightning talks". These talks served as points of departure from which to consider what new forms of scholarly communication might look like. The project will progress through a number of forthcoming living labs.

Finally, we would like to end this editorial and open this volume by expressing our gratitude to the people that never get recognised for the crucial work they do for the journal: the anonymous reviewers. The referees are the core of academic publication and serve as an indispensable voice of expertise for the editor and a source of support and constructive critique for the authors. While they often contribute greatly to the outcome of the final publication, they are per definition always left out when credits are distributed.

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Theorizing copies

Brita Brenna, Anne Eriksen and Gro Bjørnerud Mo

We live in a world of copies. This is true for contemporary society, experiencing the delights and despairs of the digital age of new available technologies, reaching from 3D-printers to the "like and share" of social media. The "age of mechanical reproduction", as it was analyzed by Walter Benjamin in the mid-twentieth century, is nothing but a mere shadow of our present way of life where an easy and direct access to copies of nearly everything is more or less taken for granted. But the statement is valid also in a broader perspective. The writer and critic Marcus Boon suggests that making copies defines us a human beings. He asks: "What if copying is what makes us human – what then? More than that, what if copying, rather than being an aberration or a mistake or a crime, is a fundamental condition or requirement for anything, human or not, to exist at all?" His own answers to these questions are "that copying is a fundamental part of being human, that we could not be human without copying, and that we can and should celebrate this aspect of ourselves, in full awareness of our situation" (Boon 2010: 7). We learn by copying, we communicate by it, we build culture and society by exchanging and manipulating symbols and signs that in some way or another seek to mirror – or copy – the objects, activities, ideas etc. At the core of this human endeavor stands our capacity to copy each other and the world around us. From this perspective, then, theorizing copies means theorizing culture, thus addressing fundamental aspects of human existence.

In the present thematic section/issue, the study of collections, museums and cultural treasures represent an attempt to explore some of the theoretical potential of copies and copying practices. At a first glance, this may seem paradoxical. Museums and collections are very much about originals, authenticity and unique objects. Copies on the other hand – particularly those that come in the guise of fakes or forgeries – are threats to be disclosed and rejected. They must be kept at

a safe distance, where they cannot pollute or question the purity of the originals. However, clear cut dichotomies separating originals from copies, and copies from fakes are not self-evident. Over the centuries, art collections and even the very idea of art in the western world have contributed to the development of a powerful semantic field, strengthening the roles of authorship and originality, and identifying authenticity and artistic value with uniqueness. This has not only shaped the art field in itself, but also colonized the general understanding of the nature and value of originals and their copies. The logic of this semantic field, originally (!) centered on the singularity of artistic creation, thus has become valid far beyond the institutions of art. It does not only structure other museum types as well, but also defines more everyday understandings. But despite the amount of energy that is being invested in defining and defending the original in museums and collections, this work is in many ways dependent on the presence and the handling of copies. As the articles in this special issue demonstrates, copies are not only ubiquitous in museums, they are also fundamental to the production of originals and of true treasures.

The idea of the authentic original has changed historically. The same can obviously be said not only of the copy as a related concept, but also of the ways of making copies, of the technologies that have been available and of the quality and nature of the copies that are produced. Modern technology offers possibilities for making copies of nearly everything in an abundance that is historically unknown, but it also allows for making copies of a very high quality and often to very low cost – which again makes copies and copying accessible in new and radical ways. What does this mean to the originals? Will they disappear and the very idea of such objects dissolve, drowned in the surges of ever new and fresh copies? Or will their value be enhanced as their relative rarity grows, increasing proportionally to the number of copies? The articles in this issue do not aim at giving final answers to such questions, but will, through a series of empirical case studies, investigate the changing relations between copies and originals, and between "good" and "bad" copies.

In the first article, Anne Eriksen takes as a starting point that neither original or copy are terms with a natural meaning. They are fundamentally shaped by changing historicity regimes, which simultaneously have transformed notions of originals and copies and are reflected in the relation between the two concepts. This relation is in itself intrinsically temporal: The copy always comes *after* the original, she argues. Eriksen frames her discussion by two theory sets. The first is Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood's investigation of two kinds of temporality that vied for dominance in works of art in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The second is Walter Benjamin's examination of artworks in what he called the "age of mechanical reproduction". The second half of the article seeks to

add to the historical complexity described by the two theory sets by introducing a concept of tradition and discussing the early modern ideals of exemplarity, emulation and copiousness.

In the subsequent article, Gro Bjørnerud Mo explores a case from early modern Europe, the lists of the wonders of the world. Such lists have circulated for millennia and been rewritten, re-edited and reimagined. Both the wonders and the lists of wonders, preferably of the seven, have had a profound and long-lasting effect, and have been abundantly imitated, copied and reworked. Renaissance creative thinking was obsessed with the idea of this kind of cultural treasures, in particular the seven wonders of the ancient world. Early-modern Europe experienced a surge of visual and verbal depictions of wonders. Bjørnerud Mo explores such a list of world treasures that was included in one of Joachim Du Bellay's canonical poems on Roman antiquities (Antiquités de Rome), published in Paris in 1558. She points out that Du Bellay shaped his list of wonders by exploring patterns of both repetition and mutability and in this way suggested connections between sixteenth-century Rome and distant civilizations. This poetic display of ruins and dust in the Eternal City is nourished by the attraction of the inevitable destruction of past splendour and beauty. In the sonnets, Du Bellay imitates classical models and patterns. While compiling powerful images and stories of destruction, he combines techniques associated with both a modern concept of copy and more ancient theories of copia or copiousness - the idea of rhetorical abundance.

The three last contributions take us to the situation in the contemporary world of museums and heritage. The article by Joanna Iranowska takes as its starting point that paintings in museums on specific occasions are replaced by photoprints mimicking the original. She investigates what constitutes a *good reproduction* of an artwork (oil painting) meant for such display. The article analyses three cases of displaying digitally printed copies of Edvard Munch's oil paintings between 2013 and 2015 in the Munch Museum and in the National Gallery in Oslo. Her approach is that of *Valuation Studies*, which means that the primary concern is with the practice of valuing itself. Her study focusses on how museum experts evaluate reproductions of oil paintings, and is based on a series of semi-structured interviews with the experts, working at and for the museums that were involved in producing and exhibiting of the photoprints: curators, conservators, museum educators, and external manufacturers. The stories told by the interviewees are grouped into five clusters, called *registers of valuing,* following Annemarie Mol and Frank Heuts (2013). The described valuation practices are connected to delivering experiences to the public, obtaining mimetic resemblance, solving ethical aspects and economic issues, and finally, with the time perspective.

Ole Marius Hylland goes into issues raised by the digitalisation of cultural heritage and investigates how a digital turn and digital copies have influenced ideas,

roles and authorities within a national museum sector. He asks whether digital museums and their digital reproductions contribute to expanding a more traditional cultural policy, or rather to challenge it. His discussion is based on two specific cases, the Norwegian digital museum platform *DigitaltMuseum* and Google's *Art Project*. Through his investigation Hylland argues that there is a certain epochalism at play when the impact of a digital turn is analysed. At the same time, some fundamental changes are taking place, even if their impact on cultural policies might be less than expected. One of these emerging changes is the replacing of authenticity with accessibility as the primary legitimating value of museum objects.

In the final article, Hans Dam Christensen goes into the fundamental role played by copies in art museums. His contribution is a mapping of strategies for copy practices, leaning heavily towards parts of the writings of Jacques Derrida (1930–2004). Against the backdrop of this theoretical premise, Christensen distinguishes five main strategies. Through a pragmatic use of Derrida's deconstructive reading, Christensen categorizes and makes visible the manifold manifestation of copies in art museums. The five strategies that he pinpoints are partly connected, but by keeping them apart Christensen is able to identify a range of different relations between originals and copies, and the shifting hierarchies between them. Christensen shows the unstable and fluid relation between original and copy in the art museum and as such his contribution both shatters and relieves the art museum in its role as the keeper of originals.

What we hope to achieve with this collection of articles is partly to discuss some very pertinent issues in the museum and heritage field. What does the increasing abundance of copies and easily accessible copying technologies mean? Such changes do not only change marketing, communication and documentation, they also challenge the fundamental ideas of museums and collections as sites of unique objects. "Sharing Mona Lisa" – in a number of different materials, technologies and settings – has a profound impact on the original painting as well as on the institution that hosts it. However, this is not our only issue. By presenting historical cases, taken from periods that differ from our own not only when it comes to technology, but also concerning the very idea of copies, copiousness, authorship, authenticity and originality, we hope to be able to show that the present era is not unique. Historically speaking, ways of thinking about copies and originals have changed, as they are changing today. The past may supply examples to learn from in different ways, but the main lesson is that neither copies nor originals carry natural, essential meanings, outside the specific cultural context in which they are working. This point also represents the interface between thinking of copies and originals in museum contexts, and thinking about these terms as more general cultural categories. From this perspective, it is possible to see that what is named copies, originals, imitations, fakes and so on, are the expressions of culturally de-

termined relations between certain objects, and that these relations represent fundamentally cultural valuations. The "good copy", to paraphrase Iranowska in her article, is not merely a matter of materiality and technology, but does also represent values, valuations and a number of ethical issues in the cultural contexts that is producing and using it.

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Copies, Concepts and Time

By Anne Eriksen

Abstract

Copies are defined by their relation to an original. The understanding and evaluation of this relationship has been changing over time. A main argument of this article is that originals and copies are phenomena with no "natural" or essential meaning outside of their specific historical settings. The idea to be explored is how changing historicity regimes have transformed notions of originals and copies over time and how these differences also are reflected in the intrinsically temporal relation between the two concepts. The discussion will be framed by two theory sets. The first is Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood's investigation of two kinds of temporality that vied for dominance in works of art in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The second is Walter Benjamin's discussion of artwork in the "age of mechanical reproduction", i.e. the twentieth century. The second half of the article seeks to add to the historical complexity described by both theory sets by introducing a concept of tradition and discussing the early modern ideals of exemplarity, emulation and copiousness.

Copies, Concepts and Time

Copies are relational. They have to be copies *of* something. The relation that defines them is fundamentally hierarchical as it situates the copy as secondary to the original. It is also temporal because the copy comes after the original. Finally, it is normative, in the sense that the original sets the norms that the copy has to adhere to in order to be a "good" copy and to be successful in the relationship. However, this comparatively simple set of suppositions houses a range of tensions and ambivalences. The relation between original and copy invites negotiation and struggle. Moreover, it has changed over time. If not totally historically contingent, neither the relation between them nor the terms in themselves have been understood in the same way throughout all periods of Western culture. Today, this relation is being challenged by digital copies and new technologies, and, as this article explores, the hierarchy between the original and its copies is certainly not a stable entity that has been handed down unchanged from the past.

In contemporary culture, originals and copies define a semantic field loaded with values – cultural, moral and economic – and norms. Viewed together, the two concepts address distinctions between right and wrong, good and bad, true and false, appearance and essence. Their relationship concerns issues of faith and betrayal, confidence and crime, legitimacy and illegitimacy, honesty and deception. At the same time, tensions and shifts will appear that complicate the structure of the relation as well as the values that define it. A single example can serve to illustrate the potential for ambivalence: A "good copy", one that is faithful and true to its original, is also one that is honest about its own nature as a copy. It does not seek to pass for the original, but keeps its place in the hierarchy. However, if the copy is too good, i.e. so much like its original that its nature as a copy is hidden or invisible, it is no longer "good" in the moral sense. It becomes a fake – an illegitimate copy – passing falsely as the original. Surpassing itself, it also trespasses on the border between right and wrong. The same object can thus be (visually, technically) good and (ethically, economically) bad at the same time, in both cases as a copy, and in both cases defined by its relative position in the network of meanings and valuations.

The relations that are implied in this play of meaning, values and norms can be approached discursively, with the original as a "nodal point" or privileged signifier that organises and determines the meaning and relations of the surrounding signs (Jørgensen and Phillips 1990). Relevant as this perspective might be to a denaturalisation of the concepts and the values they are allowed to represent, discourse theory will not dominate the following investigation. What will be examined here are the concepts and their relation in a historical context. The original and its copies cannot only be seen as moments in a given discourse (synchronously), they also represent understandings and evaluations that have been produced and tran-

smitted historically. They have been given meaning in specific and different social and cultural contexts. One of the main arguments of this article is that originals and copies are phenomena with no "natural" or essential meaning outside of their specific settings. Shifting historical conditions have produced changes in conceptualisations and evaluations. At the same time, the meaning of the two concepts is in itself based on temporal structures. While temporal changes thus supply a historical context for the changes that are to be investigated, shifting notions of the meaning of time are also intrinsic to the meaning of the concepts.

The aim of the following discussion is not to present some kind of general over-view of the history of copies and copying. Instead, the investigations will centre on the effects and impact of different historicity regimes on the understandings of originals and copies. The French historian François Hartog, who has coined this term, describes historicity regimes as theoretical constructs that can be classed alongside Weber's ideal type as formal categories. "Depending on whether the category of the past, the future, or the present is dominant, the order of time derived from it will obviously not be the same. Hence certain behaviors, certain actions, and certain forms of historiography are more possible than others, more—or less—in tune with the times, untimely or seemingly perfectly timed" (Hartog 2015: xvi). The notion of historicity regimes should above all be used heuristically, he argues, and is a good fit for comparative studies. Hartog is emphatic that historicity regimes cannot in themselves be observed empirically. He also underscores that they "do not come in a series, one mechanically following another, whether these are understood as sent from heaven or emanating from the earth" (Hartog 2015:xvii). Thus, he points out, they are not, for instance, identical with the "stages" so often called upon in early modern universal history. His careful omission of references leaves the impression that his term is not intended to be understood as structures like Foucault's *epistemes.* The experience of temporality that defines the regimes will nonetheless also acquire specific cultural expressions, and Hartog directs his attention to

> ... the categories that organize these experiences and allow them to be spoken; and more precisely, on the ways in which these universal categories or forms we call "the past", "the present" and "the future" are articulated. How are these categories, which partake both of thought and of action, actualized at different times, and in different places and societies, and how do they make possible and perceptible a particular order of time? (Hartog 2015: 17)

A certain seriality nonetheless pervades Hartog's description of the regimes. For many centuries, he claims, the European experience of temporality was domina-

ted by the category of the past. Only during the nineteenth century did a future-oriented temporal experience gain ground. Among other things, this produced the modern academic discipline of source-based, critical history. It can be added that this was also the "classical age" of public museums. In our present world, a new change is taking place, according to Hartog, and a new historicity regime, dominated by what he calls presentism, is emerging.

The perspectives developed by Hartog provide a means to explore and denominate the experience of temporality and its implications in different cultural contexts (cf. Eriksen 2014). The idea which is explored in this article is how changing historicity regimes have transformed notions of originals and copies over time and how these differences are also reflected in the intrinsically temporal relation between the two concepts. This discussion will be framed by two theory sets, presented in the two subsequent sections. The first is Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood's investigation of two kinds of temporality that vied for dominance in works of art in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The second is Walter Benjamin's discussion of artwork in the "age of mechanical reproduction", i.e. the twentieth century. Between them the models discussed by these authors describe the beginning and the peak of modernity in the Western world, respectively. They might, therefore, be taken to represent the two poles of one coherent development. However, none of these authors has the intention of contributing to simple linearity. Nagel and Wood take a decided stance against the traditional Panofskian idea of Renaissance art as a break with the past and the beginning of new progress, and insist on presenting a more complex and nuanced picture of the period. Benjamin describes a development initiated by modern technology – through his terminology "mechanical reproduction" – but remains ambivalent in his interpretation of this as liberating or destructive for art. The final sections of this article seek to add to the historical complexity that both theory sets describe. To do this, a concept of tradition will be introduced and the early modern ideals of exemplarity, emulation and copiousness will be discussed.

I. Substitution and Performance

What is an original? Or rather, what is its history? The art historians Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood locate the emergence of the idea of the original in a process that took place over a long period of time, from the Middle Ages and into the Early Modern period (Nagel and Wood 2010). An expressed aim of their work is to question the traditional idea in art history of the Renaissance as a rupture, and as the birth of a truly modern understanding of art that included the use of the central perspective and a corresponding temporal perspective based on an understanding of time as style. This implied a new concept of the anachronism. As

an alternative to this model, Nagel and Wood present the idea that two different understandings of a work of art, and the way it relates to time and incorporates temporality, existed more or less as parallels over a considerable span of time. The one, which they call substitutional, goes back to the Middle Ages and beyond, while the other, called performative, only slowly and gradually emerged. It was this performative mode that generated the idea of the original as we still think of it today. Consequently, the model presented by Nagel and Wood is not only relevant to the history of art in the period they discuss, it also has a more general significance. The model does not only emphasise the historical specificity of the idea of the original artwork, it also insists on the longevity of the substitutional mode and consequently on the dynamic relation between the two.

Objects that represent the substitutional model are described by Nagel and Wood as ones which are able to retain "[their]its identity despite alteration, repair, renovation, and even outright replacement" (Nagel and Wood 2010: 8). They explain that the substitutional model

> proposed the perfect interchangeability of one image or work for another. Under this model, the work did not merely repeat the prior work, for repetition proposes difference, an altering interval. Rather, the work simply *is* its own predecessor, such that the prior is no longer prior, but present." (Nagel and Wood 2010: 11)

Their book *Anachronic Renaissance* elaborates on this understanding through a series of investigations of artworks that have set this model into play, each work having been understood simultaneously as unique and as a token and a link in a chain unbroken by time despite fundamental material change:

> To perceive an artefact in substitutional terms was to understand it as belonging to more than one historical moment simultaneously. The artifact was connected to its unknowable point of origin by an unreconstructible chain of replicas. That chain could not be perceived; its links did not diminish in stature as they receded into the depths of time. Rather, the chain created an instant and ideally effective link to an authoritative source and an instant identity for the artifact. (Nagel and Wood 2010: 30)

One central example in their book is icons, where modern copies of ancient paintings long were understood as surrogates for lost originals. They also investigate the case of new buildings which were understood as re-instantiations of prior, ancient structures. Their argument is that the apparent "misdating" of these buil-

dings during the medieval and early modern times and the corresponding under-standing of them as very ancient, did not stem from ignorance or lack of historical knowledge. Rather, it was based on specific ideas about how art incorporates time. Nagel and Wood underline that "there is a mystical dimension to substitutional logic, a conviction of the real, and not merely symbolic, link between event and event, and between artifact and artifact" (Nagel and Wood 2010: 33). They argue that this substitutional logic was not a superstitious or primitive way of thinking, effectively uprooted and replaced by more advanced understandings in the Re-naissance.

As they describe its complexity and capacity to weave together separate points of time, the substitutional model appears not only as powerful, but also as elabora-te and refined in the ways it makes authority materialise in time and independent of time. The model also renders how the uniqueness (or originality) of an object will reside in the unbroken identity and in the capacity of the substitutional chain to keep original qualities and meanings alive in a constant presence – rather than in the material object itself. In the present context, it is also highly important that this model has no place for copies, nor really for originals, as the concept is com-monly understood today. On the one hand, each physical object or structure is a copy of the lost original type. On the other hand, each copy *is* at the same time this original, kept afloat in an eternal present. By collapsing the temporal hierarchy that is fundamental to the modern understanding of an original and its copies, the substitutional model also cancels the relationship that defines them to us. The substitutional logic demonstrates that other temporal bonds between the objects can be historically possible.

Parallels can easily be noted between the substitutional model described by Nagel and Wood and the figurative or typological thinking identified by Erich Auerbach and shown by him to have been developed in early patristic literature: The entire Old Testament was interpreted to prefigure the New. Auerbach writes that this method of interpretation, elaborated on in abundant detail, represents an approach to human and historical phenomena that is radically different from our modern approach:

> The typological interpretation combines two events, causally and chro-nologically remote from each other, by attributing them a meaning common to both. [I]n order to explain the significance of a single histo-rical event, the interpreter had to take recourse to a vertical projection of this event on the plane of providential design by which the event is revealed as a prefiguration or a fulfillment or perhaps as an imitation of other events. (Auerbach 2014:116)

Auerbach goes on to emphasise that in this process of interpretation, "neither the prefiguring nor the prefigured event lose their literal and historical reality by their figurative meaning and interrelation" (Auerbach 2014: 117). The typological model is thus not one of allegories or symbols. As is the case with the substitutional model in Nagel and Wood, both elements remain fully real, while they at the same time stand in for each other. In both cases, moreover, the temporal dimension is of another kind than that of modern historical thinking, which makes it possible to link objects and phenomena together in other ways. It should be noted, however, that the substitutional model in its way is still chronological: It is an explicitly ancient object that is maintained in a constant present. The typological thinking goes even further in sidestepping historical causality, weaving meanings, objects, figures and events back and forth through time.

Nagel and Wood contrast the substitutional model with the performative, which, they argue, treats temporality in a different way. The performative mode lets objects derive all their meaning from their anchorage in time. These are works "credited to an author, an individual who 'originates' or 'founds' (Latin *auctor*, from *augere*, 'to increase'), that were most tightly tethered to a point in time. Such works testified to their author" (Nagel and Wood 2010: 14). Nagel and Wood point out that

> the painting, like its talented author, has one body that can never be duplicated. The painting's resistance to duplication allows it to dominate time. The author intervenes in time by performing the work [...] To describe the authored work as a performance is to emphasize its punctual, time-sensitive quality." (Nagel and Wood 2010: 15)

Their argument shows that a work whose authenticity and authority resides in this kind of temporal specificity can only be copied, not substituted. The other work will always come after, and for this reason its creation can never be identical with the original performance. Trying to appear so will make it a forgery. Humbly admitting its secondary character may make it a respectable copy. The structure of the performative mode is what creates the hierarchy that was described in the introduction to this article.

Nagel and Wood's main argument is that in Renaissance art these two competitive models of origins and temporality were held in suspension. A large number of images and buildings from the late medieval and early modern period were built on a paradox, they claim: "the possibility that a material sample of the past could somehow be *both* an especially powerful testimony to a distant world *and* at the same time an ersatz for another, now absent artifact" (Nagel and Wood 2010: 31, italics in original). The two authors are reluctant to say that the performative

model finally conquered or that it represented a kind of watershed in European art history. What is important in the present context is, nonetheless, that this model supplies the fundamental structure of the understanding of the original and its relationship to copies that is being taken for granted today. As it is described by Nagel and Wood, time and temporality are at the very core of this structure.

What defines the original itself is the way it relates to time and incorporates time. It is its fixity in time that makes the original original and it is the unique performance of a specific individual in a specific context that creates originality as well as authority. Hence, all other objects, however much they might look like the original, will not share this position, and therefore be reduced to copies, replicas, models and so on. While the chain of objects suggested by the substitutional model stretches out across time and space making each object an equally valuable rendering and at the same time making copies an irrelevant issue, the performative model does the opposite: Temporal fixity defines the original as unique. This structure is also what defines both specific and generic fakes. Seeking to pass for an original, a specific fake will claim to be an outcome of the very performance that gave birth to the original in question. A generic fake, on the other hand, presented as an unrecognised work of some great artist, will not attempt to seize upon a point in time that is already occupied by another work. Instead, it will claim a temporal fixity of its own, passing as the result of another, but as an equally unique performance by the same artist.

II. The Auratic Original

It is not difficult to see that the defining qualities of the performative model as described by Nagel and Wood strongly resemble Walter Benjamin's definition of his term *aura*. To Benjamin, what gives an original work of art its unique auratic qualities is precisely its "here and now", which "has no replica" and is fundamentally tied to its situation of origin. To explain his term Benjamin proposes a comparison between the auratic uniqueness of historical objects and that of natural objects, and defines it as "a strange weave of space and time: the unique appearance or semblance of distance, no matter how close it may be." The examples given with this definition are mountains and a branch observed "at rest on a summer's noon … until the moment or the hour becomes part of their appearance…" (Benjamin 1999).

The aura, then, is defined as a unique quality given by distance and fixity. It is also this aura which, according to Benjamin, is threatened in the "age of mechanical reproduction". The numerous and easily accessible copies that are made available through modern technology of mechanical reproduction do away with both the distance and the uniqueness of the object. It is no longer fixed in time and

place, but can move around seemingly freely. The more copies, and the easier the accessibility, the less remains of the aura.

There have been many heated discussions on Benjamin's theory and its implications. It can be read as part of a more general critique of modernity, or as a comment on the totalitarian regimes of his time, and their production and use of mass culture. It can also be regarded as an expression of more or less romantic nostalgia, a lamentation of the loss of common traditions and magic – a disenchantment of the world. On the other hand, Benjamin also discusses the gradual loss or dissolution of aura as a liberating process, emancipating objects and people alike (Benjamin 1999). Without their aura, the objects also lose much of their traditional authority. Their position as ideals or models is no longer uncontested. In this way, the waning aura opens for the emergence of new cultural expressions and for new agents to announce their presence.

Even Benjamin's model includes temporal processes and relations. On the one hand, it describes a development that takes place in time, a gradual decline from an idealised state in the past to a historical change in the present, regardless of whether this decline is understood as lamentable or liberating. On the other hand, it also identifies the auratic state with the object's fixity in (distant) time. This is what defines the original in contrast to the mechanical reproductions, which for their part are not defined by their moments of creation. They are not seen as the products of a specific point in time and could be said to lack the unique "here and now" which defines the original. Benjamin does not go into the more precise reasons for this, but it seems probable that the sheer multitude of copies, made possible by the mechanical reproduction, is in some way thought to obfuscate their actual moment of production, or at least deprive it of its defining implications.

Despite the central role temporality plays in Benjamin's model, he does not seem to regard the original in itself as a historical concept, but rather as a natural – albeit threatened – species. In contrast to Nagel and Wood he does not consider the idea of the original to be historically conditioned or contingent. The auratic original may be in the process of disappearing from the world, but in Benjamin's argument it does not ever seem to have been in the process of *entering* it. Its own origin is relegated to a timeless "before".

Benjamin's presentation of the auratic object may thus appear as the ultimate triumph of the performative model as it is described by Nagel and Wood. The auratic object steps forward as an original that has now become a fully naturalised species, liberated from any processes of historical change. Nonetheless, between the early modern notions discussed by Nagel and Wood and Benjamin's auratic objects there is no straight and unidirectional development. One of the main reasons for this is the lasting artistic practices of imitation, emulation and elaboration, not least of classical forms and ideals. The following sections will contribute

to the discussions in Nagel, Wood and Benjamin by exploring these practices and ideals and examining their implications for the understanding and evaluation of originals and their copies.

III. Imitation, Tradition and Exemplarity

For many centuries in European history, learning to become an artist meant spending years copying the works of one's predecessors and classical art. Despite the importance of the performative model, as described by Nagel and Wood, and the respect and position gained by the great masters, whose names fill the textbooks in the art history that we read today, a place in the workshop or studio of one of them long represented a respectable and far more common career path, even for well-schooled painters and sculptors. In our modern museums, labels with "school of" or "after" attached to artworks still reflect this practice. Such works are in some ways exempt from the logic imposed by the performative model. If a name is stated on these labels, it is most often not that of the actual painter or sculptor, but of the one whose "school" has produced it, or whose work it has been made "after". Moreover, if the work is dated, this is often somewhat approximate. In a world of auratic originals, works of this kind fail to correspond fully to the valid categories, which makes them confusing and obscure. They may not be exact copies and they are not fakes, but neither can they be recognised as fully performative creations. They are the products of another logic of artistic performance and another historicity regime than that of the modern world.

The logic behind "school of" and "after", and similar phrases, is that of tradition and exemplarity. It represents a way of thinking that recognises the authority and value of the original. The original still represents a unique creation and an intrinsic temporal fixity. It is a specific work made by a specific person at a particular moment in time, and it cannot be changed for another. However, ascribing exemplary value to this work also provides it with a far-reaching agency and great powers to shape the works that come "after". Consequently, these works do not only follow the original in time, they also seek to follow it as an example, as a model to learn from, to imitate and emulate. Doing so, they constitute a link in a chain of tradition and are, at the same time, a tribute to that tradition.

As a pedagogic principle, imitation was thought to give the skills to work in the style of the great classical artists and the ability to learn from the most admirable models. As a result, the artist would develop his own creative powers and his ability to work independently. As pointed out by Gordon et al. in a study of Protestant humanism in Zürich, imitation was not only training in judgment but also "a means of self-discovery through a method of reading and writing that drew deeply from history and historical contexts" (Gordon et al. 2016: 14–15). Mor-

eover, the aim of this work was not merely mechanical copying. Emulation was as important as simple imitation. Elements of contest and a potential for change were involved and, in principle at least, it was possible to surpass the models that one imitated. They could be reworked and remoulded into something even better and more perfect. Whatever the actual outcome of the practice, the works that were produced represent copiousness rather than copies. Imitation created versions, replicas and variety. As pointed out by Terence Cave, the word *copia* was far more frequently used than copy in early modern writing. In rhetoric, this term was closely linked to the principles of imitation and emulation, and referred to the abundance and variety of arguments that a skilled orator held at his command (Cave 1979). The result of the traditional practices of imitation, and intrinsic to the ideas behind them, was abundance rather than mere copies.

Imitation of ancient models was nonetheless also a debated issue among European humanists. What did it actually imply? Did an exact imitation of Cicero's speeches actually mean imitating Cicero's eloquence when so many centuries had passed? How would Cicero have expressed himself if he had lived in the sixteenth century? The issues raised by Erasmus' *Ciceronianus* (1528) led to passionate discussions, which in turn have been thoroughly explored in later research. The early modern debates have been seen as expressions of an emerging sense of historicity, expressed through a growing awareness of problems of anachronism (see for instance Cave 1979, Scott 2009, Gordon 2016, and for theoretical perspectives, Schiffman 2011). As such, they represent a close parallel to the development of the performative mode, as described by Nagel and Wood. In the present context, it should be noted that the understanding of temporality, and thus of anachronism which structured much of the debate, still differ from our modern understanding. It was not the value of imitation of classical models that was contested, but rather the possibility of achieving it. The models from the past were still ascribed authority and exemplarity. Being aware of anachronism did not imply stopping to revere the past, but the discovery of some fundamental problems in reaching it.

The early modern regime of historicity remained oriented towards the past. Tradition may be a useful concept to explore to understand its temporal dimension and its implications for copies and copying. The term tradition can be understood as designating specific cultural goods that are transferred over time and "passed down" from generation to generation. It can also be defined as a cultural *process* that takes place over time and includes the transmission of cultural goods. This process refers to the past, draws on it and imbues it with authority. Tradition can thus be defined as the normative workings of the past in the present, tending towards cultural stability – real or claimed (Handler and Linnekin 1984; Eriksen 1994; Bauman 2004). In actual fact, the process of transmission most often also comprises reworkings, elaboration, invention and negotiation. Even the "singer

of tales" who most eagerly protests his or her faithfulness to an oral tradition will invariably confer changes upon it, as shown for instance in the now classical work of Parry and Lord (1965) and Walter Ong (1982).

It should be noted, nonetheless, that there is more to the processes of communication or transmission than just the degrees of change – intended or not. Richard Bauman has pointed out that tradition is "a discursive and interpretive achievement, the active creation of a connection linking current discourse to past discourse" (Bauman 2004: 147). He describes this activity in terms of mediation from a source to a target, "processes and routines in which recontextualization is deliberately managed [and] conventionally regimented" (Bauman 2004: 130). The effect of these carefully staged reiterations is an enactment of authority:

> The mediator's replication of the source utterance, by preserving its integrity and displaying special care in its reproduction, amounts to an act of discursive submission, the subordination of present discourse to discourse that emanates from the past. Moreover, I would suggest, submission to the *form* of the source utterance has a concomitant effect on the *rhetorical power* of the text: upholding the integrity of the form opens the way to acceptance of the validity of the message. (Bauman 2004: 153)

The process of transmission which defines tradition thus implies imitating a model from the past that is held in high esteem, and doing so in a way and according to such methods that the authority of the model is transferred to the new work. Even though it is not fully identical with its model, or even claiming to be so, the new work will gain acceptance and be valued both as representing the model and as being different from it. The new work is a version, a variant, a re-phrasing or reworking. Considering it a mere copy would mean reducing its richness as well as the creative vitality that it embodies.

IV. The End of Exemplarity?

Hartog emphasises that the historicity regimes that he describes should not to be regarded as models following and replacing each other in some kind of linear development in the Western world. Nonetheless, one of his sources of inspiration is Reinhart Koselleck and his investigation of the European *Sattelzeit*, i.e. the period approx. 1750–1850, and the emerging modernity in this period. According to Koselleck, a new experience of time and temporality was fundamental to the changes that occurred in mentality, society and intellectual life. Koselleck argues that the topos of history as *magistra vitae* – the teacher of life – dissolved during

this period. Going back to Cicero, who is acknowledged to have coined the term, this notion of history as a collection of models or examples to learn from is based on ideas of stability and identity: It is because things do not fundamentally change that past events and persons can work as models for the living and the present (Koselleck 1985). Even if anachronism was "discovered" and discussed in the early modern period, it was towards the end of the eighteenth century that more fundamental problems made themselves heard: The past was not just difficult to reach and the models correspondingly difficult to fully understand – the past lost its relevance. Its authority to shape the present was waning. Koselleck's theories have been discussed and contested. Did the *magistra-vitae* topos dissolve, change, disappear (e.g. Phillips 2000; Jensen 2003)? Hartog's concepts offer perspectives rather than definitive answers. He argues that the regime of historicity which came to dominate in the modern world was future-oriented. Of course, the past did not disappear, nor totally lose its meaning. But its significance and authority changed. In Hartog's investigation, François-René Chateaubriand is the figure to represent these changes. Both as a historian and writer, he embodies the new, romantic ideals (Hartog 2015: 65–95).

The nineteenth century saw the emergence of the modern discipline (or disciplines) of history. This meant critical, source-based studies of the past carried out by means of specific methods developed in the academic world. The same period saw the establishment of public museums, which were not only larger and more generally accessible than older princely or other collections, but which also took much of their pride in possessing objects that were simply old. Much of their acknowledged value stemmed from their age and "period", which often became more important than their beauty or exemplary character. The objects told a story of development, progress, history and change, of a movement from the past to the present and potentially into an open-ended future. Finally, and just as important, this period was also the age of new artistic ideals that praised individual, erupting and original creativity above the ability to imitate old masters. The past was cherished for its pastness, not for its exemplary value.

This produces another relationship to the past than the renaissance preoccupation with anachronism did. It also creates another type of originals and copies. It can be said to generate the kind of auratic object described by Benjamin. This object is defined through a fixity in time that to a high degree resembles the performative mode of Nagel and Wood. What has changed is the nature of time, so to speak, or rather, the position of the past. An original created within the frames of a performative model is fixed in a past that is in a living relationship to the present. It is endowed with powers that reach beyond its immediate temporal setting. It can work as an example to be followed, a model to be imitated. Even if its temporal fixity defines it and cannot be reproduced in a copy, some of its traditional au-

thority can be conferred to later works through imitation. This is not the case with the auratic originals described by Benjamin. Defined by their "here and now", such objects are not only fixed in time, but linked to it. In the present – which is their own future – they can be admired for their age, authenticity and aura, but the exact point of all these qualities is that they cannot be transferred into the future. Their very remoteness is their primary nature. They can only be reproduced in a process that is doomed to omit the aura.

V. Presentism, Heritage and True Abundance

Is that really so? Benjamin's notion of the aura and its implications for the production of copies, facsimiles and new media versions has been vigorously criticised by Bruno Latour and Adam Lowe. They argue that rather than chasing the aura of the original, we should approach copies and new versions with an assessment of whether or not they are well made. If they are, their aura, or rather the feeling of authenticity that they evoke and the aesthetic experience they may produce, can well exceed that of a musealized and scientifically conserved original (Latour and Lowe 2011). Their contention is that the "obsession for pinpointing originality increases proportionally with the availability and accessibility of more and more copies of better and better quality" (Latour and Lowe 2011: 278). This implies that the value of an original is created by the existence of copies, not by the original as such. Copies are proof of fecundity, of abundance, while a work without such offspring or inheritors "is not called original, but rather sterile or barren" (Latour and Lowe 2011: 279). Just as copies are relational, so are originals. Works become originals by being copied. A work of art, for instance a painting, can be ancient, rare, beautiful and well made, but as long as no copies exist, it is just an old image. Insisting on calling it an original seems somewhat odd as long as no copies are known.

Latour and Lowe write in defence of high-quality digital copies, but their line of argument can also be used to discuss more precisely how copies make originals. What defines the relations, and by what means does the copy confer value on the original? It can be inferred that copies work by contrast, by some kind of othering process, but what are the exact mechanisms? Distance, difference and distribution are key concepts. The distance is obviously temporal – the copy does not share the original's unique moment of birth, but has been created at some later moment. However, this also relates to the quality of the copy. Measuring it against that of the original, and finding it inferior, the copy also enhances the quality of the original-and of course, the distance may be spatial. This can be a matter of pure geography – a copy of the Louvre's Mona Lisa found in an art museum in quite another part of the world – but it can also be a matter of different kinds of

space. The protected original in the museum appears more valuable if the museum shop is brimming with its reproductions or when its web-pages are frequently visited. This point leads us to the issue of distribution and quantity. The more copies available and in circulation, the more value is assigned to the original. Range of distribution tends to have the same effect. And finally, difference: the copy has to look like the original for the relation to be established at all, but does not need to be the same size or material. A copy of a painting does not need to be a painting itself. It can be a photographic reproduction, and the image may be transferred to t-shirts, tote bags and tea towels rather than to flat surfaces resembling the original's canvas or panel. Once again, increased variety – copiousness – is not only an indication of the great value ascribed to the original but also a means to create it.

As pointed out by Latour and Lowe, this abundance of copies and the corresponding highlighting of originals are the products of modern technology. It may also appear as the ultimate realisation of the future of technological reproduction envisaged by Benjamin. However, large parts of it depend on a development of digital media that Benjamin could not possibly have foreseen. It is equally important that the contemporary abundance of copies can also be said to belong to another regime of historicity than that of Benjamin's period. His ideas seem to correspond well to the experience of time and the future-oriented temporal structure of modernity, which today may have been superseded by a regime of presentism. Hartog defines this as an extreme and immediate historization of the present or the very close past, and describes it as "[t]he contemporary experience of a permanent, elusive and almost immobile present, which nevertheless attempts to create its own historical time" (Hartog 2015: 17f). One of the strategies employed in this effort to create historical time is the construction of heritage, motivated by the experience that it may soon be too late, and that the past – even the near present – is falling apart due to the acceleration of continuous change (Hartog 2015: 166). This argument accords with the more general idea in modernisation theory, interpreting returns to history, traditions or religion as answers to the loss of meaning, or even 'deprivation', caused by modernity. However, the presentism of heritage work can also be understood in less negative terms, not as a compensatory response to the experience of loss, but as the genuine expression of an experience of temporality that is distinctive of our own time.

Hartog underscores that the notion of historicity regimes should be used heuristically, not diagnostically. The regimes are not empirical phenomena to be discovered "out there", but represent perspectives that may bring analytical insights. The present article has set out to argue that copies as originals, as well as the wider semantic field that these terms are parts of, can be best understood historically, in the double sense that their meaning and relations have changed over time, while the terms in themselves also carry an intrinsic temporality. Their relation to each

other, which is fundamental to their respective meanings, is based on temporal positions: They come before or after each other, and they gain their authority or lack of such through a temporal fixity or through fluidity and reciprocal reference. This field of temporal relations, which assigns different values to the different elements that constitute it, is in itself subject to historical change or rather to changes in ways of understanding time and in the ways of connecting time, exemplarity, value and copiousity.

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Collecting Uncollectables:
Joachim Du Bellay

By Gro Bjørnerud Mo

Abstract

Lists of wonders have circulated for millennia. Over and over, such inventories of spectacular man made constructions have been rewritten, re-edited and reimagined. Both the wonders and the lists of wonders, preferably of the seven, have had a profound and long-lasting effect, and have been abundantly imitated, copied and reworked. Renaissance creative thinking was obsessed with the seven wonders of the ancient world, and early-modern Europe experienced a surge of visual and verbal depictions of wonders.

This article is about a remarkable list of seven wonders, included in one of Joachim Du Bellay's canonical poems on Roman antiquities (*Antiquités de Rome*), published in Paris in 1558. Du Bellay shapes his list of wonders by exploring patterns of both repetition and mutability. Almost imperceptibly, he starts suggesting connections between 16th-century Rome and distant civilizations. Through the eyes of a fictive traveller and collector, the poet venerates the greatness and laments the loss of ancient buildings, sites and works of art, slowly developing a verbal, visual and open-ended gallery, creating a collection of crumbling or vanished, mainly Roman, architecture. This poetic display of ruins and dust in the Eternal City is nourished by the attraction of the inevitable destruction of past splendour and beauty. In the sonnets, Du Bellay imitates classical models and patterns. While compiling powerful images and stories of destruction, he combines techniques associated with both a modern concept of copy and more ancient theories of copia. In this context, this article also explores whether Pliny's *Natural History* might be a source for the imaginary collection of lost sites and wonders in Du Bellay's *Antiquités*.

Introduction

Joachim Du Bellay (1522–1560) was a major figure in the French Renaissance. He was one of the most distinguished members of the famous Pléiade, a group of seven poets, who promoted the French vernacular by imitating Italian and classical writings. In the mid-16th century, the Pléiade poets were fervently fleshing out new solutions for French culture and politics through skilful appropriations of past events, texts and monuments. Rome in the 16th century was an important model for and a vibrant centre of attraction to French humanists in the process of renewal they were engaged in. Even though there is no explicit mention of Roman art or architecture on the Renaissance list of seven wonders, we shall see that in its close vicinity sites and monuments from the city lie in wait. Humanists were drawn towards the city in both a literal and a metaphorical sense; they admired and copied writings depicting ancient Rome, but they were simultaneously driven by the desire to see the city and observe its monuments with their own eyes, "the voyage was both a rhetorical figure and a cultural paradigm for the French Renaissance, which sent some of its best minds to Rome" (MacPhail 1990: 2). Both words and things (*verba* and *res*) triggered this attention.

In his seminal manifest promoting the French language, the *Deffence et illustration de la langue françoyse* from 1549, Du Bellay metaphorically encourages his readers to march towards Rome, which in this context represents an incitement to copy the masterpieces produced by their neighbours on the Italian peninsula. Only a few years later, Du Bellay opted for the literal meaning of his own advice and travelled to Rome. In 1553, he accompanied his patron and relative, Cardinal Du Bellay, to Rome as his secretary on a diplomatic mission, a stay that lasted until 1557. These were difficult times. Rome was engaged in a series of European conflicts. French diplomacy at the papal court was a demanding task, because France was participating in several of the ongoing Italian wars. Du Bellay frequented the most powerful political milieus and found himself near the major historical events of the time. During the same period, he was writing relentlessly. Back in France, he published four collections of poetry, three in French and one in Latin: *Les Regrets, Divers Jeux rustiques, Proemata, Antiquités de Rome*. In his writings, he explores territories where the bonds between literary and political culture are tight. Du Bellay depicts journeys and itineraries; he excels in border-crossing activities, between secular and religious space, between life at the courts of France and Italy and between poetry and politics. He launches a movement where a "universal" Latin culture gradually is replaced by a powerful search for a new national French language and community (Hampton 2001).

Traveller — collector — writer

Du Bellay's canonical poems on Roman antiquities (*Antiquités de Rome*) were written in Rome and published in Paris in 1558. It is a collection of 32 sonnets, describing the greatness and lamenting the ruins of Rome.[1] The *Antiquités* opens with a sonnet to the king, presenting the collection of poetry as paintings to the French monarch, Henri II, and then the poet slowly starts developing an imaginary gallery exhibiting lost and mainly Roman architecture.[2] Rome is observed through the eyes of a staged newcomer, guided around the city and responding to a commanding voice who urges him to *see*.[3] The spatial explorations of urban landscapes are striking and at the centre of attention in the *Antiquités de Rome*, "because the map of Rome is the map of the world," the poet famously states.[4]

Roman art and architecture are at display in the sonnets. They are clearly witnessed by a connoisseur. The figure of a collector might be glimpsed in these poems, and observed next to that of the traveller. My argument is that Du Bellay's *poeta viator* (Tucker 2003) also should be seen as a *poeta collector*. The travelling writer who pens down observations of sites, buildings and objects inevitably starts editing a catalogue of the sights he chooses to depict. The affinities between the writer, the geographer and the antiquarian collector will serve as a point of departure for the reading of the poems (Momigliano 1990: 67).

The connections between displacement and imitation in Du Bellay's *oeuvre* are sophisticated and complex. Movements between geographical, allegorical or emblematic space characterize most of his texts. The roles of the traveller and of the voyage have become a central topic in Du Bellay scholarship for the last three decades (MacPhail 1990; Tucker 1990, 2003; Melehy 2010). The poetic persona created by the French Renaissance writer clearly is a traveller and the connections between movements and texts are amply and imaginatively explored. In early-modern imagination, however, collections of ancient sculpture were associated with establishing empire (Christian 2010). Such an allegorical connection between the role of the collector and the appropriation of power opens for a new kind of reading. It defines a wonderfully ambiguous display for the political and antiquarian project Du Bellay sets out to explore in his "paper collection", his verbal descriptions of magnificent and vulnerable Roman architecture.

In his classical study *The Light in Troy* Thomas Greene identifies an archaeological drive in humanist activity, an urge to dig and see characterizes the Renaissance exploration of the past (Greene 1982). A similar perspective can be found in Momigliano's 1990 historiographical study, where he stresses the role of archaeology as a precursor of antiquarian studies (Momigliano 1990). Traces of archaeological ambitions can be observed in the *Antiquités*, but Du Bellay stresses the less visible and tangible results of such a quest. Even though he chooses to deal with an antiquarian subject in his sonnets, systematically listing important monuments of

the ancient world, the poet deliberately details the precarious nature of the collections he chooses to display. His approach is different from that of the prototypical antiquarian Peiresc (1580–1637), who belongs to the next generation, and as Momigliano has pointed out, distinguishes between the task of the collector and that of the historian.

Du Bellay's portrait of the traveller to Rome differs from both the early humanist archaeological figure and the later antiquarian collectors and writers. The poetic persona he chooses to depict is an early-modern practitioner of a slightly different kind of antiquarianism. Whereas the archetypical collectors of the next generation were "convinced that they could examine the material objects of the past in a positive scientific manner" (Momigliano 1990: 57), Du Bellay's displays of Roman ruins and of the wonders are less fixed, and the metaphorical affinities of the geographer, the traveller and the collector are more open to investigations and contradictions.

Variation and visibility

In *The Cornucopian Text,* Terence Cave explores theories and practices of imitation and focuses on their reciprocity in 16th-century writings (Cave 1979).[5] Du Bellay is one of the writers Cave discusses in his book. The Renaissance writer is admired for his copious style. Within an early-modern culture of imitation, the art of copying is based on what is already written; it is clearly linked to the modern copy as we know it. But it is also connected to *copia* (lat. meaning forces, plenty, abundance, resources, supplies, wealth), its positive and rich connotations, and thereby to more ancient theories on how to create a varied, abundant and powerful discourse. The copiousness of Du Bellay's writing fluctuates between and explores resources both from the "organic" (rich harvests, flowering gardens, orchards filled with fruit) and the "architectural" (Cave 1979: 72). The latter (columns, arches, walls) plays a major role in the sonnets exploring Roman space, but images of organic growth also appear. As we shall see, a theory and a practice of a highly elaborate, creative and even paradoxical *copia* unfold in Du Bellay's poems, allowing the writer to craft and exhibit emptiness and plenitude, and to imagine displays of words and things connecting and disconnecting with the past.

In the *Antiquités de Rome*, the poet imitates classical sources. Because meditations on ruins of Rome are a humanist topos, Du Bellay follows classical models and patterns closely. He copies and quotes both ancient and contemporary humanist texts, but in the imitations, he chooses to amplify the influence of the inevitable destruction of all things. These modifications are politically motivated. The Italian humanists in the previous generation dreamt of ancient glory while depicting the ruined state of the modern city; their aim was a *renovatio* (i.e. renewal, renovation, restoration) of ancient Rome. Du Bellay's ideal is different. His

goal is inspired by the *translatio studii et imperii* (i.e. the transfer of culture and political power from one civilization to the next), and more specifically to rebuild the ancient city under French dominion. In this context, "rebuilding necessarily implies ruining" (MacPhail 1990: 12). The specific kind of *copia* he develops serves to connect with lost objects from the past, but also to imagine impressive constructions of the future.[6]

When his poetic fashioning of the lost city explicitly addresses the future, the purpose of Du Bellay's narrative becomes overtly political. In describing the agony of the Eternal City, Du Bellay aggressively borrows from a large variety of sources and verbally seeks to destroy them. The sonnet XXX describes how Roman ruins are searched for relics and robbed. Stories of uncontrollable fire, ravages of harsh seasons and of a series of ecological disasters dominate one poem after another, but towards the end of the *Antiquités*, these violent images serve to suggest the possibilities of a cyclical resurrection. Ancient Rome must be lost for a new Rome to be constructed in France. The translation from ancient Rome to modern France, as Du Bellay perceives it, happens through a paradoxical series of fertile metaphorical destructions.

It is against this backdrop that Du Bellay chooses to accelerate and intensify the role of decay. His portrayal focuses on the memory of works of art that are unforgettable and, yet, non-existent. He explores and abundantly copies what is lost. The absence or uncertainty of materiality leaves more space for a writer eager to reuse and recycle ancient materials, their immateriality made easily adaptable and transportable; they are smoothly moved and displayed in new realms. The fertility of lost material may explain why the seven wonders of the world occupy an emblematic position in the shaping and sharpening of the dichotomies unfolding in *Les Antiquités de Rome*. The copious inclusion of such organic and architectural resources allows for a veneration of works of art and even of whole civilizations that have disappeared.

The practice of imitation and more specifically of *copia* (positively connected to images of plenty) in Early Modern Europe is developed in a broader intellectual and cultural context where imagination was believed to mediate between an inner and an outer world, between intellect and body. It operates within a framework of sense-based thought, allowing for words and things to be collected in the mind – a capacity shared by humans, and that can be trained and cultivated (Lyons 2005).

An important model, in this context, is Quintilian, who advises on how to create attractive and vivid narratives addressing this cognitive and emotional plenitude in the mind of a listener or spectator. Quintilian proposes a theory linking imagination and emotion; he favours imaginative processes that allow for navigations between true and false, past and present, fiction and reality:

> The person who will show the greatest power in the expression of emotions will be the person who has most properly formed what the Greeks call phantasiai (let us call them "visions"), by which the images of absent things are presented to the mind in such a way that we seem actually to see them with our own eyes and have them physically present to us, they will be imprinted on my mind. The result will be *enargeia*, what Cicero calls *illustratio* and *evidentia*, a quality which makes us seem not so much to be talking about something as exhibiting it. Emotions will ensue just as if we were present at the act itself. (Quintilian, 2001: 6.2. 29-32)

This famous passage in Quintilian on the power of expressing emotion offers an understanding of how lost wonders may survive, precisely as an act of the imagination. Even though he mainly deals with generations of French writers following that of Du Bellay, I particularly enjoy reading John Lyons's presentation of these imaginative practices. He explains how imagination has "the power to overcome limitations of time and space" (Lyons 2005: 37). These discussions in late antiquity and early-modern culture propose a powerful theory of intense imaginative processes allowing for absent objects to be perceived as visible and present. In a context of early-modern "inter-art" and cross-media theories, anachronistically speaking, Du Bellay's poems offer access to the corresponding practices.

Du Bellay's writings include sophisticated temporal complexities, allowing for playful and innovative imitations of earlier models. He laments and rejoices when confronted with objects of the past that are lost or disappearing. This point of departure, simultaneously venerating the beauty and fragility of ancient marvels, is transformed into a high-end verbal *copia* and depends highly on the imaginative mindscape of the reader-spectator.

Irresistibly lost

Lists of wonders have circulated for millennia. Over and over, such inventories of *mirabilia* (i.e. marvels, miracles) have been rewritten, re-edited and reimagined. Both the wonders and the lists of wonders, preferably of the seven, have had a profound and long-lasting influence. In Du Bellay's case, the seven wonders of the ancient world are included in the territorial explorations unfolding within the body of sonnet II in the *Antiquités* (quite an achievement as the poet has only 14 lines at his disposal).

Catalogues of what might be the most marvellous things in the world are of course subject to change. Across the centuries, different collections of monuments, sites and sculptures have been ranked on the list of seven. Renaissance

creative thinking, obsessed with the seven wonders of the ancient world, saw a surge of both verbal and visual depictions of wonders. And one might argue that the list was fixed in the Renaissance: "The list as we know it today only became fixed in the Renaissance, at a time when scholars were looking back in admiration at the world of the Roman Empire a thousand years before" (Clayton & Price 1991: 5). The Renaissance list quoted by these two scholars builds on a series of engravings by Maerten van Heemskerck. It contains the Colossus of Rhodes, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, the Great Pyramids of Egypt, the Statue of Zeus at Olympia, the Temple of Artemis and the Pharos.

Du Bellay's collection of wonders resembles, but is not identical to this "fixed renaissance list". The first thing we learn from comparing the list in the sonnet with that of the prints is that the poet does not include the same sites and edifices as van Heemskerck.[7] This tells us that the list of seven wonders in the Renaissance is not as stable as scholars have assumed. Du Bellay chooses not to mention the Lighthouse in Alexandria, but includes the Labyrinth at Crete. The French poet starts his list describing the Hanging Gardens, continues with Artemis's Temple, proceeds with the Pyramids, goes on to describe the Statue at Olympia, followed by the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus. The last monument Du Bellay mentions is the Colossus of Rhodes.

The poet, however, also emphasizes that he is quoting verbal performances. Rather theatrically he pretends to copy appreciative accounts from people who have actually been on site and seen the ancient miracles by their own eyes. In Babylon, they boast; in Egypt, they sing; in Greece, they describe and publish; on Crete, they remember; on Rhodes, they commemorate (my translations).[8] The next thing we can learn from comparing sonnets and prints is that there is more to the number of seven than what immediately meets the eye. The second sonnet of the *Antiquités* launches a movement of geographical expansion and starts moving beyond the limits of list. In the last lines of the sonnet, the poet metonymically continues to work with the number seven and transfers it to a Roman context. He praises the Seven Hills of Rome and then chooses to associate the hills with the seven wonders of the world. In fact, at the very end of the sonnets, the seven hills simply replace the seven wonders; the seven hills have actually become the seven wonders.[9] In the context of the *Antiquités*, the comparison and / or replacement serve as an introduction to imagine the seven Roman hills as tombs surrounding the city (sonnets IV and XXVII). The remaining thirty sonnets are about how ancient Rome is destroyed, how it is reduced to ashes, and how it has become nothing but dust and an empty name (sonnets VII and XXVII).

This discursive approach to the seven wonders subtly conveys images of things and places, but overtly demonstrates that the transmissions of such inventories of past greatness depend heavily on verbal representations and reports. They come

from afar, from ancient civilizations, and they are, for different reasons, largely inaccessible. This inaccessibility explains why they are mostly collected in writing.

And then they were eight…

Several Latin authors created lists of seven wonders. One of their earliest models is Herodotus who, without mentioning lists or numbers, speaks of wonders and who mentions the pyramids and the city of Babylon. But when it comes to more canonical lists, three Greek sources are often mentioned: Philo of Byzantium, who lived during the latter half of the 3rd century BC; Antipater of Sidon, who lived in the second half of the 2nd century BC; and Stabo, who lived from 64 or 63 BC–c. 24 AD (Clayton & Price 1991). And as we have already seen the lists of the seven wonders, as they have been handed down, and as we know them today, do not include any Roman monuments or sculptures.

Discussions on how to compensate for this lacuna, however, have been going on since antiquity (Clayton & Price 1991). Some of the most important efforts of including Rome amongst the *mirabilia* argue that more memorable works of art should be added to the first seven. In the *Natural History*, completed in AD 77, the Roman author and naturalist Pliny the Elder (AD 23 – AD 79) presents detailed descriptions of the seven wonders of the ancient world, but then, suggestively adds elaborated portraits of Roman art and architecture explicitly connecting their magnificence to that of the seven wonders previously displayed in the text. Pliny opts for an expanding 7 + 1 solution when presenting the wonders. Conspicuously, he makes this solution serve to amplify the role and presence of Rome in the context of ancient marvels. A closer scrutiny, however, reveals that this, in fact, is a very common pattern. Many lists convey a model of seven wonders + one (the latter being Rome herself). When examining the Renaissance list based on Maerten van Heemskerck's prints of seven wonders, I discovered that even Heemskerck actually adds one print. He includes a representation of the Colosseum in Rome, with a self-portrait of himself figuring confidently in the front.[10]

Du Bellay seems to be fully aware of a more prolific and expansive model as he skilfully responds to it by developing the open-ended potential offered by the 7+ pattern. "I want to sing," he writes emphatically in the last lines of the second sonnet "The Seven Hills of Rome / the seven wonders of the world."[11] And we must note that after all, he writes *one* sonnet on the seven wonders, using the final line to simply replace the seven wonders of the world by the Seven Hills of Rome, explicitly ending in the 7+ model. In this way, he not only insists on a plurality of lists, but also constructs a playful bridge to a different spatial and temporal potential, and a more uncertain number of wonders, because almost all the remaining sonnets in the *Antiquités* are dealing with Rome. Swiftly his focus has shifted from

an architectural cityscape to the natural landscape of the seven hills.

Some of the most canonical lists of wonders do not follow the patterns of a rigorously delimited model and keep changing and growing, featuring abundance and fecundity in a distinct cornucopian shape. The multiform shape of the lists was new to me, and I started to study the *Natural History* more closely, because this was where I first discovered the 7 + 1 display of wonders. In fact, Pliny's work seems to be deeply involved and embedded in processes of creating variety that resemble those we find in the *Antiquités*.[12] In Pliny, there is a rather abruptly constructed bridge between the seven wonders and Rome. He suddenly chooses to stop writing about the wonders of the past and expresses a desire to deal with the wonders of his own city (Rome, that is). Du Bellay chooses a similar and swift transition in the final two lines of his second sonnet: "I want to sing / about the Seven Hills of Rome." The orientation towards the past is replaced by a sense for the present.

When Pliny insists on how Rome harbours and represents collectables, this choice make him stand out as a potential model for Du Bellay. The Renaissance poet might even have found a model for the twofold representation of Rome (magnificent and lost) in the *Natural History*. Du Bellay might even have taken Pliny's text as a point of departure for the emphasis on destruction. As Sorcha Carey has shown, Pliny evocatively makes his readers understand that the very moment Rome triumphs, and his own inventory of the world is complete, its decline begins.

> The image of Rome as the world, luxury, theatres and all, embodies precisely the paradox that has dominated Pliny's inventory of the world – that in trying to catalogue the glorious totality of the Roman Empire, one inevitably includes luxury, the substance directly responsible for Rome's decline (Carey 2000: 10).

This problem in Pliny is, as we have seen, the very point Du Bellay chooses to dramatize when shaping his own images of Roman decay. The figure of his *poeta collector* is warned. He does not opt for Pliny's dream of the complete collection. Du Bellay inverts the order of the display. He chooses to focus on the vast powers of destruction. Fragments, ruins and dust allow him to communicate a long visual history of lost objects and, simultaneously, exhibit the rich variety of changing, and yet surviving patterns.

In the Renaissance, five of the seven admired wonders were definitely lost and had been lost for quite some time. Phidias's statue of Olympian Zeus, the Temple of Artemis, the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus, the Colossus of Rhodes, the Pharos of Alexandria were all destroyed long ago. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon

might never have existed. The pyramids at Giza are the only surviving marvel. Even though the Cheops Pyramid and the ones adjacent to it still could – and can – be admired, Egyptian pyramids also include structures that were robbed, ruined and destroyed. The focus on destruction saturating Du Bellay's aesthetics in the *Antiquités* is supported by strong material evidence.

A more detailed reading of the *Natural History* led me to the discovery of yet another striking parallel between Pliny and Du Bellay. As we have seen, Du Bellay's poems on Rome have a clear rhetorical underpinning and explore the visual and spatial qualities of memory organised as a building. His representation of Roman architecture in ruins is not as straight forward as it might seem, because it also opens for an allegorical questioning of the organisation not only of space, but of memory as places (Yates 1966; Dauvois 1992). In this context, the rhetorical figure of *antonomasia* stands out as a phenomenon worth some attention (Notz 1994; Mo 2013). The antonomasia allows for a proper name to replace a phrase and launches a movement where the proper name loses its singularity. In "the search for Rome in Rome," it captures the mutability of Roman art and architecture and expresses disorientation. In "there is nothing left of Rome in Rome," it portrays the ancient city as entirely lost. The singular site is nowhere to be found. Rome is reduced to an empty name.[13]

The antonomasia also has had a strong effect on Pliny's list of the seven wonders. It literally abounds with proper names transformed into nouns. Some of which have become so familiar that we tend to use them without even noticing. Pharos lends its name to all light houses. The Tomb of Mausollos, his mausoleum, has become the common denominator for any magnificent tomb. The Colossus has given its name to anything gigantic or very powerful. The Temple in Ephesus is involved in events connected to Herostratus and Croesus. Both these protagonists are immortalized to such an extent that their names now characterize humans who gain global fame either for a criminal act, or for being extremely wealthy. When the antonomasia allows *proper* names to figure as *common* nouns, they are no longer site-specific or fenced-in, but cut loose of the confinement of singularity. The figure of the antonomasia is in the service of *copia*, open to a plurality of spaces, timelines and endless new situations. The seven wonders in their different shapes have become shared and varied resources that can be composed and recomposed in a cornucopian movement. They have disappeared, but are vividly remembered and a productive plurality has replaced a magnificent, but lost singularity.

Display of absent things

Pliny's effort was to create a complete catalogue of the world. He inventoried and collected his world in writing, and it is well known that he became an important model for early-modern collectors (Impey & MacGregor 1985). The *Natural History* also seems to be a model for shaping both the verbal and the visual qualities of the *Antiquités de Rome*. Words and things are connected and interrelated in ways that Du Bellay knows to develop allegorically. As we have already seen, he speaks of his poems as paintings. The use of the word antiquities in the title launches a corresponding ambivalence and allows for a simultaneous presentation of the *Antiquités* as a collection of poetry and a collection of lost architecture: "These old palaces, these old arches that you see / These old walls, are what we call Rome."[14] In these lines, Du Bellay deploys *copia* by verbally displaying a series of uncollectable antiquities. They are lost and visible, *phantasiai* at work, according to Quintilian. The paradoxical qualities come as the result of powerful rhetorical techniques, focusing on highly visual scenes, deliberately addressing the eye of the reader. In the sonnet, the poet includes a visitor and invites him as a newcomer to an imaginary exposition of Roman ruins. He insists on deictic references, by accumulating demonstrative pronouns, "these old palaces, these old arches." An important aim is to transform the reader into a spectator: "See here! Watch this!" The prolixity of persuasive visual invitations in the sonnets is striking.

The *mirabilia* are constantly re-imagined and re-invented. Because of their almost exclusively phantasmagorical survival, the changing canon of the seven wonders of the ancient world represents some real curatorial challenges. Du Bellay plays with them all and suggests that poetry may triumph. Words may conquer marble. By copying and recycling this old saying, the Renaissance poet starts exploring the outcome of his staged victory. The sonnets offer preservation and / or conservation of antiquities by proxy.

There is both a copy history and a copy theory at play in this movement where past splendour is simultaneously imitated and annihilated. Du Bellay is copying from within a culture practicing ideals of vivid, energetic discourse. He is detailing the visual qualities of absent things and develops a panoramic view of a disappearing and crumbling city: "These walls, these arches, these baths and these temples / Judge when you see such vast ruins."[15] The inclusion of the seven wonders epitomizes the destructive potential he discovers in Pliny and that he radicalizes and amplifies. However, it simultaneously transmits persuasive images ensuring that ancient miracles will be remembered and can be brought back on display in the present.

The art of collecting in the *Antiquités* is concerned with objects that are lost. The observer staged in Du Bellay's sonnets has an eye for things that may never have existed, for the creative potential of uncollectable and lost beauty. The poet

conveys a celebratory lament demonstrating that there is no need for originals or origins for works of art to survive. There are other effective ways of protecting the past from negligence and oblivion. Materiality is not needed for absent things to become physically present, but the forces of *phantasiai* must be activated. Du Bellay explores destruction and loss as sources of plenty. The survival of the seven wonders of the ancient world depends almost exclusively on a forceful transmission in different media such as coins, ruins, inscriptions, fragments, accounts, lists, and not least sonnets. Their long and changing history builds on techniques presenting the wonders as irresistible, serving as imaginative triggers for the creation of new high-quality copies. As they are "imprinted in the mind," they can be shared, ready to be copied again and again. Things that are lost can be recomposed in the mind of the reader. The past can be carved out in the present and sonnets become a site for collecting uncollectables.

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Notes

[1] "Une générale description de sa grandeur et comme une déploration de sa ruine," frontpage in Joachim Du Bellay, Antiquitez de Rome in the Chamard edition of the Œuvres Poétiques. All further references to Du Bellay in this article are taken from the Roudaut edition. The translations of Du Bellay's sonnets in the article are mine. An online translation into English of the Antiquités exists. See Du Bellay, The Ruins of Rome, translated by A. S. Kline 2009. http://www.poetryintranslation.com/klineasruins.htm, accessed 10.05.2017.

[2] "Je les vous donne (Sire) en ce petit tableau." "I give them to you (Sire) in this small painting," my translation.

[3] Sonnet III urges the newcomer to Rome to see and to discover the city. I have highlighted the visual verbs in lines 2, 3 and 5). "Nouveau venu qui cherches Rome en Rome, / Et rien de Rome en Rome n'aperçois, / Ces vieux palais, ces vieux arcs que tu *vois*, / Et ces vieux murs, c'est ce que Rome on nomme. / *Vois* quel orgueil, quelle ruine […]."

[4] Sonnet XXVI, "Puisque le plan de Rome est la carte du monde", my translation.

[5] Cave presents a culture where copia is associated with abundance, verbal and well

as figurative. He shows how copia was a positive concept and how it has bonds to plenitude, proliferation and affluence. The cornucopian text figures prominently in 21st-century re-evaluations of copies and subsequent efforts to reassert the early-modern meanings of copia (Boone 2010). It is as if Cave's work on copia and cornucopia keeps on transferring some of rhetorical powers and richness it analyses. It is still not only quoted, but frequently copied by scholars in different disciplines. A careful comparison of Boone's introduction to copia and Cave's presentation of the concept reveals striking parallels. My own description of copia in this article borrows all its major elements from Cave.

[6] For an interesting study of a different kind of links between copious discourse, collections and restauration, see Angus Vine, "Copiousness, conjecture and collaboration in William Camden's Britannia" (Vine 2014).

[7] Sonnet II. "Le Babylonien ses hauts murs vantera, / Et ses vergers en l'air, de son Ephésienne / La Grèce décrira la fabrique ancienne, / Et le peuple du Nil ses pointes chantera: / La même Grèce encore vanteuse publiera / De son grand Jupiter l'image Olympienne, / Le Mausole sera la gloire Carienne, / Et son vieux labyrinth' la Crète n'oubliera : / L'antique Rhodien élèvera la gloire / De son fameux Colosse, au temple de Mémoire : / Et si quelques œuvre encore digne peut se vanter / De marcher en ce rang, quelque plus grand' faconde / Le dira : quant à moi, pour tous je veux chanter / Les sept coteaux Romains, sept miracles du monde."

[8] Sonnet II, "vantera, décrira, chantera, publiera, n'oubliera, élèvera la gloire à."

[9] Sonnet II, "pour tous je veux chanter / Les sept coteaux Romains, sept miracles du monde."

[10] Copies of the prints are easily accessible here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maarten_van_Heemskerck, accessed 03.05.2016. In Dresden the prints were recently exhibited and presented as the eight wonders of the world, see http://www.skd.museum/en/special-exhibitions/archive/the-eight-wonders-of-the-world-by-maarten-van-heemskerck/, accessed 12.05.2017.

[11] Sonnet II, "Je veux chanter / Les sept coteaux Romains, sept miracles du monde," my translation.

[12] Pliny's *Natural History* is not quoted in Hassan Melehy's recent book on Du Bellay and Rome, nor is he quoted in this context by leading Du Bellay scholars like George Hugo Tucker or Eric McPhail. Pliny is not mentioned in the elaborated annotations to the Antiquités in the Chamard edition. He is not among the 13 classical writers quoted as the most important sources for Du Bellay's poems in the more recent François Roudaut edition, and Pliny's name is not mentioned in the footnotes to the Antiquités in this last edition.

[13] Sonnet III, "Nouveau venu, qui cherches Rome en Rome / Et rien de Rome en Rome n'apperçois," my translation. For a rich and interesting study of the role of proper names in Du Bellay, see (Mathieu-Castellani 1980).

[14] Sonnet III, "Nouveau venu […] Ces vieux palais, ces vieux arcs que tu vois, " my translation.

[15] Sonnet XXVII, "Ces murs, ces arcs, ces thermes et ces temples," my translation.

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What is a 'Good' Copy of Edvard Munch's Painting?
Painting Reproductions on Display

By Joanna Iranowska

Abstract

Paintings in museums might occasionally be replaced by a photoprint mimicking the original. This article is an investigation of what constitutes a *good reproduction* of an artwork (oil painting) that is meant to be displayed. The article discusses what the usefulness of reproductions depends on, applying the *Valuation Studies* approach, which means the primary concern is with the practice of valuing itself. In other words, the study focuses on how museum experts evaluate reproductions of oil paintings. The article analyses three cases of displaying digitally printed copies of Edvard Munch's oil paintings between 2013 and 2015 in the Munch Museum and in the National Gallery in Oslo. The study is based on a series of semi-structured interviews with the experts, working at and for the museums, that were involved in producing and exhibiting of the photoprints: curators, conservators, museum educators, and external manufacturers. The interviews were grouped into five clusters, which I have chosen to call *registers of valuing* following Frank Heuts and Annemarie Mol (2013). The described valuation practices have to do with delivering experiences to the public, obtaining mimetic resemblance, solving ethical aspects, exhibitions' budget, and last but not least, with the time perspective.

Introduction

Art museums are less afraid of copying their pieces than we may think. Despite their traditional role as custodians of the original, they occasionally experiment with reproducing canvases and displaying them in exhibitions that serve a particular purpose. This article explores what constitutes a *good reproduction* of a painting in the context of being a supplementation for the original artwork. The investigation was done by taking an ethnographical approach, interviewing museum experts and people involved in the museum projects, working for the museum. Recently, the rapid development of new printing technologies, especially 3D printing, has generated interest in rethinking the use of reproductions in museum exhibitions (Latour and Lowe 2011, Foster and Curtis 2016). In the introduction to the book *Coping with the Past. Creative Perspectives on Conservation and Restoration* the authors points out that "[t]he new intimacy with works of art created by these technologies reveals unexpected aspects and potential, and in some cases allows us to study them more freely and more creatively" (Gagliardi et al. 2010: XV). Bruno Latour and Adam Lowe, in their essay "The Migration of the Aura or How to Explore the Original through Its Facsimiles" (2011) propose distinguishing between good and poor copies of artworks based on the quality of reproductions. They even go one step further and claim that the *aura* of an artwork in Walter Benjamin's sense might migrate from the original to the professionally prepared reproduction, as long as three conditions are fulfilled. Firstly, a reproduction should be displayed in its original location, where it used to belong historically. Secondly, it should be possible to come in close contact with the painting without being disturbed by hordes of tourists. Thirdly, the reproduction technique should be advanced enough to resemble the surface features and register the three-dimensional aspects of paintings. As I read them, Latour and Lowe suggest a good reproduction is that which possess an aura. I will argue that the question of a good reproduction is even more complicated and not strictly limited to the Walter Benjamin's often-explored notion of aura. In the following I identify and name five different categories involved in copying artworks, which I call *registers of valuing* after Frank Heuts and Annemarie Mol (2013). As the reader will come to see from the following analysis, some of the described categories, for instance the mimetic and the experiential registers, indirectly evoke the auratic qualities of copies. On the other hand, others, for example the ethical or the monetary registers, transcends such auratic qualities. What is important to emphasize, I choose to limit my inquiry to the exhibition context. More specifically, the article analyses three cases of displaying digitally printed copies of Edvard Munch's oil paintings between 2013 and 2015 in the Munch Museum (including the annual summer exhibition at the artist's studio Ekely) and in the National Gallery in Oslo. The following aims to shed new light not on the public's reception of the copies, but on

the museum practice of valuing. I would like my article to contribute to the young interdisciplinary field of Valuation Studies.

The article aims to research the less visible and under-researched areas of museum routines and exhibition making in regards to copying. As Hans Dam Christensen posits, "it is pertinent to rethink the use of reproductions in current Art History and Visual Studies, and, further, to reflect on the difference between representation and art object" (2010: 214). 3D printing has received some attention in the interdisciplinary field of museum studies, but no previous investigation has looked specifically at the use of UV-printed reproductions in the museum context, even though this technique is more widespread in at the time of writing than 3D printing. All the life-size reproductions that are the focus of this study are photoprints. Most of them were developed with ultraviolet printing technology (except these displayed in Ekely; in that case water-based printing was employed). The canvases were photographed with a high resolution digital camera, and then the photo files were developed with photo software and printed out. In the process of UV printing, inks turn to a solid immediately when exposed to UV light, therefore this technique enables one to print on a variety of substrates such as glass, metal, plastics or canvas. This type of digital print is durable, for example it is more resistant to scratches and exposure to water and sunlight than water-based ink printing. Moreover, it is cheaper than 3D printing and enables the picture to obtain a depth of up to 5 millimetres (Stormo 2015). For this reason, it is sometimes called 2,5-dimensional printing.

Unpacking the *Valuation Studies* and Registers of Valuing

In the following, my primary concern will be with the practices of valuing. *Valuation Studies* is a new emerging field of transdisciplinary studies, which focuses on valuation as a social practice. The field combines approaches from disciplines such as sociology, science and technology studies, management and organisation studies, and social and cultural anthropology, just to mention a few (Helgesson and Muniesa 2013: 3). The unifying feature is dealing with subjects or objects of valuation and situations in which "the value or values of something is established, assessed, negotiated, provoked, maintained, constructed and/or contested" (*Valuation Studies* 2013).

The research focus and the analytical strategy of this paper are inspired by the approach presented by Frank Heuts and Annemarie Mol in the article "What Is a Good Tomato: A Case of Valuing in Practice" (2013), in which they explored what *good tomatoes* might be. They studied not the "*worth* (a quality)", but rather "*valuing* (an activity)" (ibid. 129). Through analysing a series of interviews with tomato growers, sellers and consumers, they captured and demonstrated the complexity

and dynamic of the valuation process of a mundane vegetable. They named and identified five different sets of categories, which enabled them to detect the various aspects of good tomatoes. I decided to follow the same path when analysing my empirical material, even though I dealt with the reproductions of art masterpieces; I spoke to a number of people involved in reproducing oil paintings and asked them what is a good reproduction, and how do they make it "good". Thus, in the context of this paper, being "good" refers to possessing qualities that are considered and perceived as positive by my informants. The implication here is that "goodness" is relative and a subjective, rather than an objective, feature of painting reproductions. This is in line with what Heuts and Mol describe as "different kinds of goodness" (ibid. 134). They explore this phenomenon of the plurality of the concept of goodness by applying the analytical notion of *registers*, which is central to their methodological approach. However, while they write extensively about what registers *do*, they do not define them in concrete terms. Before going further, therefore, I would like to reflect upon what I mean by "registers" within this paper. If one were to glance at the definition of the noun *register* in the 2010 edition of the *Oxford Dictionary of English*, one would see no less than seven different meanings listed. Two of them in particular seem to be relevant for our purposes here. A *register* in music is: "a particular part of the range of a voice or instrument". Whereas in Linguistics a *register* is "a variety of a language or a level of usage, as determined by degree of formality and choice of vocabulary, pronunciation, and syntax, according to the communicative purpose, social context, and standing of the user". So "register" would be a spectrum, which enables us to systematize and capture the intensity of a phenomenon.

Registers help us focus on the practice of valuing as an action itself, they "indicate a shared relevance, while what is or isn't good in relation to this relevance may differ from one situation to another" (Heuts and Mol 2013: 129). This feature distinguishes them from the "economies of worth" introduced by Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thevenot (2006, see also Thevenot 2002), which focus on justifying the evaluating acts and worth of things. Furthermore, the different registers of valuing clash and there are tensions between them: "[…] they rob each other of any potential self-evidence. They instantiate each other's criticism" (Heuts and Mol 2013: 129). For example, a craftsman would not bother about exactly the same qualities of a good copy as a curator or museum educator; but at the same time, it is easy to observe overlaps between registers.

That brings us to the next point – it is important to notice that valuing is not a passive activity. In the case of the reproductions it is about assessing value and producing it at the same time (Helgesson and Muniesa 2013: 4). The informants perform various actions in order to obtain the desired result, namely *a good copy*. For example, the process of transforming a digital file into a proper printed repro-

duction requires some tinkering and a series of adjustments. The printer I spoke to said, "I am preoccupied with the best technique, the best possibility all the time. I always think about it [when working]."[1] Clearly, in the process of reproducing art, "[t]he *assessment* part and *improvement* part […] slide over into each other" (Heuts and Mol 2013: 129), thus, valuation should be considered a performative action.

Furthermore, the entities involved are not only humans – Antoine Hennion, posits that *Valuation Studies* methodology "involves that we grant a certain degree of agency to things: they react, resist, make us do things. […] One does not listen to interviews in the same way, ask the same questions" (2015: 51). Heuts and Mol share this view when they call actors for *socio-material figures* (2013). Consequently, I will perceive reproductions as actors with obligations towards the originals, which I will come back to, especially while analysing the ethical register.

Methodology and the Choice of Cases

The investigation is primarily based on a series of seven semi-structured interviews with experts that were involved in producing and exhibiting the photoprints in the museum. Having multiple conversations with the staff enabled me to identify interesting cases for my research. All in all, I conducted seven interviews – I spoke with two curators, two conservators, two museum educators, and one external manufacturer. Each conversation took about an hour. Due to the fact that this article is a discussion on how reproductions are evaluated by professionals, talking with individual members of the public (e.g. audiences, visitors to the museum) about their experiences and impressions concerning "good" copies is beyond the scope of this study. The conducted interviews focused on three cases of displaying digitally printed copies of Edvard Munch's oil paintings between 2013 and 2015 in the Munch Museum and in the National Gallery in Oslo in Norway. Moreover, the interviews were supplemented by an analysis of the press coverage of the exhibitions in the national newspapers and online. The analysis was based on the search in *Atekst Retriever* database.

All the conducted interviews were transcribed and exported to *NVivo*, a qualitative data analysis software. After the first overview reading and familiarizing myself with the content, I listed the emerging thematic clusters (in *NVivo* they are called *nodes*). I then read carefully through the transcripts again and matched these clusters with the fragments that had to do with the valuing of reproductions. For example, transcribed quotations about ethical or mimetic issues were labelled accordingly and assigned a colour which together represented a given register. Some passages received more than one label. As the result of this colour-coding it became clear that the gathered empirical material could be clustered and organi-

zed within five overarching registers. Each register represented a different aspect of what was considered to constitute a "good" reproduction: Experiential, Mimetic, Ethical, Monetary, and Time registers. As the analysis has shown, some of them were employed by the informants more frequently (see Fig. 7 on p. 56)**.** For practical reasons, I will introduce them starting from the most frequently mentioned, but first I will go through the analysed cases.

The first case concerns the reconstruction of Edvard Munch's famous picture series, the *Frieze of Life,* in the Munch Room in the National Gallery in Oslo, which was a part of *Munch 150* exhibition.[2] (Fig. 1) The installation of twenty-two paintings was modelled after Edvard Munch's exhibition at the Berlin Secession in 1902, where the artists experimented with the framing of the cycle and hung it high up on the walls around the room.[3] (Fig. 2) Like art historian Wenche Volle points out, the reconstruction "draw[s] attention to the way in which he [Munch] framed the frieze and adapted it to different architectural settings within different art institutions" (2014: 144). The series deals with existential themes, expressed in titles such as *Love*, *Angst* and *Death* (subtitles actually used in 1902 and 2013)*,* and was in 2013 shown in the same manner as 111 years before – the paintings were taken out of their frames and mounted high on the walls, framed only in a beige textile passe-partout.

Fig. 1. Edvard Munch's *Frieze of Life* reconstructed in the Munch room in the National Gallery, Oslo, 2013. Photo: The National Gallery.

Fig. 2. Edvard Munch's exhibition at Kunsthandlung P.H. Beyer & Sohn, Leipzig, 1903. Photo: The Munch Museum.

The *Frieze of Life* series can be read as a connected visual narrative (Guleng 2013, Eggum 2000, Volle 2013). The aim of the installation was to present the whole and offer a unique spatial experience, but not all the original paintings could be borrowed. Therefore, in order to build a reconstruction, when setting up the exhibition, the museum had to rely on five coloured photoprints: *Dance on the Beach* (1899–1900), *Jealousy* (1895), *Woman* (1894), *Golgotha* (1900), and *Death and the Child* (1899). Reproductions were ordered at a printing house FotoPhono Imaging in Oslo, which is known for engaging in artistic projects.

A second case is the *Touch Munch* project, which dealt with the important issue of the accessibility of visual art. It was a collaboration between the Munch Museum, the *Norwegian Association* of the *Blind* and Partially Sighted, and the company Canon. The idea of the project was to enable the blind and partially-sighted to experience art through UV-printed tactile reliefs of three paintings *Melancholy* (1893), *Despair* (1894), and *Separation* (1896) (Stormo 2015, Valmot 2015, Steen and Rafaelsen 2015). The reliefs delivered a multisensory experience and were presented jointly with the authentic artworks in October 2015 (see Fig. 3 and Fig. 4).

Fig. 3. The *Touch Munch* exhibition, the Munch Museum, Oslo, 2015. Photo: Canon Norge as.

Fig. 4. A close-up of the tactile relief of *Melancholy. Touch Munch* exhibition, the Munch Museum, Oslo, 2015. Photo: Canon Norge as.

In addition to the two main cases introduced above, a third one, less-explored by me, serves to provide context. That is the annual summer exhibition produced by the Munch Museum and displayed at the Munch's atelier Ekely,[4] which was the artist's permanent residence on the outskirts of Oslo from 1916 until his death in 1944. The exhibition's core part is the reconstruction of a wall of the artist's studio based on a photograph taken ca. 1938, which depicts Munch himself, posing on the sofa, with three rows of his pictures in the background. In the exhibition, fourteen photoprints are displayed in the same order as the paintings hung on the wall 75 years ago (see Fig. 5 and Fig 6). The documentary exhibition was shown for the first time in 2013 and has been presented every summer since then.

Fig. 5. Edvard Munch's studio wall reconstruction, Ekely, Oslo, 2015. Photo: The Munch Museum.

Experiential Register

The first register relevant to valuing reproductions is the experiential register. It has to do with engaging with the public and delivering a sensorial and affective experience. In other words, it is about the reception of the copies with human senses. The reproduction's task in the museum exhibition is often more complex than to simply mimic the original. Like Adam Lowe notes, "[t]here is no doubt which is the more authentic object. But which version provides the more authentic experience is open to question" (2010: XIII). The analysis of my qualitative data shows

that the experiential aspects of reproductions were most frequently mentioned by respondents (thirty-five times; see Fig. 7). Furthermore, variants of a Norwegian noun *en opplevelse* (an experience) and a verb å oppleve (to experience) were mentioned by interviewees about 20 times.

Fig. 6. Edvard Munch in his studio at Ekely on the outskirts of Oslo, ca. 1938. Photo: The Munch Museum.

The aim of the *Frieze of Life*-installation was to reconstruct the visual narrative as a whole and give an experience to the public: "It is a very unique spacious experience to watch paintings framed in a white ribbon on the wall. It [the *Munch 150* exhibition] was the only time in the history we could do that," curator 1 said. It was a kind of once in a lifetime experience, which was possible to conduct only in connection with the anniversary. This reconstruction project was the first time Munch's famous picture series was displayed as an ensemble after his death. The reconstruction aimed to bind the past to the present. Masterpieces like *Scream* and *Madonna* were taken out from their golden frames in order to be mounted as a frieze. Nothing like that had been done before. On top of that, curator 1 added, "it will for sure never be done again; I think it was fun to experience that."

The tactile reliefs presented in the *Touch Munch* exhibition delivered a multisensory experience for the partially-sighted, who usually do not visit art museums, where things can be experienced mostly with the sense of sight. The main aim with the tactile reliefs was to introduce the content of the paintings: "for ex-

ample in *Separation* this hair which goes from the woman and around the man's neck, one might experience that." In other words, educators perceive tactile reliefs not as exact reproductions, but rather as a tool which enables story-telling. The reliefs were presented together with the original paintings: "it [the reliefs] enables partially-sighted people to come close, to touch, and get a feeling of how the picture looks like for us. It is a positive thing," commented museum educator 2. Even though the tactile reliefs were designed to serve the blind and persons with weak sight, it was impossible for them to make much out of it without the professional help of a guide. The best result came from providing a combination of audio-guided tours and touching of the reliefs, explained educator 2. What is more, all the vernissage guests were invited to borrow a masque and experience the paintings with different senses than their eyes.

Mimetic Register

The mimetic register is about resembling the authentic artwork in terms of colours, size and surface. The task of the photoprint, or its basic obligation towards the original, is to imitate and to provide a likeness. In his book *In Praise of Copying* Marcus Boon explores the notion of mimesis and posits, following Socrates and Heidegger, that "it is outward appearance that makes something *like* something else" (2013: 19). The analysis of my qualitative data seems to confirm that statement: the mimetic register became the second most frequently activated register. The desired visual features of the copies were mentioned thirty-one times in six interviews. The mimetic register covers the technical aspects of reproducing work of art. The informants focused mostly on obtaining the right colour, surface and size. This section, therefore, is accordingly divided into three parts under these categories.

Colours

The printing process of the five reproductions from the *Frieze of Life* series took place at the FotoPhono Imaging. It was not enough to push a *print*-button, like some might imagine. In order to obtain the desired colours, the digital files delivered by the museum needed to be developed, which required approximately three hours of work per single file. The actions taken by the printer involved tinkering towards improvement: adjusting the intensity of the shades or emphasizing the faded black contours. The printing master made a strong claim, saying that "I can manipulate a picture so that it will look like an original." He said that all that would not have been possible without being familiar with Munch's *oeuvre* and style:

> My task, I thought, was to build up Munch's brush strokes, and open the contours, that he was very occupied with. To capture the intensity of the colours that he was fond of; some things like that, which were not in the picture; so I have painted on Munch's painting [in Photoshop].

He points to the photoprint of the *Woman* (1894) which temporarily decorates the FotoPhono Imaging's office and continues,

> I have underlined these lines, because they were almost gone, these contours, that Munch is famous for. […] Also, I have slightly emphasized the green colour here and the red, and brought out the details. If you watch it from the distance, you can see the details in what I have done; I brought the dynamic back, because it was completely greyish, it was almost gone.

What is interesting is that the curatorial staff in the beginning considered whether they should include black and white or coloured photoprints. Curator 1: "In the end we didn't experience it [black and white reproductions] as a good esthetical solution. They would seem very unfamiliar elements." So they went for coloured photoprints and after the decision was made, a few rounds of colour-correction were necessary.

The education department and external manufacturers involved in *Touch Munch* were occupied with colours too, even though the project was directed towards the partially-sighted public. In Norway there are very few people who are completely blind, so the quality of the colours was relevant. Educator 2 relayed: "The Canon printer is so precise and great at mapping the colours that it delivered a realistic picture for the partially-sighted." When asked about the features of a good reproduction, the educator answered:

> What was most positive for me was that the image of the colours was so good that it felt like we took the partially-sighted and blind seriously, because we didn't give them something McDonald's-like. We gave them something resembling the original.

Surface

Depending on the type of paint that has been used, different adjustments of the light setting are necessary when photographing an artwork. The next visual clue addressed by the respondents was the light: "there is a difference between an oil and acryl [painting], how should one lighten an oil painting and how should one

lighten acryl, how should one lighten the different type of paints, that is a knowledge one needs to have", explained the printer from FotoPhono Imaging.

The technical conservator spoke about the paintings' texture, which is impossible to replicate faithfully with the UV-printer. The Canon Arizona printer, which was used in both of my main cases (The Frieze of Life and Touch Munch), prints up to 75 layers on a single image and the relief can stick out up to 5 mm. The conservator explained that when reproducing "one completely loses the structure of the material." To exemplify her point, she showed me a Munch painting with a thick layer of paint. The other interviewee from FotoPhono Imaging was concerned about the texture as well: "I needed to bring out the canvas, the canvas was a little bit behind here, it's kind of visible in many places; I needed to bring it out, because it is not a white canvas, it is grey." The interview was conducted in Norwegian, and by the word I have directly translated as "behind" the interviewee meant that the canvas was not visible enough before he developed the file.

In turn, the main goal with the tactile reliefs was not to introduce the surface, but rather the content of the paintings. Preparing a mimetic copy of the artist's strokes wouldn't give that much meaning to the blind and partially-sighted public. Therefore, experienced museum educators were asked not only to pick the paintings, but also to choose which motifs should be highlighted. Moreover, "in the reliefs there are in a way hierarchical levels. Some of the reliefs are smaller and some are higher", noted museum educator 2. The chosen paintings are from Munch symbolic period. "In one of them we chose to accentuate the eyes [in *Despair*], but with another one we didn't do that, for example", explained educator 1. The details were agreed on during a meeting of the educators with printers from the company Canon. The meeting took three–four hours and the result was a depth map, stating which elements should be highlighted.

Size

When making a replica, getting the scale right matter, because changing the proportion of an image transform the original: "All decisions as to scale are creative ones. Such decisions are a basic form of copia, and the production of difference within the same" (Boon 2013: 191). All the copies which are subjects of this study are full-size representations and this feature has been listed as an advantage. Although, under some circumstances, depending on the copy's function, a smaller or bigger object might work better. Like in the *Touch Munch* exhibition, where the aim was to enable the blind and partially-sighted to experience art through the tactile reliefs:

> we have prepared one additional set in half-size, which we might use in different exhibitions. The pictures were relatively big. It was difficult to

see the total picture. So actually it would have been nice to have them be smaller. But of course it is also something to experience them in their life-size. (Museum educator 1)

While the second educator added: "[..] maybe we should have them in 1:1 and a small one in addition where it would be easier to get an overview."

Ethical Register

A third register of valuing reproductions mobilized by interviewees is the ethical one. It has to do with appropriation and corresponds with the thesis put forth by Thevenot that "objects might participate in the moral world" (2002: 2). In his article *Which Road to Follow?* he tracks how roads are involved in people's moral evaluations. In turn, copying art, even in the museum exhibition context, requires solving plenty of ethical issues.

The first of the three occurring dilemmas is how faithful a reproduction supposed to be. And the emerging answer would be: a fairly accurate one, but not too perfect either. The first part, good quality, seems relatively uncomplicated, but it is more to it than that. A reproduction carries meaning and one of their tasks is to spread knowledge about the original artwork. Therefore, displaying a poor quality reproduction might insult the original painting, like in the story told by the skilled printer from FotoPhono Imaging who spotted a presentation of Edvard Munch's paintings at the Oslo Airport:[5]

> I arrived from abroad and saw Munch displayed at Gardermoen. They were big pictures, it looked so damn bad. Then I saw them one week after that, I was abroad again, and then I called the project leader [of *Munch 150*]. […] I came to her and said: 'this needs to be taken down. You cannot present Munch like that. It would be better if it is not there.' And she actually agreed with me.

Shortly after, new versions were made and the display was improved. Munch's honour was saved. On the other hand, it seems as though curators do not wish to include reproductions that would resemble the original completely and so mislead the public. The curator of the reconstruction of the *Frieze of Life* put it like this: "[the reproductions] are much more two-dimensional. And flatter, which was also the intention. It wasn't the intention to erase the difference between the original and the reproduction. It is impossible anyway. Even with a 3D printer". The curatorial staff was shown two versions of the UV photographic print of the *Woman* (1894) – one printed on canvas and one on an aluminium substrate. The first type

of substrate was turned down. The printer stated:

> it is us who have the skills and know how good it [a copy] could be;
> museums have no idea about that. It was so good that when we sent a
> reproduction on a canvas of this painting [*Woman*, 1894] they didn't
> want to have it. They meant that they could not use it, because it looked
> like an actual Munch. But at this point the painting was reworked a lot,
> I sat many hours and worked, developing the structure.

Apparently, in that particular case the actual intention was to rely on prints that would look more like photographs and less like oil paintings. It seems like a reproduction has some ethical obligations towards the original and towards the public. A copy should not mislead the public's eye. Therefore, it is important to state on the label that displays the item that it is a copy, argued the curator. This brings us to the second dilemma: displaying reproductions might generate shame and embarrassment, because it can be seen as an act of failing to satisfy the public's expectations. In *Munch 150* five out of twenty-two paintings in the series installation had to be replaced by the photoprints. This sense of failure was articulated by a museum conservator:

> They wanted to stage the *Frieze of Life*–room in the exhibition and then
> they had to use reproductions to be able to do that. It was really a sha-
> me. But I understand that they had to use reproductions. That was what
> has happened.

The curator of the *Frieze of Life* reconstruction discussed how KODE Art Museums of Bergen refusing to loan *Woman* (1894) and *Jealousy* (1895): "Bergen withdrew two paintings a few weeks before the exhibition. That was something we could not predict at all. That was a big shock. We didn't think it would be that many." Two paintings from the Munch Museum, *Golgotha* (1900) and *Death and the Child* (1899), were too fragile to display. The fifth one, *Dance on the Beach* (1899–1900), owned by the National Museum of Prague could not travel outside Czech Republic at that point.

    This brings us to the third point. Art critics have various opinions on whether it is appropriate or not to exhibit reproductions in art museums. I have investigated press coverage of these three exhibitions. Out of them the reconstruction of the *Frieze of Life* received the most media attention. It seems that the majority of the critics appreciated the curators' intention and they did not perceive it as anything extraordinary to display a couple of reproductions in the National Gallery, if the purpose was clearly defined and stated (Gjessing 2013, Bhar 2013, Chris-

tiansen 2013, Elton 2013). In contrast, there was one clearly critical voice – the art historian Ingvild Krogvig was critical of including reproductions and framing them in such a way that they were perceived equally with the paintings: "[…] the original works seems almost as sterile as the reproductions. And that brings as to the exhibition's only eyesore. Big money was spent on the exhibition's architecture and diverse stage props" (2013: 40). Reading the reviews, it becomes apparent that while the majority react positively to the exhibition of reproductions, there is still not a perfect unanimity of opinion as a minority persistently consider them to constitute nothing more than superfluous scenery. In the case of Krogvig, the concern goes beyond that of the assumed superfluous nature of reproductions in exhibition; she has also raised questions concerning the monetary issues.

Much was written about *Touch Munch* and tactile photoprints, but not in national newspapers, rather in photography and technology magazines like *Computerworld*, *Fotografi*, *Teknisk Ukeblad*, *Sign og Print*, *Tek.no*. Reviewers' reactions on showing the tactile photoprints in the museum were enthusiastic and focused on the technical aspects of the printing process, which means that journalists evoked mainly the *mimetic register*. The documentary summer exhibition at Ekely was barely noticed by big newspapers.

Monetary Register

The monetary register of valuing reproductions has to do, firstly, with the expenses connected to the production of the copy itself and, secondly, with the resources that can be saved by the museum by exhibiting a reproduction instead of an original masterpiece (for example, the working hours and surveillance of a conservator). In the case of the most fragile paintings, which require a complex treatment, ordering a copy can solve the problem of lack of time and human resources. A conservator had this to say about exhibiting a reproduction of the *Alma Mater* sketch in the exhibition *The Way to the Aula* (The Munch Museum, 2011): "The work was in very poor condition. And, like always in such circumstances, there was little time. So there was no time to treat it. That was one of the reasons [why the original could not be displayed]."

UV-printing might be less expensive than financing a long conservation project, but it is still a cost in the budget: "It is quite costly to make such big [prints] on an aluminium substrate," said curator 1 of *the Munch 150* exhibition, which relied on five reproductions manufactured by FotoPhono Imaging. In two out of three cases that I am analysing, the print collaboration between the museums and the skilled copyists had a form of sponsorship: "that was a very good [exhibition], so I thought it would be good for us to sponsor it. I sent a few invoices, but not many. And we were mentioned in all the speeches. That was a win-win situation,"

explained the printer. The respondents confirmed the popular belief that corporate-museum collaboration and partnership offers mutual benefits (Rousseau 1998, Rectanus 2002, Kotler et al. 2008). However, even sponsored events might involve large amounts of museum resources: "If you think about the working hours and the resources the museum has used, we have used massive resources on that," museum educator 2 said, who coordinated the project enabling to experience art through the tactile reliefs.

Time Register

The last register relevant to valuing reproductions is a time register, which can be defined in many ways. My material contains a few instances where people mentioned historical time or reproductions' afterlife. I have decided to call it a separate register, because time-related qualities point in completely different directions than the rest of the registers that were discussed above. The time register points back and forward in time. A copy that we consider good or decent today might not be considered as such in twenty years, because of its corrosion or the rapid development of reproducing technology. But sometimes it might be quite the opposite – nostalgia for the older plaster reproductions appeared in one of the narratives. Educator 2: "When I was interviewed by a woman from the Norwegian Association of the Blind, she said that at one point in the 90s it was fantastic, it was much better. Why don't you show them [plaster models] any more? [laugh]." These models were made by an artist (Kjersti Grøstad) with her hands.

The past and future are the relevant contexts here, and so is the present moment, or the right moment in history, like the curator of the *Frieze of life* reconstruction emphasized many times. The jubilee of Edvard Munch's 150th birthday was a special point in time, legitimizing the reconstruction:

> That was the only time in the history that we could make it. Paintings
> are owned by so many different people and institutions and because of
> the jubilee we were able to loan many of them, which we wouldn't usu-
> ally have been able to do. (Curator 1)

Regardless of the quality of the reproductions, exhibiting only them, without the originals, would be pointless. In that case the reproductions' task would have been to substitute for the fragile originals. This unique historical circumstance which was the celebration of the jubilee added some value and meaning to the photographic prints.

Last but not least, my concern is with what happens with the photographic prints when they have completed their task after the art show is dismantled. The-

refore, I asked museum experts how the reproductions are handled afterwards, where are they kept and whether they are registered in a museum catalogue. It turned out that the art museums have no space dedicated to storing exhibition photographic prints. As one of the curators explained: "That is slightly difficult. They are packed together and placed here and there." Thus, sometimes they might serve as decoration in offices. Curator 1: "some employees took them into their offices. That is one of the pictures that were shown [pointing at the wall]." Moreover, both curators mentioned the possibility of thrashing the reproductions at some point. Curator 2 said: "he [a technician] told me already after he took the exhibition down 'so what, was that the last year? Can we throw them away now?' [laugh]"; even though, in that particular case the plan was to display them annually in Edvard Munch's atelier. In turn, the tactile reliefs presented jointly with the authentic art objects were displayed only once and only for a week. One of the educators told of what followed, when the exhibition was over: "we had no showroom for them. They hang in the cinema now, in the corridor next to the cinema room." The cinema room is located in the underground floor of the museum building and not all visitors go down there and have a chance to see them. The museum had an agreement with Canon which obliged them to display the *Despair* and *Separation* reliefs until the end of 2016.

Furthermore, do museums have an overview of the reproductions they have? And has anyone considered registering them in the museum database? Every time I attempted to ask these questions, the informants' first reaction was laughter and dismissal. But I did not give up and kept on asking, encouraged by Michael Angrosino, who actually recommends a *cultivated naïveté* as an important quality of the observational researcher and offers the reminder that an ethnographer should "never [be] afraid to question the obvious or the taken-for-granted" (Angrosino 2007: 56–58). So I continued to ask questions, confronting uneasiness and controversial issues. A curator who was asked whether photographic prints are museum objects answered: "Not at all. No, it is not a question." A museum educator asked about the possibility of registering a tactile relief in the database answered: "No [laugh]. I don't think it's going to happen." Meanwhile, the second educator added: "No one in the house besides us know what it is about, don't you think so?" So there are no specific registers of the reproductions. Moreover, in some cases a couple of items which were used for a specific exhibition might be considered as one object: "No, actually I don't have it [a register]. I look at the photographs they are based on; so I consider them all together" (curator 2).
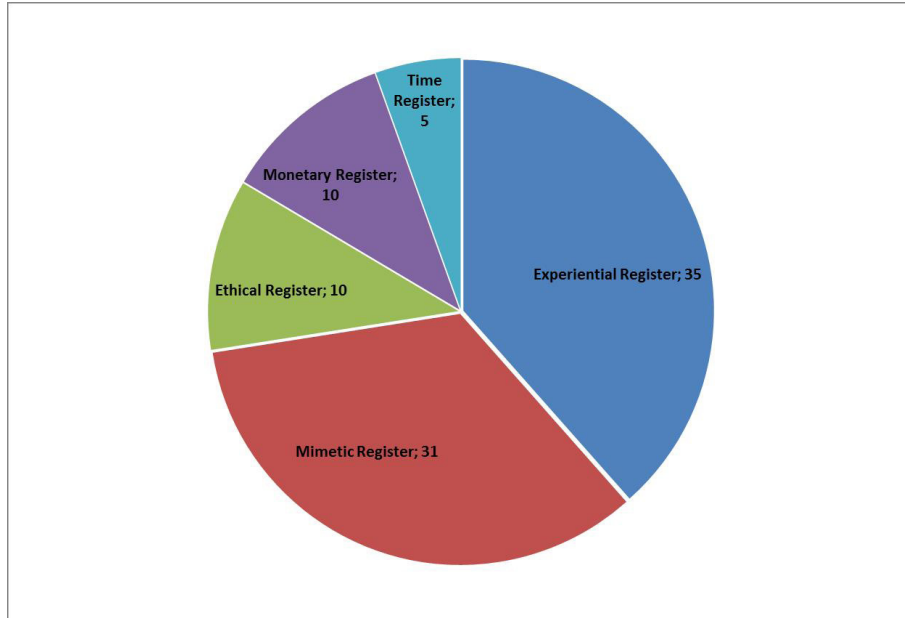
Fig. 7. Registers of valuing compared by the number of times they were mentioned in the interviews.

Tangle of Registers

Multiple registers of valuing are in play simultaneously and create a web of connections. Some of them are employed by the informants more frequently (see Fig. 7). They form a network of intertwined threads that overgrow, coincide and are confusedly interlaced. When valuing the reproductions, the interviewees gave a lot of attention to the experiential aspects. These clues seemed to have guided the curatorial staff and educators in their primary aim; and, therefore, the other registers, which can be compared to a fluid structure, adjust to that idea. The informants might suddenly switch from talking about one register to another. Not to mention that two or more registers might be activated simultaneously.

Sometimes it is impossible to draw a border line between them, like in the case of the mimetic and experiential register, where I have observed a rather obvious overlap. They clearly interfere, but do not coincide. Reproduction needs to possess certain characteristics in terms of colours, surface and size in order to appeal to visitors' senses. The experiential register has to do mostly with creating an *atmosphere* and resembling a work's of art aura; while the mimetic register is more about technical aspects and exquisite delineation of the original.

Furthermore, there is a friction between the mimetic and the ethical register. Copies fulfil an important *moral* task – by displaying them museums protect fragile originals from the potential damage that might be caused by their exposure.

Although today's technology enables the creation of reproductions that respect the mimetic features of the canvas, including resembling its surface, it is not always the museums' intention to include the copies of the highest quality. The printer created the best copy he could have, but it was not what the museum wished to include in the exhibition. This implies that, a copy's ethical obligations towards the original in the museum context is to represent it in a decent way (but not to forge it!). One of the possible explanations could be Masahiro Mori's hypothesis of the uncanny valley,[6] which says that watching a piece almost resembling the original might cause cognitive dissonance, uneasiness and revulsion among some observers.

Moreover, as the analysis of the empirical material shows, there is a tension between the monetary and the previous two registers of valuing of the photoprints (mimetic and experiential). The exhibition budget, which is often limited, determines the choice of the mimetic technique. When two registers are in conflict with each other, the tension between them might be solved by negotiations and by reaching a compromise, for example by ordering a decent copy for a reasonable price or by collaboration in a form of corporate sponsorships.

But compromise is not the only way to solve controversies; "sometimes one value might overrule the other" (Heuts and Mol 2013: 132), like in the case of the discarded reproduction of *The Woman*, when the museum did not wish to display the photoprint on a canvas, but chose a *flatter* print, on aluminium substrates. The ethical register overruled the mimetic one. Another controversy between the mimetic and the experiential register arose in connection with the *Touch Munch* project. The feedback from the partially-sighted public was that they would rather prefer to experience reliefs in reduced size, since the reproduced paintings were rather big. In that case, by reference to experience the mimetic register overruled the experiential one.

The time register is significantly related to all the other categories. Printing technology improves over time. And this improvement results in copies of higher quality in terms of mimetic features. As a consequence the museum experiences changes too. Moreover, the time register corresponds with the ethical one. This could be seen, for example, when the historical moment (the Munch's birthday anniversary) justified including reproductions in the show. This was emphasized by the statement about "the only right moment in history". I could multiply the examples of the various relations between registers, but I feel they have been analysed in the characteristics of the registers above.

Conclusion

Facsimiles have not always had a positive reputation among interest groups such as museum experts or audiences; therefore they have often been overlooked. Thus, this investigation shed some new light on under-researched practices regarding copies in the museum that so far have not been noticed. This is in tune with Latour's and Lowe's posit that "we should refuse to decide too quickly when considering the value of either the original or its reproduction" (2011: 108). The notion of registers served as a framework for better understanding of different kinds of reproductions' "goodness" in the museum exhibition context. Identifying and naming the five registers helped to grasp subjectivity and relativity of reproductions being perceived and conceptualized as good by staff and associated professionals.

I focused on the processed perspective – valuing as activity. The result of the process of giving worth and assessing, however, was that values were produced. Consequently, I was interested in how they were constructed and how they interacted with each other. As the analysis has shown, a good reproduction is a heterogonous set of phenomena, a result of negotiations and compromises, and therefore, could be compared to a resultant force[7] in physics. Producing a copy in a museum is a collective process and multiple registers of valuing are at work at once: experiential, mimetic, ethical, monetary and time registers. My informants repeatedly referred to all five of them; sometimes they tended to switch between them, at other times two or three registers were referred to simultaneously. My analysis of the interviews confirms that things have several values, in the words of Helgesson and Muniesa: "what things are worth can be manifold and change – and these values can be conflicting or not, overlapping or not, combine with each other, contradict each other" (2013: 7). Hence, the conditions that make a reproduction *good* are not constant; they are rather fluid, dependent on the registers of valuing which are activated at the moment and can evolve over time. Valuation is done differently in the printing house, the museum exhibition room, and the curator's office. The investigation has shown that a good reproduction of a painting means different things to different people, e.g. the printer delivered a reproduction which resembled the original so much, that the curators discarded it. Furthermore, they vary between situations too, e.g. partially-sighted members of the public appreciate the experience offered to them, but they need not be concerned with monetary aspects at all. Moreover, the process of attributing worth is often a performative action, e.g. developing graphical files on a computer or a few rounds of colour-correction. The result of the clashes and tensions I have described between registers and their dynamic character is that it is impossible to schematize the valuation process (Heuts and Moll 2013: 140).

This study has focused on exhibitions of one artist in three locations. Reproductions, however, are valued at other sites and in other kinds of places as well. I

believe that based on the analysis of these cases we can learn about the usage of reproductions in the museum context in general. Other museums, such as cultural history or applied arts museums face similar challenges. Their objects might occasionally need to be replaced by a surrogate too, and they may decide to display copies alongside original works. Then the question concerning *what* a good copy *is* arises and triggers new negotiations that seek to find a middle ground for all parties involved.

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Notes

[1] All the quotes from the interviews were translated to English from Norwegian by myself.

[2] The *Munch 150* exhibition (2013) was a collaboration between the Munch Museum and the National Museum. It was a huge celebration of the anniversary of artist's 150th birthday.

[3] No photo documentation from the exhibition at the Berlin Secession in 1902 is preserved; the curators therefore relied on the three installation photographs from the exhibition at Kunsthandlung P.H. Beyer & Sohn in 1903.

[4] The studios at Ekely are owned and sustained by Edvard Munch's Studios foundation which task is to preserve them as a cultural heritage monument and ensure that they are used as a place to work for artists and promotion of visual arts (http://www.munchstudios.org/).

[5] A temporary show in connection with the Munch 150 jubilee in 2013.

[6] In his essay *The Uncanny Valley* (2012) Masahiro Mori posits that watching robots (human replicas) that looks nearly like a human evokes uneasiness and revulsion in the observers. Looking at something almost resembling the original can elicit eerie sensation among some people. The essay was originally published in 70s in Japanese, but only recently the concept of the uncanny valley attracted interest in engineering, but also psychology and popular culture.

[7] A force, velocity, or other vector quantity that is equivalent to the combined effect of two or more component vectors acting at the same point.

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Even Better than the Real Thing?
Digital Copies and Digital Museums in a Digital Cultural Policy

By Ole Marius Hylland

Abstract

This article investigates how a digital turn and digital copies have influenced ideas, roles and authorities within a national museum sector. It asks whether digital museums and their digital reproductions expand and/or challenge a traditional cultural policy. Two specific cases are highlighted to inform the discussion on these questions – the Norwegian digital museum platform DigitaltMuseum and Google Art Project. The article argues that there is a certain epochalism at play when the impact of a digital turn is analysed. At the same time, some clear major changes are taking place, even if their impact on cultural policies might be less than expected. I propose that one of the changes is the replacing of authenticity with accessibility as the primary legitimating value of museum objects.

Introduction

The concept of *digital museums* has been around for more than two decades. Historically, the mid-nineties seem to be a formative period for the digitization of museums. In her 1996 article, Suzanne Keene simply states that "in 1995, museums went digital". For more than twenty years, many and varied ideas on the merging of museum collections with digital technology and networking computers have been circulating. One of the very first uses of this concept is illustrative in the way it expresses an uncertainty about the wider consequences of digital technology:

> [Will] it really change their nature in fundamental ways? It is far from clear as yet who are the users, and what they might want. If a museum disregards the seductive new technology, or finds it too expensive, will the institution wither away? Or will it thrive regardless of whether the information superhighway is just a vast distraction from its real business? (Keene 1996: 299)

The actual and factual role of digital technology in museums has been subject to discussion ever since (cf. e.g. Bearman and Trant 1997, Müller 2002, Karp 2004, Cameron and Kenderdine 2007, Parry 2007, Parry 2013): do digital tools simply give museums an opportunity to fulfil old tasks in new (and better) ways, or do they open for new and unprecedented responsibilities? Moreover, do digital technology and digital objects also add a completely new field of responsibility to the custodian function of the traditional museum? The questions are also many and varied, and there does not appear to be a simple answer to any of them.

The development of digitized museums and collections highlights and challenges in a profound way the museums' notions of authenticity, as well as the dichotomy between original and copy (cf. Trant 1999, Cameron 2007, Cameron and Kenderdine 2007, Lynch 2013). Firstly, in what way do twenty-first century museums (still) need to be keepers and guardians of authenticity, especially in light of digital, immaterial and networked collection practices (cf. Trent 1999)? Secondly, is there such a thing as an original, authentic *digital* object? From the perspective of computer science, there is not. Computer scientist David Levy states on the digital realm that

> [i]t is a realm in which, as far as I can tell, there are no originals (only copies—lots and lots of them) and no enduring objects (at least not yet). This makes assessing authenticity a challenge. (Levy 2000: 24)

Following Levy's claim, Clifford Lynch, information scientist and director of the Coalition for Networked Information, says on digital objects, that

> [t]here is no "original." This is particularly relevant when we are dealing
> with dynamic objects such as databases, where an economy of copies is
> meaningless. In such cases, there is no question of authenticity through
> comparison with other copies; there is only trust or lack of trust in the
> location and delivery processes and, perhaps, in the archival custodial
> chain. (Lynch 2000: 41)

A digital representation is in several ways *not* a copy of the original object, and
neither does it pretend to be (cf. Smith 2003). Consequently, one important ques-
tion is what replaces claims for authenticity, as museum collections are made up
of digital representations? What kind of legitimacy can be claimed for digital or
digitized museums?

These questions are also highly relevant in the context of cultural policy. The
fundamental rationale and legitimation of public museums is reflected in the ra-
tionale of the public support for these institutions. The perceived value and func-
tion of museums is an integral part of the cultural policy for them. Furthermore,
any challenge to or breach in the authenticity tradition of the museum is also a
challenge to its accompanying cultural policy.

Here, I will investigate the relations between the digitization of Norwegian
museum collections and the development of a digital cultural policy. The main
questions are: How has a digital turn and digital copies influenced ideas, roles and
authorities within a national museum sector? To what degree does digital user de-
mocracy and digital industry influence the ideas and concepts of cultural policy?

In this article I aim to discuss these questions and accompanying challenges to
cultural policy by examining two specific cases: 1) the development and role of *Di-
gitaltMuseum* – a national digital museum portal [directly translated: "Digital Mu-
seum"] , and 2) The implementation and role of *Google Art Project* for Norwegian
museum collections. These two cases will highlight both processes and results in
the development of digitization for the Norwegian museum sector, and will also
illustrate the challenges in formulating a cultural policy for digital museums. Even
if the described cases in this article are from a national context, the development
and challenges they illustrate are evidently supranational and international ones,
thus, hopefully, also making this analysis relevant outside the Norwegian context.

To be able to answer the research questions raised in this article, we need to
look at instances where the traditional tools of cultural policy and museum le-
gitimacy might be challenged. The digitization of museum collections and the
consequences of this development are an important example of this. This article
employs a general understanding of cultural policy similar to the one discussed by
Bell and Oakley. "Cultural policy is what governments at different scales choose
to do or not to do in relation to culture" (Bell and Oakley 2014: 20). What they

choose to do or not do can then be divided into two branches – promotion and regulation (ibid.). I will return to a discussion on the way this generic understanding of cultural policy is related to a public and digital museum policy.

The analysis is based on a combination of empirical sources. The digitized collections of two Google Art Project collaborating museums (the National Museum and the Munch Museum) were systematically studied, as were a number of collections on the DigitaltMuseum platform. For this article, the main source of information on museum policy and digitization has been taken from museum policy documents covering the last thirty years, from the Norwegian Ministry of Culture, Arts Council Norway and the now defunct public body Norwegian Archive, Library and Museum Authority (*ABM-utvikling,* 2003-2010). Furthermore, I have interviewed the current head of the digital development of museums in Arts Council Norway. I have also conducted interviews with the museum professionals in charge of digitization and the cooperation with Google at the Munch Museum and at the National Museum of Art, as well as with the leader of DigitaltMuseum and two representatives from Google, one in charge of Google in Norway and the other one working specifically with the Google Art Project internationally. I have also had access to quantitative data on the use of the digital collections. The national statistics on museums, published by Statistics Norway, has also been a relevant source. It should also be noted that I have first-hand experience in working with policies on digital collection management, working at the Norwegian Archive, Library and Museum Authority, as well as in its predecessor the Norwegian Museum Authority (*Norsk museumsutvikling*).

In the following, I will discuss some principal issues concerning the relations between cultural policy, museum policy and a *digital* cultural policy before moving on to presenting and analysing the two cases in question. These will be presented by emphasising their policy role in relation to other actors, their actual practice and their implicit or explicit understanding of their own duplicating, reproducing and communicating enterprises. The final section of the article will discuss how digital copies of museum originals, as well as the distribution infrastructure for such copies, calls for an alternative type of legitimation for both museums and the policy that governs them.

Cultural policy, museum policy and digital cultural policy

In general terms, the cultural policy of Norway, including its museum-specific cultural policy, exemplifies a Western European approach to cultural policy with a Nordic model added to this kind of approach (cf. Mangset et al. 2008, Duelund 2004, Dubois 2014, Mangset and Hylland 2017). Some basic national differences in organising and implementing their actual cultural policy notwithstanding,

most Western European countries share the following assumption: the production and distribution of culture is (although to varying degrees) a public responsibility. This includes preserving cultural heritage and making it accessible. Furthermore, there is also an inherent ideological component in this kind of policy in viewing cultural expressions and cultural heritage as vehicles for personal and societal growth and identity. This is usually also accompanied by the belief in treating culture as a vehicle for economic growth.

The Nordic cultural-policy model is a variant of this. In a special issue on Nordic cultural policy, Mangset et al. (2008) describe the Nordic nations' cultural policies as characterised by such features as welfare orientation, influential artists' organisations, low level of private subsidies, a relatively egalitarian cultural life, a link between cultural policy and national identity (re)construction and relatively strong ministries and arts councils on a national level (Mangset et al. 2008: 2, see also Duelund 2004).

In Norway, museums have arguably been part of implemented cultural policy for more than 150 years. In accordance with a parliamentary decision in 1836, the Norwegian State Museum for Visual Arts [*Den norske stats sentralmuseum for billedkunst*] opened in 1842, later to be renamed the National Gallery and, subsequently, the National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design. In 1866, parliament decided to give economic support to Ålesund Museum, dedicated originally to exhibiting tools and innovation in the fisheries industry (cf. Dahl and Helseth 2006, Eriksen 2009: 66, Solhjell 2005). A number of public subsidies of newly established museums followed.

Beginning in the 1930s, and coming to full force after the Second World War, a fundamental agenda for Norwegian cultural policy has been the idea of democratizing culture (Mangset 1992, Mangset and Hylland 2017). This agenda was heavily influenced by social democratic ideology, viewing access to quality culture as a *right* that should be equally distributed amongst the population, regardless of geography or resources. One of the main vehicles used to attain the goals of such a democratization objective was to ensure that people across the country had access to relevant and high-quality culture. Four institutions were established to accomplish this: The Norwegian Touring Theatre (*Riksteateret*) (1948), the Mobile Cinema (*Norsk Bygdekino*) (1950), the National Touring Gallery (*Riksgalleriet*) (1953) and, finally, Concerts Norway (*Rikskonsertene*) in 1968.

The distribution policy behind these institutions points to a relevant divide in the culture that was the focus of these policies. Besides the example of the National Touring Gallery, which included works of art from for example the National Gallery, collections from museums were not and are not distributed in the same way. Museums have tended to be rather sedentary institutions, linked in several ways to their locality. In the Norwegian case, this is due, for example, to the fact

that it was the institution type itself that was fairly well distributed, leading to a plethora of local and regional museums (cf. Eriksen 2009).

General public access to museum collections and objects was consequently limited by local and regional availability. This changed in a profound way with digitization and digital distribution. What had been a consistent idea underpinning cultural policy for more than 60 years – the idea of democratizing culture – could now include any kind or number of collections and objects, albeit in the form of their reproduction. Herein lies opportunities and challenges: "[U]nlike traditional means of dissemination, digital media presents viewers with the unique problems of authenticity, interpretability, guidance and contextuality – or rather, the lack thereof" (Kalay 2008: 6).

The relations between digitization and cultural heritage go back around 25 years in the Nordic countries, and the inclusion of digitization in public-museum policy came a few years later (cf. Hylland 2014). The democratic potential of digital tools was acknowledged already in 1996, where in the Official Norwegian Report (*Museum – mangfald, minne, møtestad*), which in many ways laid the foundation for a revised Norwegian museum policy, the committee maintains that information technology might make information and knowledge in museums more easily accessible. Furthermore, the report states: "A clear tendency in the use of IT is the movement towards closer contact between institutions, often across borders, through the *internet*"[1](NOU 1996: 87).

The ideas that were introduced in this report were to be relaunched and expanded in a number of following official reports, policy documents and white papers on cultural heritage (NOU 2002:1), the archives, libraries and museum sector (Ministry of Culture 1999), digitization (Ministry of Culture 2009a), museums (Ministry of Culture 2009b), libraries (Ministry of Culture 2009c) on cultural democratization (Ministry of Culture 2011). Ideas of accessibility, democratization, communication and co-creation are important throughout these and other similar documents (cf. Hylland 2014). A recent report from the Auditor General of Norway, a *performance audit*, concerns the governmental efforts to digitize cultural heritage. This report affirms clearly that providing access is a consistent political goal for digital cultural heritage (Riksrevisjonen 2017).

In a previous article I have suggested the consistency of these goals is due to different ideas or traditions of democratization merging: 1) ideas of unrestricted access to digital information online (open source, creative commons), 2) cultural policy ideas of cultural democracy (everybody's culture should be included) and cultural democratization (everybody should have access to culture of high quality), in addition to 3) ideas of the importance of writing history *from below* (local history, social history, oral history) (Hylland 2014.). The normative foundation for a digital cultural heritage or museum policy is hence based on such a combination

of ideas of democratization. The target group for digitized heritage should enjoy a combination of access to, involvement in and influence on this heritage.

From a cultural policy perspective,[2] digitization of museum collections can be viewed as two different kinds of re-distribution of power. On the one hand, digitization has for almost two decades been seen as a tool for cultural democracy – making cultural heritage widely accessible, making it possible to have crowdsourced documentation and making artefacts and objects matter more to more people.[3] On the other hand, digitized cultural heritage has also become a focal point for global digital companies, with Google being the primary example. Google Art Project, following up on Google Book Project[4], makes high-resolution images from art collections available online.

In other words, there is both a movement towards greater public accessibility and participation, as well as an increase in collaboration with private companies. The same dual movement is also present in all other cultural areas where content is distributed digitally. Both kinds of power redistribution imply a potential decline in the importance of public cultural policy. However, giving more influence to the public and/or to the digital industry will necessarily and consequently have impact on the influence of traditional cultural policy.

Or will it? Let us see how such processes might be illustrated by two concrete cases: DigitaltMuseum and Google Art Project. The following section describes these two digital museum platforms as two examples that differ on a number of parameters in the way they make digital reproductions accessible: context, size, scope, ambitions and so on.

Cases: two platforms of digital museum reproductions

DigitaltMuseum is a digital, web-based platform providing access to museum collections.[5] Initially, the platform was developed and used as a tool for Norwegian museums only, but it has later also been implemented by a number of Swedish museums. The purpose of DigitaltMuseum is described on their webpage:

> The Norwegian museums have large and exciting collections. Traditionally, these have primarily been presented in exhibitions and books from the museums. Large parts of the collections have rarely or never been shown to the public. The goal of DigitaltMuseum is that the museums' collections can be easily accessible to everyone and anyone who is interested in viewing them, independent of time and place. Our hope is that the collections can now be more easily used for studies, teaching and image retrieval.[6]

DigitaltMuseum is a tool and a platform that is based on and developed from the museum collection software *Primus*. This software was originally developed by a consortium of Norwegian museums, and eventually administered by the quasi-autonomous organisation Museenes datatjeneste ["Museum IT Service"]. The software was module-based, where one of the modules that was developed, *Primus Web*, was based on the acknowledgement that the online presence of museums had to include some kind of access to their collections. Many of the museums, being Primus users, also signalled a need for a digital outreach platform for their collections. The first version of DigitaltMuseum was launched in 2009. At the end of 2016, around 85 Norwegian and 50 Swedish museums have their collections (or rather, parts of them) digitally accessible through this platform. In addition to this, the platform also includes collections from several archives, institutions and other non-museums. The total number of accessible objects is, as of April 2017, 1.95 million objects from Norwegian cultural heritage institutions, including digitized photographs (1.22 million), digital photos of artwork and cultural history objects, as well as information on the objects themselves. The depth and detail of the information on the objects differs greatly.

An object is typically presented as shown in image 1 (parts in Norwegian). A photograph of the object is accompanied by categories of information from the collection management software. There are also information boxes where the digital audience might suggest tags/keywords for the object and supply additional information about it.
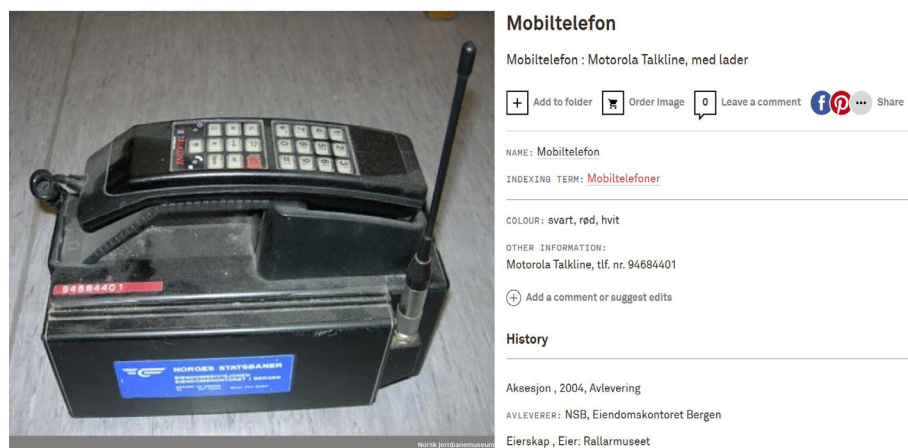

Image 1. Screenshot from DigitaltMuseum. Mobile phone in the collections of the Norwegian Railway Museum, including the section on catalogue data. From Digitalt-Museum/Norsk jernbanemuseum.

The digitization behind the DigitaltMuseum platform is marked by a rather complex division of labour, involving a combination of amateur and professional

input. First of all, there is no central agency for digitization of the museum collections, and all the practical digitization is undertaken by the museums themselves. The report from the Auditor General on digitization showed that as many as 41% of the museums used people from unemployment schemes from the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV), and 34% percent used volunteers for this work, in addition to their own staff. Only 13% of the museums used professional firms to digitize their collection (Riksrevisjonen 2017: 55). The technical development of DigitaltMuseum, including the programming, the digital system architecture and the interface of the platform, is carried out by employees in KulturIT. The company is organised as a joint stock limited company (*aksjeselskap*), and owned by five Norwegian and one Swedish museum (Anno museum, Jærmuseet, Museene i Sør Trøndelag, Nordiska museet, Norsk Folkemuseum and Lillehammer museum).

An important part of the idea behind DigitaltMuseum was that it should include some kind of interactivity with users of the platform. There is (at least) a twofold ambition behind this kind of idea, which of course is not unique to DigitaltMuseum. As will we discuss in more detail below, the premise of digital interactivity with users is one of the most prevalent *topoi* in international museum discourse over the last two decades. For a system like DigitaltMuseum, getting the users activated might be a good way to tap into the vast source of information that the large numbers of interested amateurs in different areas have in their possession. This source of knowledge is potentially useful when filling in some of the many gaps in the information on different objects in the digitized collections. The users of DigitaltMuseum are encouraged to contribute relevant pieces of information and more anecdotal, personal stories related to different objects. Ideally, this might enhance the quality of the collections. Furthermore, this kind of contact is at the same time also a way of relating directly to the museum public in the hope that the institution and their collections are made *relevant* for the contemporary public.

The development of both Primus and DigitaltMuseum has been heavily subsidised by public agencies. The defunct Norwegian Archive, Library and Museum Authority, and from 2010, Arts Council Norway, have supported the development financially. All in all, these technical platforms have received around 25 million kroner between 2007 and 2013 (Gleinsvik et al. 2014). As of now, DigitaltMuseum is more or less the default, publicly sanctioned (and funded) tool for online access to Norwegian museum collections. The relative importance of economic support from the public authorities has, however, diminished over the years. In 2015, around 10% of the income of KulturIT came from development support from Arts Council Norway, while the remaining 90% came from user payment.

DigitaltMuseum and KulturIT have not been exempt from criticism. In 2014,

two separate reports on digital museum development were published: *A digital infrastructure for museums* [Digital infrastruktur for museer] (Gleinsvik, Wedde and Nagell 2014) and *System tools for museum logistics* [Systemverktøy for logistikk i museer] (de Haan 2014), both commissioned by Arts Council Norway. In two different ways, these reports are critical to how and if the needs of museums of today have been satisfied by the way the operations were organised and run at the time.

DigitaltMuseum and the museum software that it is founded on merges two basic tasks for museums: managing collections and giving access to them. This is consistent with the two basic goals for digitizing cultural heritage, as described by the Office of the Auditor General in its 2017 report on the digitizing of cultural heritage. The criteria for the performance audit, as identified by the Auditor General, are: 1) conserving and 2) providing access to cultural heritage (Riksevisjonen 2017: 35). The DigitaltMuseum is in a way providing a certain amount of basic access to the public both to collection management and to the objects themselves. By opening for comments and questions, there is also a small possibility for anyone to make an actual contribution to the documentation of the object. But what do we know about the use of the platform and its interactive possibilities? Between the first year of operation, 2009, and 2013, the number of visits increased dramatically, from 80 000 visits in the first year to over 1.3 million visits in 2013 (Gleinsvik, Wedde and Nagell 2014: 41). Recent numbers from Google Analytics[7] show that DigitaltMuseum had over 1.6 million visits from January to November, with around 980 000 users. On average, the visits to DigitaltMuseum last for three and a half minutes.

These numbers do not, however, say much about the qualitative nature of the use of digital museums, digital collections and digital objects. A user survey from 2014 might give us some additional information on user patterns (Gleinsvik, Wedde and Nagell 2014: 41ff). The majority of the users, close to 75%, are 40 years old or more, while 14% are 30 years old or younger. Around 35% of the respondents in the survey report to be regular users, visiting the platform once a week or more. When asked to describe why they visited DigitaltMuseum, a large group of the users stated that their reason for the digital visit was unspecified entertainment: looking at pictures, getting a glimpse of the past and sharing what they found on Facebook. Another group has more specific reasons, for example obtaining information on their hometown or relatives or objects that they own themselves. The last group of users, which amounts to around a third of the respondents, use the platform for professional or educational purposes, as part of their work or education.

A survey like this points to the rather self-evident understanding that a user of a digital museum is not one and the same thing, but also to the possible distance

between ambitious policy and mission statements, on the one hand, and actual use on the other. The leader of KulturIT describes user interactivity as a multifaceted challenge. The knowledge potential of users is not exploited enough, he says, but any piece of information from them entails a certain workload for the professionals. Processing a thousand new pieces of information requires a lot more work than if the information had been gathered by the museums themselves, he points out. He also notices an evident impatience in the digital audience, expecting that any query, whether it is questions about particular items, questions of valuation, offering objects or correcting information in the database, is answered within minutes. It is also clear that the level of interaction varies across the different collections that form DigitaltMuseum. The informant from the National Museum says that during a period of two or three years, their collections had received around 60 comments from users, which is not an impressive indication of user interaction. However, as both this informant and the leader of KulturIT explains, important parts of the communication with users take place on Facebook.

Google Art Project (earlier, Google Art) is an online platform that the company initiated in 2009 and launched in February 2011. Initially, the platform was launched in collaboration with seventeen international museums, including the Tate Gallery in London and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The number of collaborating museums, galleries and institutions has expanded gradually, and in January 2016, Google announced that over 1000 museums were included on the digital platform.[8]

The concept of the platform is to make digital reproductions with high resolution accessible, in addition to making it possible to virtually tour the included museums, using the same technology as is employed in the Street View version of Google Maps. Furthermore, another feature lets the users create their own virtual collections, combining reproductions from different institutions. This is done by logging in with a registered Google account. This exemplifies the extreme convergence that characterises a number of Google enterprises. Google Art uses Google Maps and Street View technology, the search engine directs queries to the digitized images and the images are linked to educational content on YouTube (owned by Google) and to scholarly work registered in Google Scholar. Browsing the Google Art platform, users might also seamlessly share their virtual collections on the designated social media platform Google+.

The technology employed in making the digital reproductions has two levels of digitized quality. The basic level, described as "high-resolution images", is a digitization that follows a certain standard for digital reproduction. In addition to this, Google has also asked all collaborating institutions to choose one image to be digitized through what the company refers to as *gigapixel* technology, which means creating digital images that contain more than one billion pixels, or picture

elements. This is done by using a camera devised specifically for this purpose, set up and operated by technicians from Google. The process of capturing an image in this way takes several hours, a representative from Google explains, and for that reason it usually takes place at night.

In Norway, Google Art Project has collaborated with four museums: the National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design, the Munch Museum, the International Museum of Children's Art and Hallingdal Museum. The first three of these museums are geographically located in Oslo, while the latter is located in Nesbyen, some 150 kilometres north of Oslo. The artwork chosen by the National Museum to be digitized in a gigapixel version was *View from Stalheim* by Johan Christian Dahl, see image 2.

View from Stalheim
Johan Christian Dahl 1842

From the collection of
The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design, Norway

Image 2. View from Stalheim, by Johan Christian Dahl. Screenshot from Google Art Project. Copyright: The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design.

The Munch Museum chose their absolute centrepiece, *The Scream* by Edvard Munch, as their gigapixel image. The image below shows how it might appear if one zooms in on the eyes of the iconic screaming figure. The illustration should give an impression of the level of detail that this kind of digital reproduction might entail.

Image 3. Detail from Edvard Munch's The Scream, from Google Art Project. Copyright: The Munch Museum.

The Google Art Project is an integrated part of an entity that Google has named Google Cultural Institute (GCI). This entity is especially interesting in the context of cultural policy. GCI is, in its own words, a

> not-for-profit initiative that partners with cultural organizations to bring the world's cultural heritage online. We build free tools and technologies for the cultural sector to showcase and share their gems, making them more widely accessible to a global audience.[9]

This is a similar understanding to the way GAP originally was described on their website:

> A unique online art experience. Users can explore a wide range of artworks at brushstroke level detail, take a virtual tour of a museum and even build their own collections to share. With a team of Googlers working across many product areas we are able to harness the best of Google to power the Art Project experience. Few people will ever be lucky enough to be able to visit every museum or see every work of art they're interested in but now many more can enjoy over 40 000 works of art from sculpture to architecture and drawings all in one place. We're also lucky at Google to have the technology to make this kind of project

a reality. (from Bayer 2014: 5)

Google's mission statement is also a more or less condensed version of the ideas inherent in such descriptions. The company states that its mission "is to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful."[10] This is a statement that the leader of Google Norway also quotes as a natural way of explaining how Google Art Project should be understood. These statements describe a basic mission that in many ways is similar to the basic ideas inherent in Western European cultural policy: ideas of making accessible, democratizing and distributing culture and cultural heritage.

In general, GAP seems to have been rather well received by the international museum sector and audience, although some critical voices have been raised, especially when it comes to the question of how much influence the company has. In the words of critic Siva Vaidhyanathan, who wrote *The Googlization of Everything* already five years ago, Google has been

> moving quickly from a service through which people found information online to one in which it served as an embedded guide to navigating choices, associations, tastes, and the world around us. This mean that Google, the most flexible yet powerful information filter we use regularly, could come to exercise inordinate influence over our decisions and values. (Vaidhyanathan 2011: 199)

Written before the launch of GAP, the argument is no less relevant as the information of interest to Google also has come to include cultural heritage (see also Hillis, Petit and Jarrett 2012).

Other critics have pointed to a perceived distance between the Google and GAP discourse on democratization and interactivity, on the one hand, and the practical implementation of the concepts, on the other hand. Alanna Bayer writes:

> If users cannot respond to one another's content, or directly respond to gallery content, the GAP community cannot truly achieve the "community building" celebrated in Web 2.0 discourse. In fact, many of the functionalities and qualities Web 2.0 is largely known for are absent in the GAP interface. (Bayer 2014: 74)

She contrasts this to the narrative that is effectively promoted by the corporation – that of openness, possibilities and seamless convergence. She adds that

> GAP might represent a movement toward the democratization of art

collections. To use the term "democratization" to suggest an escape from traditional gallery control is misleading: both systems exert restrictions of some kind. In the case of GAP, the user cannot partake in the potential empowering or "democratizing" effects without entering into a relationship with Google, the business. (Bayer 2014: 75f)

The critique against the power and influence of Google is, according to one informant from Google Norway, based on a misunderstanding, as he claims as some people feel that since Google is a large American company that makes money on some of their many enterprises there must be a capitalist ulterior motive to everything that they do. He simply does not understand the resistance to the company's invitations, and describes how the National Library of Norway turned down an invitation to collaborate with Google on digitizing their collections. According to him, there are no ulterior motives for Google in such projects, and says that one of the basic ideas of the company is to make the world a better place. The mottos for Google and its holding company Alphabet are, respectively, "Don't be evil" and "Do the right thing".

A specific challenge for the Google Art Project has been the potential obstacles related to the legal issues of copyright and ownership (see Papakonstantinou and de Hert 2012). To avoid a similar lawsuit to the one that was filed by the American Authors' Guild against Google Book Project in 2005, GAP has introduced the practice of blurring out artworks in its Street View section. This means that when a user takes a virtual tour of the museum halls, several of the artworks on the walls of the museum will appear as blurry rectangles. Although it is unclear whether the same agreement has been made between Google and the participating museums (ibid.), a general distinction seems to have been made between the Street View images that are generated by Google and the images of the actual artwork. Google has legal ownership to the former, while the museums have the ownership of the latter.

How do the Norwegian museums describe the relation to and collaboration with the large international company that Google quite evidently is?[11] The Munch Museum and the National Museum of Art began to work with Google and GAP in 2012, with the Munch Museum being the first and only Norwegian museum that took part in the international launching of the platform in Paris in April 2012. The reported intention of the Munch Museum was to make the museum, Munch and his art more widely accessible. The marketing and communications director admits that there has been some internal discussion as to whether it was a good idea to collaborate with Google, but they decided that it was so they could increase knowledge and awareness of the museum. The interviewee from the museum says that they have no direct information on the actual impact of the collaboration

with Google, e.g. on the number of visitors to the museum. She says that GAP is relevant to but not very important for the (digital) work they do, and that she sees GAP as a channel for directing web traffic to their own webpages. There has also been substantial development in the availability of digitizing technology. Now, the technological solutions that Google could offer in 2012 are not as difficult to obtain as they were back then.

The interviewee from the National Museum of Art makes a similar point. He maintains that the initial interest in cooperating with Google and GAP was partly sparked by interest in the technology that they could offer. The relevant technology is much more available today, he says, and adds that many institutions are not dependent on Google to be able to offer digital access to their collections. The collaboration between GAP and the National Museum resulted in the digitizing of around 200 artworks, one of which was photographed with the above-mentioned gigapixel technology. There is also a Street View documentation of the museum, but, as the museum representative says, the exhibitions have changed a lot since the initial filming, making the virtual tour a tour of how the museum exhibitions looked back in 2012. There was some initial concern from museum employees and the Norwegian Artists Copyright Society (BONO) as to whether the cooperation with Google was consistent with the established copyright. Eventually, however, the museum signed an agreement with Google in 2012. The agreement states that Google has all intellectual property rights to the so-called Museum View images (the virtual tour of the museum), while the museum has ownership of the high-resolution images. The gigapixel image is initially owned by Google, but on a set date ownership is transferred back to the museum, on certain conditions. There is also a clause that gives Google certain rights to use the digital images for their own purposes.

There is a rather small degree of overlap between DigitaltMuseum and GAP, with some interesting exceptions. The painting chosen for the gigapixel image in GAP from the National Museum of Art, *View from Stalheim* (see above), can also be viewed in DigitaltMuseum, as well as in the museum's own digital collection on their webpage. These are two different reproductions, and there are no links between the three digital versions of the painting. There is also an interesting difference in the administration of the property rights of the digital image. The DigitaltMuseum page has a standardised "Order image" button leading to a page to order high-resolution images of the artworks in the museum. The GAP page offers no possibilities to download or order images, while the digital collection on the National Museum page includes the possibility to download a high-resolution digital copy of the painting under a Creative Commons license (CC-BY-NC[12]).

The example illustrates how different digital communications of one and the same original may be rooted in different contexts and different ideas on the rela-

tions between the original and the copy. But what about the digital contra the analogue user? The museum interviewees from the two museums have comparable reflections on the relationship between the digital and the analogue museum visit; or, between browsing a digital copy or viewing the analogue original. They both say that they do not perceive the digital copies to be any serious competitors for the originals, but that they rather complement each other. The idea that digital access might threaten the number of actual museum visits was more common some years ago, they claim. The reproductions are understood as ways of enhancing the interest in and expectations of the originals. Nevertheless, they also acknowledge that there is a characteristic of the digital museum experience that qualitatively differs from the analogue, real one. One of them explains it in this way: "The digital museum is a way of telling a story that you're not able to tell in the museum itself. It creates new stories and connections and expands the rooms of the museum. This gives a certain intrinsic value to the digital experience".

Concluding remarks: Accessibility is the new authenticity

What kind of implications might be drawn from the cases described above? How do they serve to illustrate a digital cultural policy for museums? First, we might start by presupposing that there indeed is a close relation between what happens on the micro and structural levels. In other words, the changes on the museum-object level sparked by digitization – reproduction, de-territorialisation, de-materialization – have equivalents on an institutional *and* on a policy level. When the objects change, the functions of the institutions in charge of them change, the significance of different actors changes and so does also, directly or indirectly, the respective policies of the field. These changes are not unique to the museum sector, as all digitization of cultural products has changed and challenged the value of cultural artefacts. On a general level, the use of digital reproductions in museum collections, exemplified here by DigitaltMuseum and Google Art Project, seem to influence the authority of museums, create liquid forms of ownership, challenge authenticity, add new actors and roles to the field, and, consequently, also change the cultural policy of the sector. I will comment on each of these points in this final section.

A number of analysts have contended that digitization indeed limits, challenges or even deconstructs the authority that lies at the core of the collections and exhibitions of the museum. Ross Parry traces this to the introduction of digital collection management, which in turn has made it possible to access objects from a distance, create virtual collections and crowdsource curatorial input to the collections (Parry 2007). Another comment on the relation between digital tools and museum authority, from Sebastian Chan, Chief Experience Officer at the Austra-

lian Centre for the Moving Image, is that: "The [cultural heritage] sector has been slow to respond to the 'digital turn'. Despite more than 40 years of engagement with the 'database' and its impact on collection management and documentation practices, the sector has had difficulty in coming to terms with the shifting sands of its own 'authority'" (Chan 2015: xv). In her above-mentioned analysis of Google Art Project, Alanna Bayer writes that "[t]he World Wide Web provides a potential method for diluting the art institution's authority, aiding in the incorporation of both large and small voices into artistic conversation" (Bayer 2014: 82). There is no doubt that digitization, exemplified in the webpages of DigitaltMuseum and Google Art Project, in a principal way affects authority, simply because the control over and knowledge and ownership of the objects are dispersed through digital reproduction.

Ownership is a key issue here that is complicated by digitization. This issue is illustrated by the National Gallery of Denmark, which since 2008 has had a comprehensive programme for working digitally with their collections (Sanderhoff 2014a). In a long article, the director of the museum reflects on the principles and challenges related to the ambitions of becoming a digitally present and aware art museum (Sanderhoff 2014b). The museum was also part of the Google Art Project, and the article describes a number of potential objections to being included in the GAP portfolio, including the right of a private company to use digital images from the museum:

> Google wanted to reserve the right to use the images on all existing and future platforms. What caused an internal discussion was that the users of Google Art Project should not be allowed to download the images from the website freely, only to view them and interact with them on Google's own platform and with Google's tools. In other words, Google Art Project is a "fenced garden", preventing users from re-using images and data on their own terms.[13] (Sanderhoff 2014b: 69)

The solution chosen by the museum was to make the paintings and images included in GAP available as high-resolution downloads on their own webpage, and the director describes this as a "small hole in the fence around GAP". The overriding decision was to make as many digitized high-quality images as possible publicly available, using Creative Commons licences (CC-BY). This means that the museum allows free downloading, use, re-use, adaptation and even commercial use of the images, as long as their source is credited.

Questions of ownership have apparently always been important for museums as they have to deal with challenging cases of settling the rightful owners of objects in their collections. Now, digitization has added an extra layer of challenges

to this by making questions of copyright and legal ownership of digital material a core issue, as the example from the National Gallery of Denmark clearly illustrates. The solution chosen by museums like the National Gallery, the Dutch Rijksmuseum and others is to endorse a form of collective ownership, fronted by such statements as: "Our cultural heritage belongs to us all. (…) When cultural heritage is digital, open and shareable, it becomes common property (…) It becomes a part of us" (Sanderhoff 2014c: 14). In a way, the digital cultural objects create a liquid, displaced form of ownership. Indeed, the very possibility of ownership of digital content has been called into question, as exemplified by a recent book by the two lawyers Perzanowski and Schultz, *The end of ownership* (Perzanowski and Schultz 2016).

Authenticity is a core value for museums; a legitimating value. Although it might be considered a late nineteenth century or early twentieth century ideological invention, as contended by Lisa C. Roberts (1997), for example, there is no doubt that "[m]useums are in the authenticity business" (Burton and Scott 2003: 58). Put in another way, "[a]uthenticity is a fundamental measure of museum distinctiveness and serves as an important criterion for allocating a museum's scarce resources (Chhabra 2008: 430). But how about the *digital* museum? Is there such a thing as an authentic digital object? As we have seen argued by Clifford Lynch and David Levy, authenticity is a seemingly self-contradictory concept for digital objects. The very nature of being non-original and immaterial makes the idea of being authentic challenging. This basic fact has implications on different levels. It influences the ideas of value and legitimacy, regarding the objects *and* the actors managing them. Digitization replaces authenticity with accessibility as the primary value of the object. An analogue original is valuable because it is authentic, while a digital copy is valuable because it is accessible. Furthermore, the legitimacy of key actors follows in the same vein of thought. The traditional legitimacy of museums resides in their role as custodians of authenticity, while the legitimacy of for example Google (Art Project, Book Project and so on) in this context lies in the production of accessibility. With the increasing digital presence of cultural heritage institutions, they are also becoming producers, guarantors and guardians of access. In a digitized cultural environment, access becomes both a core value and a central commodity to be given, had, shared, bought or rented.

Digital reproduction and accessibility introduce new actors to the field and a new division of labour. Furthermore, the roles of the existing actors have changed, as has been analysed thoroughly with such concepts as digital democracy, web 2.0, web 3.0, prosumer, crowdsourcing, produsage and communities of practice (cf. Stuedahl 2011). The introduction of new actors, software developers, private companies and global media conglomerates, is complicating the established relations between public government, museum institutions and the general public. At

the same time, there seems to be a potential *epochalism* present in the continuing discussions on these matters. There are no evident signs of digital objects actually reducing the interest in analogue ones. The proposed new role of the public does not seem to change in any fundamental way the basic work of the average museum, and the knowledge of the crowds has to a very little degree influenced the actual curating and managing of collections. The role of an actor like Google might also be more important for a principal discussion than for actual practice. GAP has digitized around 200 artworks from the collections of the National Museum's collections, while the museum itself has digitized around 35 000. The collection amounts in total to around 400 000 objects.

All in all, there seems to be a slightly exaggerated belief in and/or fear of digital democracy and digital industry. But they have not in any profound way affected and changed the principal cultural policy of the Arts Council Norway, for example, or the practical cultural policy of the museums themselves. What has changed, however, is the number and roles of actors, and the kinds of legitimacy, valuation and ownership that characterises the field of cultural heritage. This can lead us to conclude that in spite of revolutionary changes on a principal level, we still live in a not-so-brave and not-so-brand new digital museum world.

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Notes

1 My translation.
2 Following e.g. the perspectives of Hesmondhalgh 2006, Healy 2001 and Jenkins 2006.
3 For a critical view on this development, see Keen 2007.
4 Google Books had, originally, an explicit ambition to digitize (literally) all published books, approximated to around 130 million unique publications, within the current decade. Cf. http://booksearch.blogspot.no/2010/08/books-of-world-stand-up-and-be-counted.html. For an analysis of the consequences of electronic cultural policy, see Vaidhyanathan 2005.
5 URL: digitaltmuseum.no and digitaltmuseum.se.
6 Cf. http://digitaltmuseum.no/info/digitaltmuseum [accessed 28/10/16]. My translation.

7 Google Analytics is a free service from Google to analyse website visits and traffic. The numbers are provided by KulturIT.

8 https://blog.google/topics/arts-culture/from-self-portraits-to-street-art-1000/ [accessed 14/11/2016]

9 https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/about/partners/ [accessed 14/11/2016]

10 https://www.google.com/about/company/ [accessed 15/11/2016]

11 Just how large depends on the method of measurement. Judging by stock or market value, Alphabet, Google's parent company became the world's largest company in early 2016. Cf. https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2016/feb/01/how-alphabet-made-google-biggest-company-in-the-world [accessed 18/11/2016].

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13 Original in Danish. Translated by the author.

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The Art of Copying: Five Strategies for Transforming Originals in the Art Museum

By Hans Dam Christensen

Abstract

This article discusses copies within the field of art museums by way of mapping strategies for copy practices. This mapping leans heavily towards parts of the writings of Jacques Derrida (1930–2004). Against the backdrop of this theoretical premise, the article distinguishes five main strategies. Firstly, the copies which often are considered to be typical museum copies, characterize the strategy for the disseminating relation between original and copy, that is, reproductions, magnets, etc. This strategy implies how copy practices are closely integrated into museum practices in general. Secondly, the supplementing relation between original and copy will be introduced. This strategy frames, for example, artists' citations of other works and forgeries. Both show that copy practices often lead to new originals, in principle, *ad infinitum*. Thirdly, this leads to the strategy for the displacing relation between original and copy which encompasses, for example, artistic reworkings of other artists' originals and conservatorial restorations. This approach partly excludes the copy and partly displaces the original, while still, unavoidably, referring to the latter. In general, this strategy signifies the latent instability of the original. Fourthly, the strategy for the informational relation between original and copy will be discussed as it has a vital function in terms of talking about museum originals and copies. This is the strategy which grants the original artifacts their status as museum objects. An informational copy is just as unique as an original object of art, and at the same time, it defines the original and is itself defined by this opposition. Lastly, the strategy for the imagined relation between original and copy follows. This strategy is dependent upon several of the previous approaches, and, in addition, handles signs that exist without explicit originals, as the strategy covers copies referring to originals which have disappeared, been destroyed, not seen yet, etc.; that is, this strategy produces images of originals not least by way of the disseminating relation between original and copy from the first strategy.

Introduction

I

Postcards, magnets, posters, plaster casts, digital reproductions, autographic reproductions, photographic reproductions, "my museum" features on museum websites, selfies, *Google Art Project*, etc., all signify copy practices in the art museum. In a pell-mell, these terms imply a variety of physical objects, media, senders, receivers, ideas, social platforms, and so on; apparently, they whirl around without taxonomy.

In the following, this blurry notion of copy practices will be expanded further, as it, alongside the usual copies, will include, among others, forgeries, inscriptions in acquisition books, conservatorial restoration, and artistic remaking. The art museum field incorporates numerous copy practices.

Thus, this article aims at reflecting on copies within the – primarily – contemporary field of art museums. In order to outline some main strategies, this will be done predominantly by way of conceiving copy practices as more or less delimited strategies. Some of these strategies will be partly overlapping with practices in the overall art domain, as copy practices are also widespread here, as for example, from the magnet in the museum shop to the art history textbook to further the aspiring art student's application to the art academy. Hopefully, the strategies may also be relevant for museum fields beyond the art domain.

As the present article surfaces in the broader context of "theorizing copies", it is urgent to stress that the mapping of the strategies in question is not theoretically unbiased. On the contrary, it leans heavily towards thinking in the Derridean vein; that is, as it will become clear very soon, it paraphrases parts of the writings of the French philosopher, Jacques Derrida (1930–2004).

Admittedly, one might ask whether Derrida is a pertinent choice as a theoretical underpinning. A facile, but also misleading answer might be that Derrida – in discussing the dispute between the German philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) and the American art historian Meyer Schapiro (1904–1996) about the former's reference to a pair of shoes, painted by van Gogh, in the mid-1930s lectures known as *The Origin of the Work of Art* (published as *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerks* in 1950) – in fact touches upon the relations between the copy and its possible originals (Derrida 1987: 255-382). A more careful answer is that "Derrida" should be limited to early Derrida, in particular his *Of Grammatology* (*De la grammatologie*) from 1967. In this early stage of his critique of structuralist thinking, Derrida introduces various concepts that he employs in later works, e.g., "supplement", "the transcendental signified", "dissemination", and "difference".

It should be noted, however, that this is not a rigorous Derridean endeavor into museum practices of copying. In the present article, his thinking has been stimulating because it addresses "naturalized" oppositions, but my use of his ter-

minology is a pragmatic interpretation. This approach, hopefully, helps clarifying theoretical positions, rather than performing a strict analysis that walks a line into dissolution and paradoxes, the latter being awkward as the early Derrida launches a critical approach towards structuralist linguistics, not museum practices of copying.

Thus, it should be further noted that the article is not going to discuss or reflect on Derridean theory. Within the current context, there is no room for such an elaboration. However, the use of notions such as "copy", "original", "practices", etc., follows a Derridean manner. Concise definitions are deliberately avoided, typographical neologisms are introduced, and empirical evidence is unspecified and imbalanced. In other words, the following is not a meticulous empirical mapping of the practices of copying within the field of art museums. Nor is it, from a quite different approach, a matter of defining an "ontology" of copies in the philosophical sense, that is, a study of the nature of being or becoming copies.

Copy practices cannot be defined against the backdrop of essentialist definitions. On the contrary, a pragmatic generality is required in order to unfold a series of relevant points. As such, it is the relation between the copy and the original which is in focus, not whether the copy in question is a replica, a variant, a repetition, a reenactment, etc., or the "original" in question is a masterwork or bad work of art, a new or an old work of art, a painting, or a sculpture, etc. This pragmatic approach is a weakness as well as a strength – the former because the reader might launch counterexamples, the latter because, hopefully, the arguments along the way challenge established notions, discourses and practices in order to enlighten the use of copying within the art museum.

II

In order to vindicate the use of Derrida, it should be noted that in terms of his critique of oppositions in structuralist linguistics, the early Derrida argues, in a simplified manner, that Western thinking considers writing (in French: *écriture*) as merely a derivative form of speech (*langue*). For example, he states: "The system of language associated with phonetic-alphabetic writing is that within which logocentric metaphysics, determining the sense of being as presence, has been produced" (Derrida 1997: 43). In other words, writing is conceived as a "fall" from the "full presence" of speech, an argument that Derrida unfolds in a lengthy discussion of Ferdinand de Saussure's chapter on "Représentation de la langue par l'écriture" in *Cours de linguistique générale* (1916).

Ignoring Derrida's otherwise pertinent arguments about Saussure's notion of the sign, the point is that, for Saussure, speech and writing are two distinct systems of signs, but the second (phonetic writing) exists for the sole purpose of representing the first (Derrida 1967: 46ff). Analyzing this relationship, Derrida sug-

gests that written symbols are legitimate signifiers on their own – that they should not be considered as secondary or derivative relative to oral speech, in particular because speech cannot exist without writing or, rather, arch-writing. For example, in clarifying his argument, he quotes the German polymath and philosopher Leibniz (1646–1716):

> Speech is to give the sign of one's thought with an articulated voice. Writing is to do it with permanent characters on paper. The latter need not be referred back to the voice, as is obvious from the characters of the Chinese script. (Derrida 1997: 80)

Later on, Derrida notices that:

> … we have known for a long time that largely non-phonetic scripts like Chinese or Japanese included phonetic elements very early. They remained structurally dominated by the ideogram or algebra and we thus have the testimony of a powerful movement of civilization developing outside of all logocentrism. Writing did not reduce the voice to itself, it incorporated it into a system … (Derrida 1997: 90)

If one should simplify Derrida's position, it is impossible to make the distinction between speech and writing as writing, or arch-writing, is closely related to the idea of constituting language; pure speech, directly from the mind, is phonocentrism (Derrida 1967: 44–45).

However, Derrida does not believe it is possible to escape from operating with the opposition speech-writing. Instead, he calls for a new domain of "grammatology" that would relate to questions in new ways (Derrida 1967: 74).

III

At the general level, the mapping of strategies, accompanied by the above mentioned Derridean approach, has resulted in five main approaches: "The disseminated original/copy", "The supplementary original-copy", "The displaced originalcopy", "The informational originalcopy", and "The imaginary original-copy" [see Figure 1]. As the labels indicate, Derridean terminology and thinking partly supports this mapping in at least two ways. As mentioned, dissemination, supplement and displacement are important notions in the early Derrida's writings. Moreover, although the use (and non-use) of typographical signs (the slash and the hyphen) specifically refers to W.J.T. Mitchell's variants of his notion of "imagetext" (Mitchell, 1994: 89), the use is also an "unspoken" reference to Derrida as the typographical conventions primarily are "writing" and not "speech". In this

case, the slash designates the relation of "original/copy" as a gap, a rupture which constantly is enlarging, the non-use of typographical sign ("originalcopy") designates composite, joint combinations of originals and copies, while the hyphen in original-copy designates joint relations where the original is missing, absent, etc., but the copy is depending on the now imaginary existence of the former.
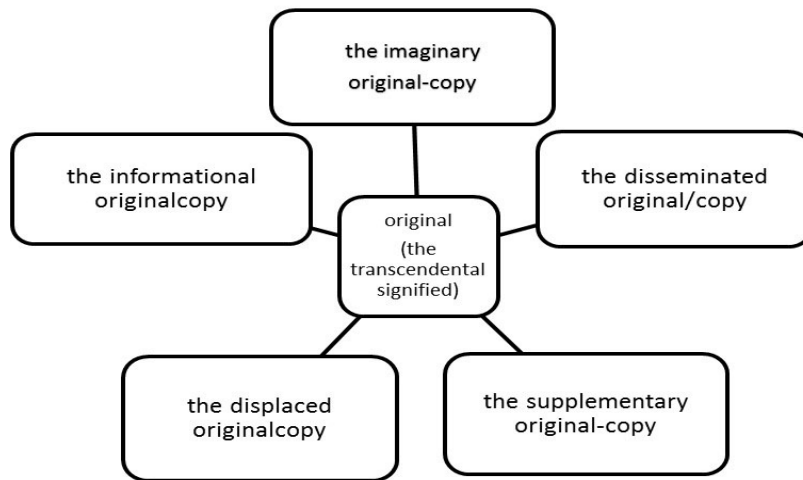

Figure 1

However, the use of theory in the following is more complicated than this. For example, one could readily anticipate that the presence of the hub category "original" in the figure of the main strategies – meaning, obviously, the original work of art – implicitly promotes concepts like "authenticity", "uniqueness", "aura", "cult value", etc. Moreover, this figure apparently reproduces the dichotomy between originals and copies, although the above-mentioned typographical variants are meant as symbols of the relation between the two. Therefore, the bracketed "the transcendental signified" follows "original". A clarification is needed:

The hub category of the "original" should rather be considered as "a transcendental signified", a translation of Derrida's *signifié transcendental* (Derrida 1967: 33ff). In other words, searching or referring back to an "original", the origin of origins, might be deceptive as the status of the original, an external point of reference upon which copies are whirling around (and to which the discursive practices constantly refer back), might be overemphasized or be misleading in the signifying practices.

The "original" does not provide the ultimate meaning as "the origin of origins" (Derrida 1967: 90), nor is it centered in the process of copy making – simultaneously decentering all copies. This is not so, because the original object is not a

unifying element in the signifying process. After the first copy is made, there is only difference (Derrida 1967: 38). In another place, Derrida states with the support of the American semiotician, C.S. Pierce (1839–1914): "From the moment that there is meaning there are nothing but signs. *We think only in signs*" (Derrida 1997: 48). Accordingly, every copy has in principle an infinite number of possible interpretations without an assumed one signified meaning. In this deconstructivist strain, everything centered has to be decentered.

As a parallel, the theoretical argument in the present article asserts that one cannot ignore the opposition of original and copy, but copies should not be considered as secondary or derivative to originals. Instead of highlighting that there are no copies without originals, one should be painstakingly aware that upon encountering a copy, the original is seldom present. Sometimes we even do not know we are encountering a copy, and not an original. Even if we know about the relationship between the original and the copy, the last-mentioned is a part of discourses that the original does not necessarily take part in. In addition, as several studies show, the concepts of copy and original are fluid and dynamic (see, for example, Boon 2013).

Thus, the copy might refer "back" to the original, but it might just as well, and at the same time, refer to other signifying practices and meanings, which are more important in the given context. The point is that copies are "legitimate signifiers" on their own. They take part in signifying systems that also endow the originals with new meaning, e.g., granting the original a "museum status" (we will come back to this pivotal point when discussing "the informational originalcopy"). Moreover, knowledge about the original might come from knowledge of the copy, as for example, when the art history student is gaining his or her knowledge of the traditional art history corpus. This is primarily done by way of reproductions in books, not by encountering originals positioned in museums and churches all around the Western world; in discourse, there is no origin of origins.

IV

Against the backdrop of these theoretical premises, the following sections distinguish the five main strategies; the Derridean predispositions will be further elaborated underway. Firstly, the copies which often are considered to be typical museum copies, characterize the strategy for disseminating the original/copy, that is, reproductions, magnets, etc. This strategy will be thoroughly presented as it implies how copying practices are closely integrated into museum practices in general. Secondly, partly derived from this approach, the strategy for the supplementary original-copy will be introduced. This strategy frames, for example, artists' citations of other works and forgeries. Both show that copying practices often lead to new originals, in principle, *ad infinitum*. Thirdly, this leads to the

in-between strategy for the displaced originalcopy which encompasses, for example, artistic reworkings of other artists' originals and conservatorial restorations. This approach partly excludes the copy and partly displaces the original, while still, unavoidably, referring to the latter. In general, this strategy signifies the latent indefiniteness and instability of the original. Fourthly, the strategy for the informational originalcopy will be discussed at length as it has a vital function in terms of talking about museum originals and copies. This is the strategy which, as mentioned previously, grants the original objects their status as museum objects. An informational originalcopy is just as unique as an original object of art, and at the same time, it defines the original and is itself defined by this opposition. Lastly, the strategy for the imaginary original-copy follows. This strategy is, on the one hand, dependent upon several of the previous strategies, and, on the other hand, handles signs that now exist without explicit originals, as the approach covers copies primarily referring to originals which have disappeared, been destroyed, not seen yet, etc.; that is, this strategy produces images of originals not least by way of the disseminated original/copy from the first strategy, but the gap is not enlarging as the original has disappeared, been destroyed, etc.

The five strategies will show that art museums are unavoidably involved in copy practices, which have an impact on the understanding of their collections of original objects. In numerous coincidences, the copies surface in discourses and practices as "legitimate signifiers" of their own without the company of originals, but nevertheless with an effect upon the perception of these originals.

The strategy for the disseminated original/copy

I

Broadly speaking, the term "the disseminated original/copy" signifies reproductions which the museum, as the holder of the "the transcendental signified", in one way or another distributes. This strategy is easily recognized as covering museum copies. From a theoretical point of view, "dissemination" is also the title of one of Derrida's books (*La dissémination*, 1972), a collection of various texts. The last section of this book, which repeats the main title, in particular is considered as partly operating at the very limits of intelligibility. Suffice it to say that "dissemination" signifies the:

> … impossible return to the rejoined, readjusted unity of meaning, the impeded march of any such reflection. But is dissemination then the loss of that kind of truth, the negative prohibition of all access to such a signified? Far from presupposing that a virgin substance thus precedes or oversees it, dispersing or withholding itself in a negative second mo-

ment, dissemination affirms the always already divided generation of meaning. (Derrida 1981: 268)

Derrida hints at the Latin roots of "dissemination", that is, the scattering of seeds/semen or transport of seeds away from the parent plant (the origin) or male organ. Thus, "dissemination" refers to the idea of scattering and spreading, but also impregnating. In this sense, "dissemination" suggests manifold meanings which, once underway, run out of control. As such, "dissemination" also has a purposely sexual connotation. It suggests a free play which is joyous, unstable and "excessive". Paraphrasing Derrida, "copies" also refers to the "surplus" or excess of meaning which is inherent in the copy making.

II

Upon closer inspection, a tentative diachronic approach might structure this strategy for disseminating the original/copy. Early ways of multiplying artworks were plaster casts and prints. In particular, European art academies and 19th-century museums applied these technologies for learning purposes. For a very long time, printmaking was also the predominant means of distributing masterpieces to a general audience, and even though photography surpassed printmaking during the second half of the 19th century, the importance of the latter should not be underestimated (see e.g. Ivins 1982; Bann 2001). By way of 3D print, plaster casts (in their modernized form) might have a comeback in the near future.

In developing art history as a scientific discipline, photographic collections of artworks clearly have prevailed. In the early days of photography, the developing of both the commercial connoisseur practice and the scientific art history became dependent upon photographic reproductions. In general, gaining visual knowledge of the corpus of the history of art required photographic collections, cf. the proposal for a cooperative *Negativzentrale* at the International Congress of Art Historians in Darmstadt in 1907 which was supposed to make the ordering of photographic prints easier and more scientific feasible. (Dam Christensen 2010).

Later on, for example, André Malraux' *musée imaginaire* and UNESCO's projects on color reproductions of masterworks, as well as travelling exhibitions in the period 1949–81 which pursued Malraux's ideas of a museum without walls in order to popularize art and by this means to elevate democracy and human values, are worth mentioning (Håkansson 2007).

Today, the multifaceted digital reproduction practices present in the museum shop demonstrate the commonness of photographic reproductions. This practice, today involving postcards, magnets and posters, encompasses, for example, commercial reproductions, affective reproductions (memorabilia) and didactic reproductions in museum catalogues, among others.

In addition, due to the development of technological means, visitors are increasingly distributing their own reproductions via social media platforms such as Flickr, Instagram, YouTube, etc. The museums themselves also distribute parts of their collections on these platforms. In other words, museums can meet potential audiences in social spaces created by others, including commercial services (Bearman and Trant 2009). In fact, these copy practices more or less have replaced features such as "my museum", where the virtual user could enter the museum website and collect his/her own collection of digital reproductions within the virtual space of the museum in question guided and lured by slogans such as "Make and keep your own art collection".

When museums and visitors take their own shots of museum objects and upload them to social media platforms without copyright restrictions, this is in contrast with former days. This is so because Creative Common licenses are gaining influence in the museum world (Bearman and Trant 2009; Hylland in this journal). These licenses help to clarify the intellectual property status of, e.g., museum online collections in ways that apparently encourage reuse of their possessions. At least, it seems that a free commons model increases visits to online platforms. Moreover, Creative Common licenses might even be more profitable than business models in which museums require payments for access and reuse of reproductions – in particular because "… often managing revenue-generating rights-and-reproductions requests brings less income than the resources used to do the managing" (Edson and Cherry 2010).

III

An important branch of this strategy for disseminating the original/copy is the development of extended virtual museums via websites and social media platforms. For example, one can point to the early phase of virtual museums. In 2007, Dresden Gemäldegalerie's Alte Meister became accessible in the online 3D virtual world *Second Life*:

> Starting off with a classical approach towards museum communication, the Dresden Gallery shows a detailed reconstruction of the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister in the Sempergalerie at the Zwinger in Dresden, Germany. … Inside the Dresden Gallery, the reconstruction of the environment is continued as the paintings of the original gallery are shown at a position that corresponds to their placement in the real world gallery. Furthermore, the environment integrates the existing audio guide system, by mapping audio-tracks that were created for the real world exhibition to the virtual counterparts. (Wieneke 2010: 132)

According to its own information, the Dresden Gallery became the first museum visualized and accessible in *Second Life* (Rodriquez-Echavarria and Wieneke 2010). The project ended in 2011.

An even earlier layer in developing virtual museums is MUVA: Virtual Museum of the Arts, *El Pais*, first launched in 1997. Today, this still exists as a dynamic, interactive museum exhibiting works of modern and contemporary Uruguayan artists. Due to the socioeconomic situation of Uruguay in the early 1990s, the art historian Alicia Haber took the initiative to develop a purely virtual museum that has no counterpart in reality in terms of the museum institution. The virtual artworks are, however, existing in the real world. MUVA is located in a virtual building designed by architects, and the settings could be built at any time as the museum strongly endeavors to display the artworks in a virtual realm that strengthens the sensation of reality (Haber 2000).

Alongside these examples, the progress of *Google Art Project* has opened new ways for museums' dissemination of digital copies of artworks (see also Hylland in this issue). The almost seamless connection between *Google Street View* and the *Google Art Project* parallels a physical reality in a way in which artworks and buildings correspond to their placement in the real world gallery. This approach was anticipated in a former version in 2004 when the restoration of the main building of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam started. In the period 2004–2012, a 3D interactive panorama of the Philips Wing, where the museum displayed highlights of the so-called *Golden Age of Dutch Painting*, was accessible online and offered a unique opportunity to view all the highlights of the Golden Age in one place.[1]

IV

These various examples, which obviously are gathered without taking further account of systematic chronological transferences and evidence, underline the impression that art museums take part in new media practices in entrepreneurial ways. In the vein of a Derridean approach, one could argue that this strategy is defined by the pains of the museums to make copies in order to disseminate as much visibility as possible of the artworks in question; in general, museums constantly pursue new means of spreading reproductions of their holdings.

In the beginning, museums were in control of the copies due to copyright and methods of reproduction. As time passed, they more or less voluntarily and joyously have lost the control and increasingly permitted the scattered digital copies to make the origin of origin non-present. Historically speaking, there has been a dilemma surrounding copyright and dissemination, not least reinforced in the 1990s by museum websites with accessible digital reproductions that could be disseminated in an abundance of copies. Currently, the implementation of Creative Common licenses, however, seems to solve this limiting side of dissemination practices.

The strategy for the supplementary original-copy

I

In *De la grammatologie* (1967), Derrida discusses "supplement" by way of the Genevan philosopher and writer, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778). According to Derrida, the distinction between oppositions such as nature and culture, speech and writing, object and image features, is for Rousseau a matter of a hierarchical relationship between the double elements where the latter supplement the insufficiency of the former. However, this insufficiency of the former does not suggest an equal status with the latter. Instead, culture, writing, and image of representation play a subsidiary role to enhance the presence of nature, speech and object. That is, the supplement is instrumental to promote the natural and original "essence", although again, both, according to Derrida, define each other on an equal basis (Derrida 1967: 142).

In terms of this strategy which partly overlaps with the previous strategy, given that the visual references to the "original" are obvious, there are two or perhaps three particular interrelated features: first, this strategy requires deliberate human intervention in the production of each copy; that is, it requires artistic agency. One could argue that the making of plaster copies and prints from the previous strategy requires artistic skills as well, but the main difference is then and thereafter that this strategy for the supplementary original-copy typically avoids remediation. In disseminating reproductions, the museum typically remediates the original from, e.g., painting to photography. In making supplementary copies, one has to stick to the original media. Thirdly, the supplementary original-copy tends to produce new originals. The strategy includes both copies and new originals — in principle new originals *ad infinitum*.

II

In the field of art museums, this strategy for the supplementary original-copy frames the work of art citing another, if only in part, and following the iconographical scheme for a certain motif. In the French sense of the word *supplément* one can find a double meaning as it means both "an addition" and "a substitute". Thus, the copy potentially institutes both meanings. The mentioned variations are often considered original works of art in themselves, but they also add new meaning to the implied original.

The 19th-century art student who copies a work of art in order to learn the skills of the older master or an artist who sketches artworks in order to support his or her visual memory also contribute to this strategy. In each case, the original and copy are intertwined in the signifying processes, although the latter case might touch upon remediation, e.g., when J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851) in 1819 copied Claude Lorrain's (1600–1682) oil painting *Seaport with the Villa Medici*,

1637, in his sketchbook (Moorby 2011); it is, nevertheless, an original work of art.

In addition, artists can produce remakes (e.g., Andy Warhol's *Brillo Boxes*, Donald Judd's *Untitled Boxes*, Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain*, etc.) and variations of his/her own works (e.g., identical motifs rendered from slightly different angles or in slightly different compositions). In both cases, additions and substitutions are in play.

Historically speaking, one could further argue that from the outset this strategy is separated from the control of museums, but the shadowy side of the supplementary original-copy is, nevertheless, a severe threat to museum practices due to the risk of acquiring forgeries. In fact, this sort of supplement is akin to Derrida's supplement of supplements which endangers the hierarchical relationship between, for example, the abovementioned oppositions such as nature and culture, speech and writing. He also writes "…the supplement supplements. It adds only to replace" (Derrida 1997:145); that is, there is a "danger" of inverting or destabilizing the hierarchy of original and copy since the center is being decentered.

This, in particular, is the case with forgeries within the art world, which include two variants of the supplementary original-copy. The one suggests a smooth transition from the abovementioned art student repetition or replicas to forgery, that is, the copying of specific works of arts. The other might often be considered a deliberate fake as, for example, in the case of simulating an artist's style. This might be labelled a generic forgery in the present context.

On the one hand, it is vital for art museums to not end up acquiring forgeries because the phenomena of authenticity and aura still carry with them a certain idea of art. In addition, the failed acquisition displays the responsible curators' lack of competence. On the other hand, the copy in question might be confused with either a specific original or a generic, imaginary, original. In both cases, the copy is nevertheless a new original, although untouched by the hand of the "original" artist. This field of tension destabilizes the opposition between original and copy. The copy is framed by the original (or the imaginary idea of an original), but cannot be detached from it as the original reinforces its status and meaning by way of the copy in question. The specific and generic fakes might even be perceived as origins of origins.

The strategy for the displaced originalcopy

I

This in-between strategy puts copies in parenthesis. This is the case because the original is still present, but not as *the* original. Instead, it has become unstable and transient as, for example, it has become part of a *new* original which, nevertheless, unavoidably refers to the bygone, or displaced, original, which now might only

exist in copied versions of the transcendental signified. One could perhaps also argue that this is a double original without copies where the original is the same without being the same.

Thus, in the context of Derrida, it is tempting to launch his notions of "difference" and "différance", a word that he coins himself playing on the double meaning of "to defer" and "to differ" of the French word *différer*. In his essay "Différance" (1968), Derrida recaps the subverting of the hierarchical opposition between speech and writing as following:

> Now, in point of fact, it happens that this graphic difference (the *a* instead of the *e*), this marked difference between two apparently vocalic notations, between vowels, remains purely graphic: it is written or read, but is not heard. It cannot be heard …. (Derrida 2004: 257)

The sound is the same when pronounced, but when written it is a matter of at least two words combining partly overlapping, partly with different meanings. Thus, the *a* is an intentional misspelling that can only be seen and, further, be sensed visually before it intelligibly makes meaning.

Among other things, the point is that meanings of words and signs can only become clear from differences from similar words; that is, there is never a moment when meaning is complete in itself. Meaning is always "deferred" through the infinite chain of signifiers.

In the current context, this sameness without being the same summarizes the objects in this strategy. Moreover, the strategy also plays on the Lacanian understanding of "displacement". The word is derived from Freud's *Verschiebung*, a defense mechanism whereby the unconsciousness replaces desires, which are felt to be dangerous or undesirable, with new objects. In 1957, the French psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan (1901–1981), linked displacement to the poetic function of metonymy, in which an object or idea is not addressed by its own name, but the name of something from which the part is taken for the whole (Lacan 2006: 421). In other words, the new object is the same without being the same.

II

Figuratively speaking, displacement is the case when a person makes an artistic intervention towards an existing work of art. The American artist Robert Rauschenberg's (1925–2008) *Erased de Kooning Drawing* (1953), today in the collection of San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, is probably the best known work of art within this genre. Although the drawing initially was not a museum piece, but was donated to Rauschenberg by the famous older artist Willem de Kooning (1904–1997), Rauschenberg's idea was to "purge" himself of the admired de Koo-

ning's teaching. Apparently, he spent four weeks erasing the senior artist's drawing (Scott 2013). A newer famous example of this practice is the British artist brothers Jake and Dinos Chapman's reworking of thirteen Adolf Hitler water drawings which they brought themselves. The remake drawings were displayed as *If Hitler Had Been a Hippy How Happy Would We Be* in 2008 (Chapman 2008) and imply a collective preconception of the historical Hitler.

In both cases, one could argue that the involved artworks were not part of museum collections to begin with. However, numerous cases demonstrate that museum pieces also belong to this strategy. In her article, "Iconoclasm as Art: Creative Gestures and Criminal Acts Inside Museums and Galleries" (2013), Helen E. Scott mentions a series of intentional artistic acts of vandalism against museum pieces: e.g., Picasso's *Guernica*, Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain* (even twice by the same artist) and Malevich's *Suprematism 1920–1927 (White Cross on Grey)*. Of course, it might be a matter of degrees whether an act is an artistic performance or explicit vandalism:

> Every so often an individual will attack a work on display and insist that this action constitutes a piece of conceptual or performance art. The phenomenon has blurred the boundaries between criminality and creativity, and proved remarkably difficult for museums and galleries to suppress…. (Scott 2013: 78)

This is so, because:

> On the one hand, it seems hypocritical for museums to reject the legitimacy of iconoclastic gestures that are the progeny of theories and formal experiments celebrated as milestones in the history of modern art. Yet, on the other hand, if museums recognize such assaults as innovative art, they undermine their custodial responsibilities and risk the future safety of collections. (Scott 2013: 82)

Often conservatorial practices "restore" the artwork in question back to its "original" state. Several of these restoration practices are also included in this strategy as it includes originals that either vandalism without artistic intentionality or the ravages of time have changed. In these cases, conservatorial restoration normally takes place. When the ravages of time bring about the restoration, this explicitly displaces the origin of origins as the restoration wants it to be present now as it is/was when it became present as a museum piece for the first time, ignoring the decay of time which in fact would recognize the original's being. Thus, restoration produces a tension of sameness without being the same. When vandalism or

the intentional damage of art without artistic intention, which has a long history within the art world (Gamboni 1997), cause restoration, the original is also displaced. This is so both as a disregarding of the present state of the (wounded) original, as in the previous case, and in addition, of the prior attack on the original.

The Lacanian associations are perhaps also strengthened by the fact that artworks have a certain aura as "originals" that attract potential vandals. Some very celebrated works of art, such as Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* (1503–06) and Rembrandt's *Night Watch* (1640–42) have been deliberately damaged several times. As museum pieces, the attraction might even be amplified on account of their placement in regulated museum spaces which ought to uphold their status as everlasting originals.

Thus, the actions in this strategy displace the originals while unavoidably referring to them at the same time, for example by way of traces in the new original, existing reproductions, memory, etc. This tension makes us acutely aware of the fluidity and instability of the originals, even, or in particular, when it comes to museum pieces.

The strategy for the informational originalcopy

I

Following along the lines of Derrida, the informational originalcopy lingers in several of the previous approaches. As will become clear, the informational originalcopy easily supplements the supplement as it inverts the hierarchical opposition between original and copy; it is the same without being the same and so on. In addition, the informational copy grants vital meaning to the original.

This strategy for the informational originalcopy is important because it challenges the hierarchical opposition between "original" and "copy" in museum practices; that is, there is again a "danger" of inverting the hierarchical opposition between "original" and "copy". In any case, this strategy indicates a systematic logic which clearly illustrates the mutual interdependence between original and copy.

As with the strategy for the disseminated original/copy, this approach might also be conceived as partly following a diachronic structure with distinct phases, however, not by erasing earlier phases. It is more like a palimpsest, on which practices have changed over time, but still show evidence of previous layers.

Upon closer inspection, the motivation for outlining "the informational originalcopy" as an autonomous strategy is caused by the fact that from the moment a new acquisition enters the museum, experts examine it and accumulate information to be recorded according to a variety of ordering operations. In fact, the object is granted its specific meaning as a museum artifact by way of its informational twin, the unique inventory number in the physical or virtual ledger, otherwise,

it would just be an ordinary object. The unique code parallels and simultaneously represents the work of art in question as without this codification, the work of art is not a museum original. A copy of this code might even be inscribed, stamped or written on the reverse side of the object, invisible to the general audience.

In the "ledger", signifiers (partly as metadata) helping the identification of the signified accompany the code: for example, information about media, size, motif/theme, provenance, visual representations, literature referring to the object in question, and, not least, a reference to its current location in the physical world.

Thus, this informational twin presupposes an "original" (an origin of origins), but the "original" is "musealized" by way of its informational shadow. Moreover, this twin might even survive its physical counterpart if something happens to the original object.

II

Broadly speaking, the first layer of the "informational originalcopy" was characterized by the traditional physical acquisition register, ledger, inventory, catalogue, protocol, list of collection items and the like. In this sense, the items of a collection are listed according to an ordering system which produces the informational orignalcopy.

In the current context, modes of doing the formative registering, e.g., according to various epistemes (cf. Foucault 1967), do not matter. Suffice it to say that one way of exemplifying the inventory is to refer to a common way of registering new items in a collection, as for example:

> …, if Mr. Smith donated three paintings, all given on a particular day in 2009, and it is the fifth gift the museum has received from all its donors that year, the number for the gift would be 2009.5. Numbers are assigned within that gift, to each individual object. Painting one will be designated as 2009.5.1, painting two will be 2009.5.2 and painting three will be 2009.5.3. (Neilson 2009: 3742)

Another example might be the code NN-12/2016, meaning acquired item no. 12 in the year of 2016 in the collection NN. Again, the object will perhaps be briefly described in terms of registration date, object name and description (including size and media), acquisition method (e.g., donor, trader, and price), reproduction numbers, location, etc.

Necessarily, every object is assigned this unique and permanent identification number which distinguishes it from all other items held in the collection. Over time, this registration documents (and constitutes a "copy" of) the entire collec-

tion.

Since the 1990s, digital register practices increasingly supplement or replace the acquisition book. In days past, the book was almost as important as the objects themselves as this is/was the sum of knowledge and the most important primary reference of the collection. It might even have been stored in the safe repositories which also held the most precious and valued artworks of the collection and, not least, the former acquisition books.

Tentatively, a distinction might be drawn between "acquisition book" and "museum catalogue". This is, however, a random division. In practice, there is a smooth transition from the register to the catalogue. "Catalogue" derives from the Greek *katalogos* meaning, among other things, "list" and "register". In this context, the distinction suggests a distinction between the register as part of the internal apparatus and the printed catalogues presenting information and knowledge to the visitors.

Obviously, collection registers existed before the 19th-century museum (in churches, private collections, etc.). However, ideas about the printed art museum catalogue arose towards the end of this century, most likely in order to systematize the collections and disseminate knowledge. From a critical point of view, it was a matter of establishing an order, the history of art, at the same time as making this system, promoted as a "universal" system, in the process.

This is so because even though the basic principles for the scientific collection catalogue seem obvious today, it was once a matter of "naturalizing" a system. For example, at the first congress for art historians in Vienna, 1873, the principles were subject to negotiation (*Erster Kunstwissenschaftlicher Congress in Wien* 1874: 445–455). A draft for cataloguing painting collections was presented by a speaker. He stressed the importance of the catalogue by stating that this was one of "der wichtigsten Verplichtungen" for the museum. After proceedings and voting, the principles were determined.

Upon a closer look, it appears that the debates were at times very meticulous concerning, for example, the physical format of the catalogue among other things, and specifying that it should be moderate-sized with blank end pages as the visitor might take his own notes during the exhibition walk. Moreover, the catalogue should be sold at a modest price:

> It must be an honorable duty of the experts concerned to ensure that the catalog is available in the best form. However, because the catalog is a teaching tool one has to supply the catalog as cheaply as the production costs make possible. (*Erster Kunstwissenschaftlicher Congress in Wien*, 1874: 459)

Otherwise, the basic codification resembles that of modern catalogues.

III

Although the preliminary steps were taken long before, the phenomenon of digital databases *in* the museum became visible during the 1990s and exemplifies, broadly speaking, the next layer of the informational originalcopy. (cf. e.g. Parry 2007; Bearman and Trant 2009). At this time large museums had to make important decisions in terms of which software to use in developing internal databases, not least in order to make retroconversions of old registers, exchange updated information with other museums, and foresee future migrations.

These databases became online accessible towards the new millennium which signals the third layer of informational copies; for example, the American Museum of Natural History made its collection catalogue searchable on the Web as early as 1996. However, museum collection catalogues were difficult for non-specialists to interpret as these text databases often only included rudimentary data without any images. Thus, non-specialist seldom appreciated this prominent online access (Bearman and Trant 2009).

Concurrently, museum organizations, cultural agencies and the like negotiated and developed national and international principles for software protocols, etc. Among other things, centralized databases were developed.[2]

This development was followed by a fourth layer in which museum websites and digital platforms within the museum increasingly allow users to become producers of content and to interact and collaborate with other users in a social media dialogue. Thus, the traditional role of the museum expert is weakened, and in terms of informational shadows (here, social metadata), the users contribute to meaning making by way of, for example, crowdsourcing, tagging, etc.

As many museum collections contain huge numbers of items not indexed, inadequately indexed or indexed using older methods that need to be converted into new modes, professionals will never be able to secure metadata. Therefore, users are involved in these processes. In fact, this involvement can be tracked back to the 1990s. The Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, for example, had early success with volunteer keywording of its Thinker database which was launched in 1997. As social tagging increased in the new millennium, studies of the potential for folksonomy came in focus (Bearman and Trant 2009). In addition, *the steve.museum. The Museum Social Tagging Project* (2006–2010), headed by the Indianapolis Museum of Art, examined the use of social tagging for art museums at an early stage in the emergence of crowdsourcing (Trant 2006).

The question of user motivation, however, has been a recurrent issue. Almost simultaneously with the *steve.museum* project, Ahn and Dabbish introdu-

ced labeling images with a computer game in 2004 (Ahn and Dabbish 2004). This extra sensory perception model became a forerunner for the *Google Image Labeler* (2006–2011), a gamification with the overall purpose of improving Google's image search by way of user-generated metadata (Jafarinaimi 2012).

This, and similar approaches, have been implemented in a variety of museum projects, but the duration seems in each case to be limited. Apparently, museums and other image base providers do not always have the resources to maintain interest in tagging by way of community building and/or the development of tagging is taking a different route. (Bernstein, 2014; Simon, 2014). These obstacles are important to overcome if tagging is to ease the burden of professionals in terms of informational copies.[3]

From an analytical point of view, this potential use of crowdsourcing has a dimension which is in contrast to the early registration. Although the preliminary listing still takes place more or less in front of the object which is to be granted museum status, the crowdsourcing does not need to take place in the same way. On the contrary, most collective projects are implemented by way of internet participation; that is, each user accesses the activities via digital copies.

However, the main point of this strategy which makes it particularly important is that the code of the informational twin is closely related to the museum original as it grants the latter its privileged museum status. In the process, the informational code itself becomes unique as each object in principle has its own code. As mentioned in the introductory remarks, this code might even be copied onto the original artifact.

The strategy for the imaginary original-copy

I

The strategy for the imaginary original-copy comes last. Although the title might have poetic connotations, it is, in fact, on the one hand, dependent upon some of the previous categories, and, on the other hand, a strategy that might exist without originals as it includes originals that have disappeared, been destroyed, not yet seen by the art lover, etc. Thus, the imaginary original-copy heavily depends on its copies.

Some examples might illustrate the latter. Due to the abundance of disseminated copies, most artworks are encountered for the first time by way of reproductions. In the previous discussion, the study of art history has been underlined as depending heavily on these copies. The numerous copies might even cause people to doubt whether they have seen the original in question *in situ*. The copies could have an impact on the beholder; that is, they might displace the recollection of the specific encounter with a work of art, and furthermore, they can impact the future

encounter with a yet unknown work of art (à la "isn't it bigger?"). In each case, the mind of the beholder in question produces the imaginary original-copy.

II

In terms of destroyed and disappeared artworks, disseminated reproductions help keep the original alive in the memory. Thus, an imaginary copy might be a demolished museum piece, such as Gustave Courbet's *Les Casseurs de Pierres* (1848–50) which was destroyed by the British bombing of Dresden during Second World War. Nevertheless, most art historians can produce an imaginary copy supported by old photographic reproductions (some even with blurred and faint colors) from before the demolition.

Disappeared originals imply stolen museum pieces or objects that are being hidden from the public domain, although still present in the acquisition books, and still visible in catalogues, etc. They might even be implicitly present in the museum display, e.g., the four empty frames at Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, since 1990, where thirteen artworks were stolen. Due to the bequeath of the former owner nothing must be changed in the display, although the museum by way of *Google Art Project* offers a guided tour that compares the present display with former photographs of the display and specific photos of the thirteen stolen works of art.[4]

Other famous examples are: Monet's *Impression, Solei Levant* (1872), absent from the Musée Marmottan, Paris for years, but which has now been returned; *Mona Lisa*'s disappearance from the Louvre 1911–1913; and the copy of Goya's Portrait of the *Duke of Wellington* (1812–14) which appeared in *James Bond's Dr. No* (1962), suggesting that Bonds' rival had stolen the original after its loss the year before. This piece is still hidden from the public gaze.

The necessities of several of the previous strategies are visible not only in the use of disseminating the original/copy, but also in the informational originalcopy which granted the original its museum status and thus from the beginning, incorporated the original in the copying practices of the museum. Last, the imaginary original-copy is also a supplement to the original, even a supplement that supplements, because it might be the only way the origin of origins is kept alive; in other words, as mentioned, the imaginary original is subjugated to its copies.

Conclusion

It is important to ask again whether Derrida has been an appropriate choice as a theoretical approach for the present article. As has been seen, definitions of notions such as "copy", "original", etc., have been implicit, the use (and non-use) of hyphens and slashes might have been annoying and the use of empirical cases has

been, more or less, random. This vagueness is partly akin to Derrida's own application of various concepts. In addition, the use of Derrida's terminology above was addressed as a pragmatic interpretation, which, hopefully, could help to clarify or make distinctions between the allegedly copious (!) copy practices within the art museum field in order to map them.

In addition, the use of Derrida was encouraged in particular by his critique of "naturalized" opposition which in this case paralleled the opposition between original and copy. Thus, by way of the Derridean motivation, the *relationship* between the two came to be emphasized.

As a result, this article maps out five approaches for copy practices. The first strategy for disseminating the original/copy indicates that museums in general are very keen on copying and in applying new technologies and exploiting legal opportunities in order to make the best use of dissemination practices. The next strategy for the supplementary original-copy demonstrates how a variety of copy practices produces new originals which might even become a threat to the museum. The third strategy for displacing the originalcopy eliminates the copy and the origin of origins showing the potential fluidity and instability of the original. The fourth strategy for the informational orignalcopy underlines the deep interdependence of originals and copies, but also confirms how the informational twin or shadow, the unique code in the "ledger", made the original a museum artifact. The fifth and last strategy for the imaginary original-copy implies how originals might be totally dependent upon their copies, in particular due to disseminated copies from the first strategy.

These five strategies clearly show that art museums are deeply involved in copy practices which have an impact on the understanding of their collections of original artifacts. In an abundance of situations, the copies take part in discourses and practices as "legitimate signifiers" of their own without the presence of originals, but nevertheless with an effect upon the perception of the originals.

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Notes

[1] See http://www.euromuse.net/en/museums/museum/view-m/rijksmuseum-amsterdam/content/en/zid/142/

[2] For example, in the same period every state-approved and state-owned museum in Denmark was requested to provide relevant collection information to the Agency of Cultural Heritage which then developed its own software and which, as technology improved, functioned as a portal to each museum database. In Denmark this database for art museums is Kunst Index Danmark, a centralized "offline" database from 1984 that became online accessible in 1996.

[3] In contrast, an apparently successful, ongoing project is the German ARTigo which is continuing the gamification of tagging in order to motivate users, see http://www.artigo.org/.

[4] See https://gardnermuseum.culturalspot.org/exhibit/gAIyZKoNat4oLA?position=0%3A0.

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