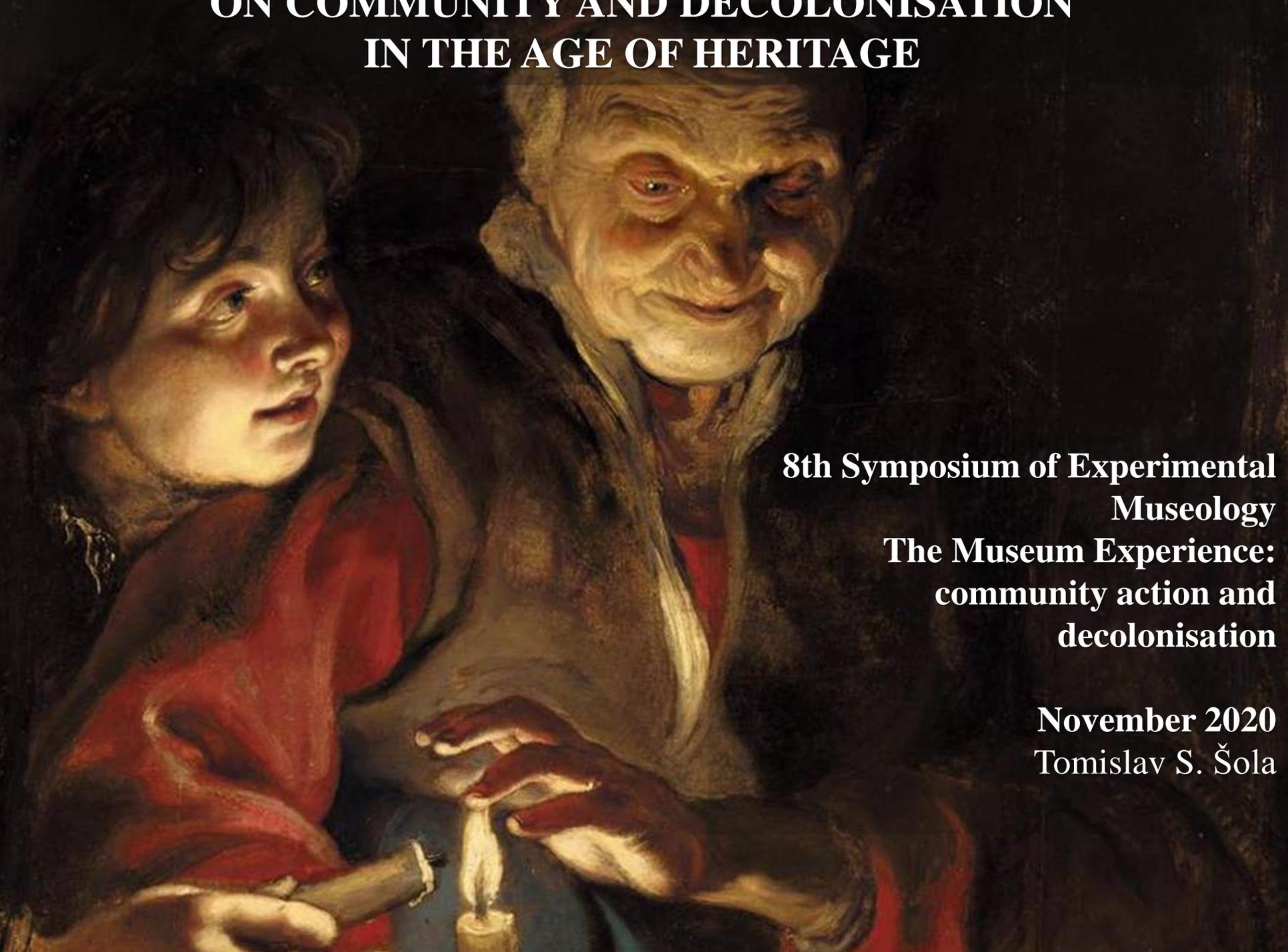


ON COMMUNITY AND DECOLONISATION IN THE AGE OF HERITAGE



**8th Symposium of Experimental
Museology
The Museum Experience:
community action and
decolonisation**

**November 2020
Tomislav S. Šola**

A bright sun is positioned in the upper center of the frame, shining through a blue sky filled with scattered white clouds. The sun's rays are visible, creating a starburst effect. The clouds vary in density and size, with some appearing as soft, wispy patches and others as more defined, puffy shapes. The overall scene is bright and clear, suggesting a sunny day.

The world around us,
object and context of our concern





The clown is gone but his values stay

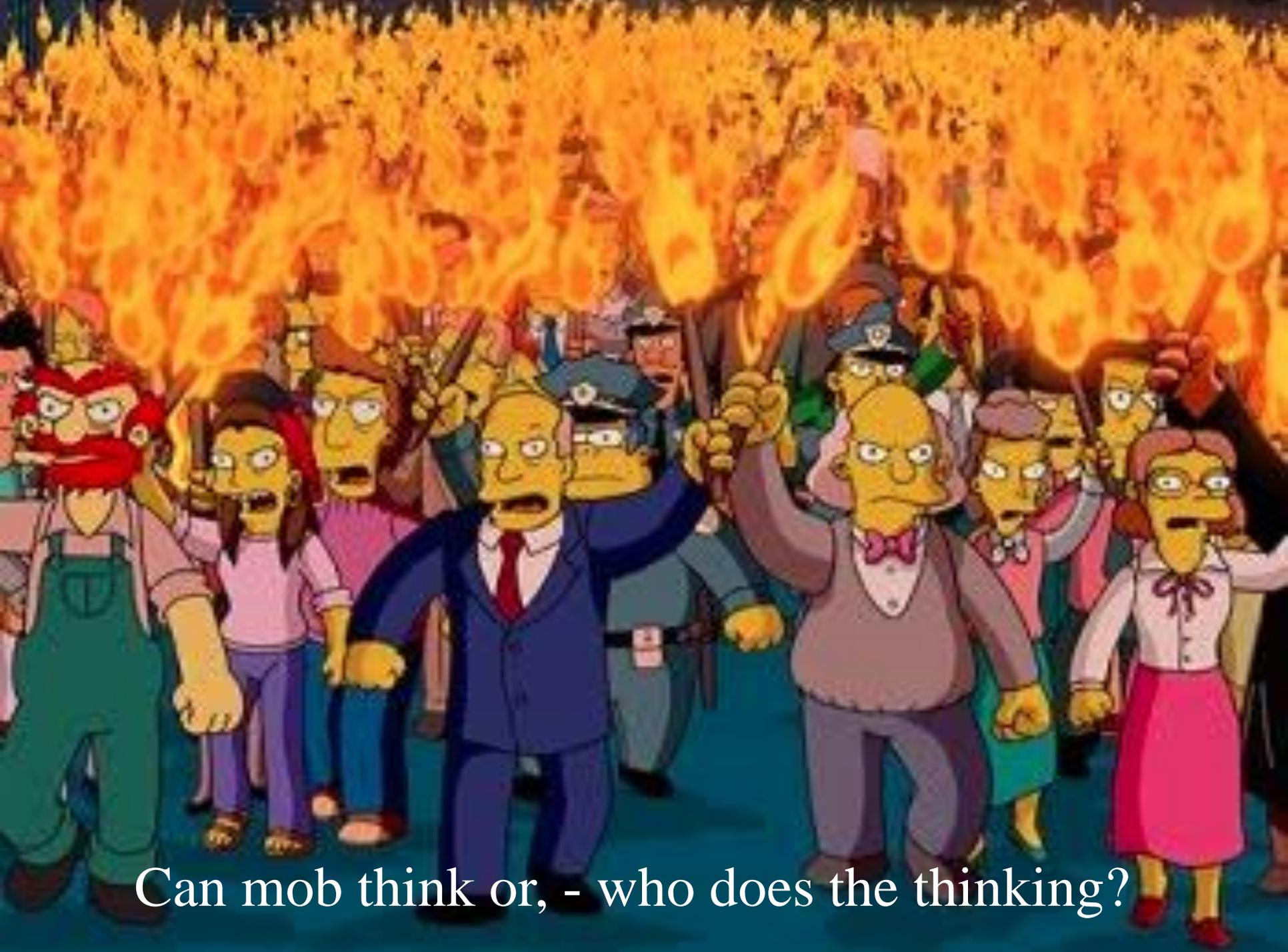
... calm, and ...
... heard what Big Brother was saying
... encouragement, the so
... words of
... a few words of encouragement, the so
... uttered in the din of battle, not distin
... but restoring confidence by the f
... Then the face of Big Brother fade
... and instead the three slogans of the Party st
... capitals:

WAR IS PEACE

FREEDOM IS SLAVERY

IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH.

... of Big Brother seemed to persi
... screen, as though the impa



Can mob think or, - who does the thinking?



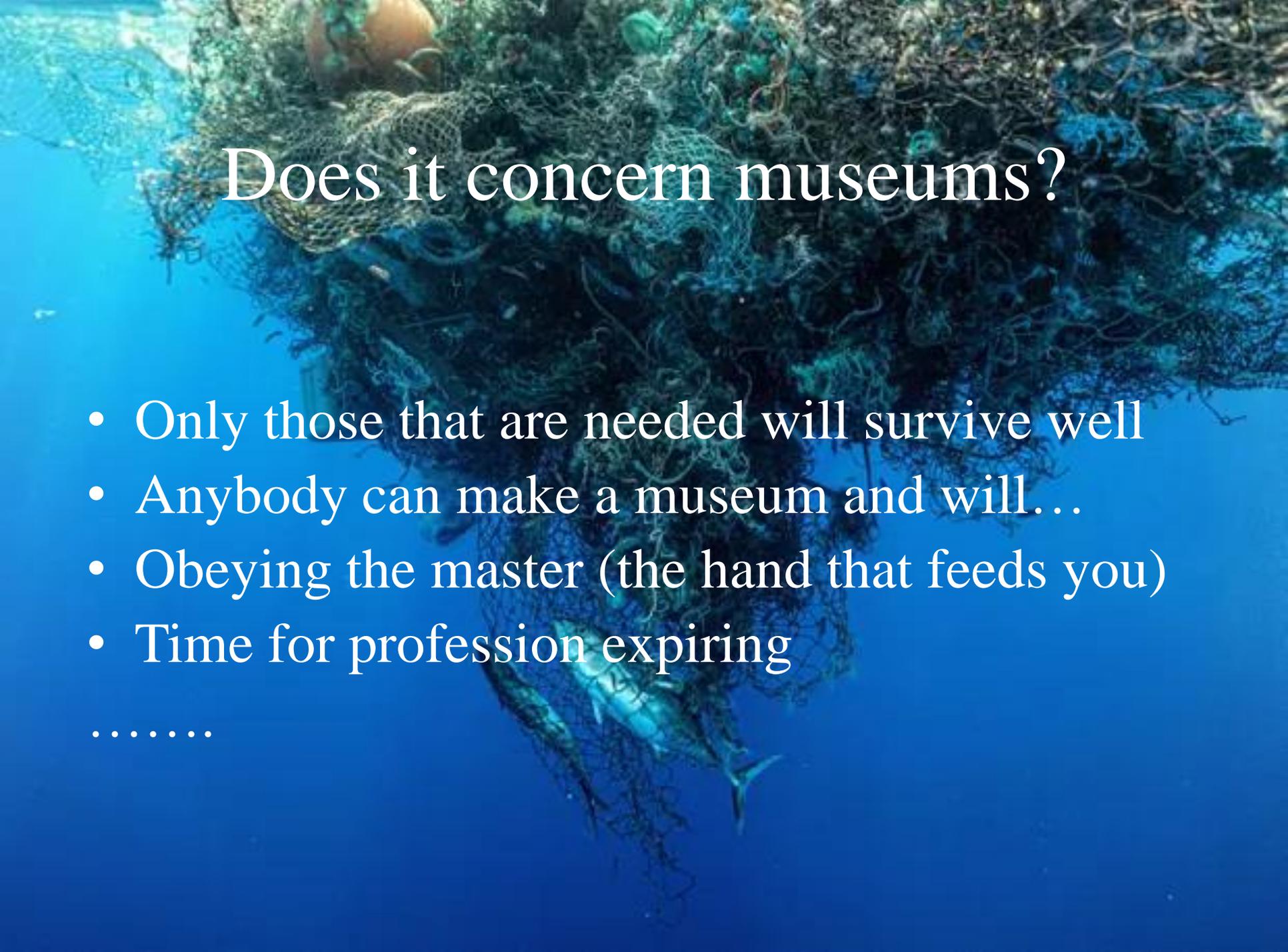
CAN WE ASSIST POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LITERACY ?

**DEMOCRACY BASED UPON MANIPULATED, SEDUCED AND ILLITERATE
MASSES IS A STAGED SPECTACLE, A DANGEROUS ILLUSION**

„Everything goes” turned into “Nothing matters”

- Moral debacle of neo liberal rule
- Wars, chaos
- Insecurity & fear
- Pauperisation-precariat-oligarchies
- Uglification and pollution
- Loss of quality
- The end of species option
- The karaoke world
- The rule of mob, -ochlocracy

Aren't we lost like never before? Where are we?



Does it concern museums?

- Only those that are needed will survive well
- Anybody can make a museum and will...
- Obeying the master (the hand that feeds you)
- Time for profession expiring

.....



ENDLESS TAKING
BRINGS MISERY AND RAGE



Refugees come from former colonies and escape from western wars



AND, BY THE WAY....

There are **61 colonies** or territories in the world:

Australia (6), Denmark (2), Netherlands (2), France (16), New Zealand (3), Norway (3), the United Kingdom (15), and the United States (14)

“There are two ways to conquer and enslave a nation. One is by the sword. The other is by debt.”

John Adams

The third is by aculturation:
By enslavement of mind and spirit.

Can museums/PM help?

Depends upon answer:

Do we want better past?

(using museums to create more of it)

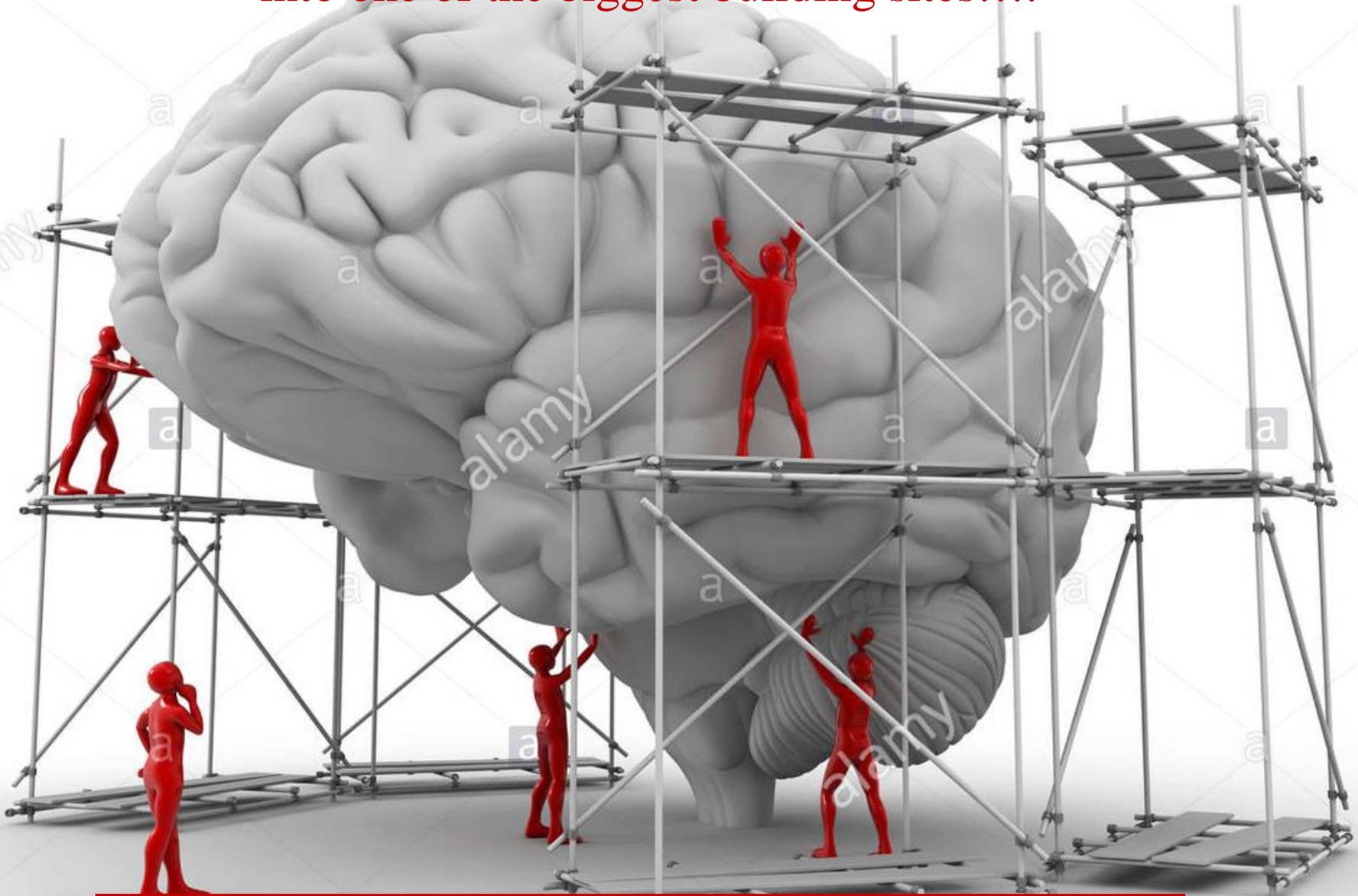
or

Do we want better present?

(using the past for quality development)

It has become easier to tell the future than the past !

**WORLDWIDE, the past is turned
into one of the biggest building sites....**



**WE CHOOSE OUR HERITAGE.
VALUES WE CONTINUE DEFINE US.**

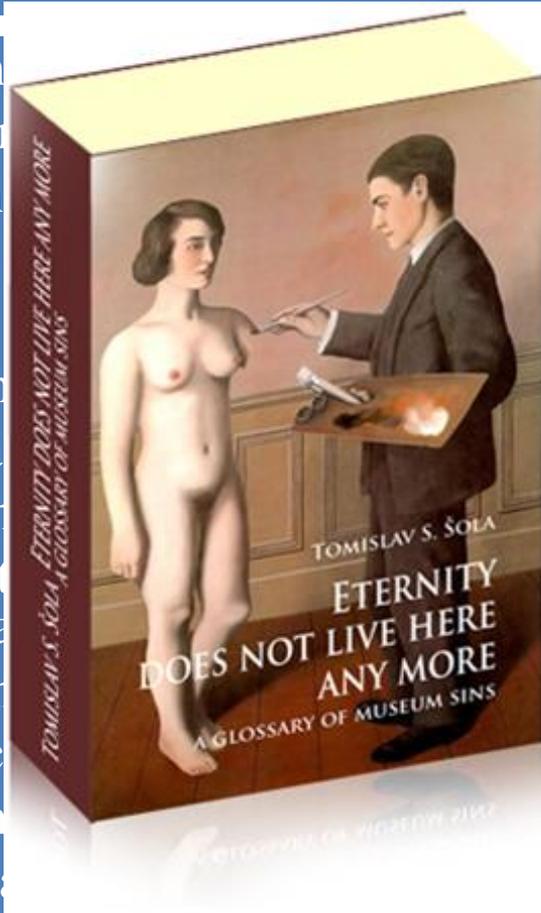


MUSEUMS

Their historical tasks start
in a community

A brief history of museum sins

- Boredom
- Dependence
- Defect through
- Elitism
- Entropy
- Escapism
- Euphoria
- Fetishism
- Fragmentation
- contextual
- Gigantism
- Hyper-activity
- Hypermnemonic
- Hyper-representation
- Imago mortis
- Eurocentrism (cultural colonialism)



- Institutionalism
- Literariness
- Medusa's head
- Mercantilism
- Non-professionalism
- Nostalgism
- Over-design
- Over-specification
- Scientifism
- Servility/Obedience
- manipulation
- Superlativism
- Technological
- Vanity







The Reformist Manifesto

**MUSEUMS HAVE ALWAYS
ANALYSED THE WORLD,
WHEREAS THE POINT IS
HOW TO CHANGE IT**

i.e. how to serve the world towards the harmonious continuity
and survival.

Knowing problems – Finding solutions

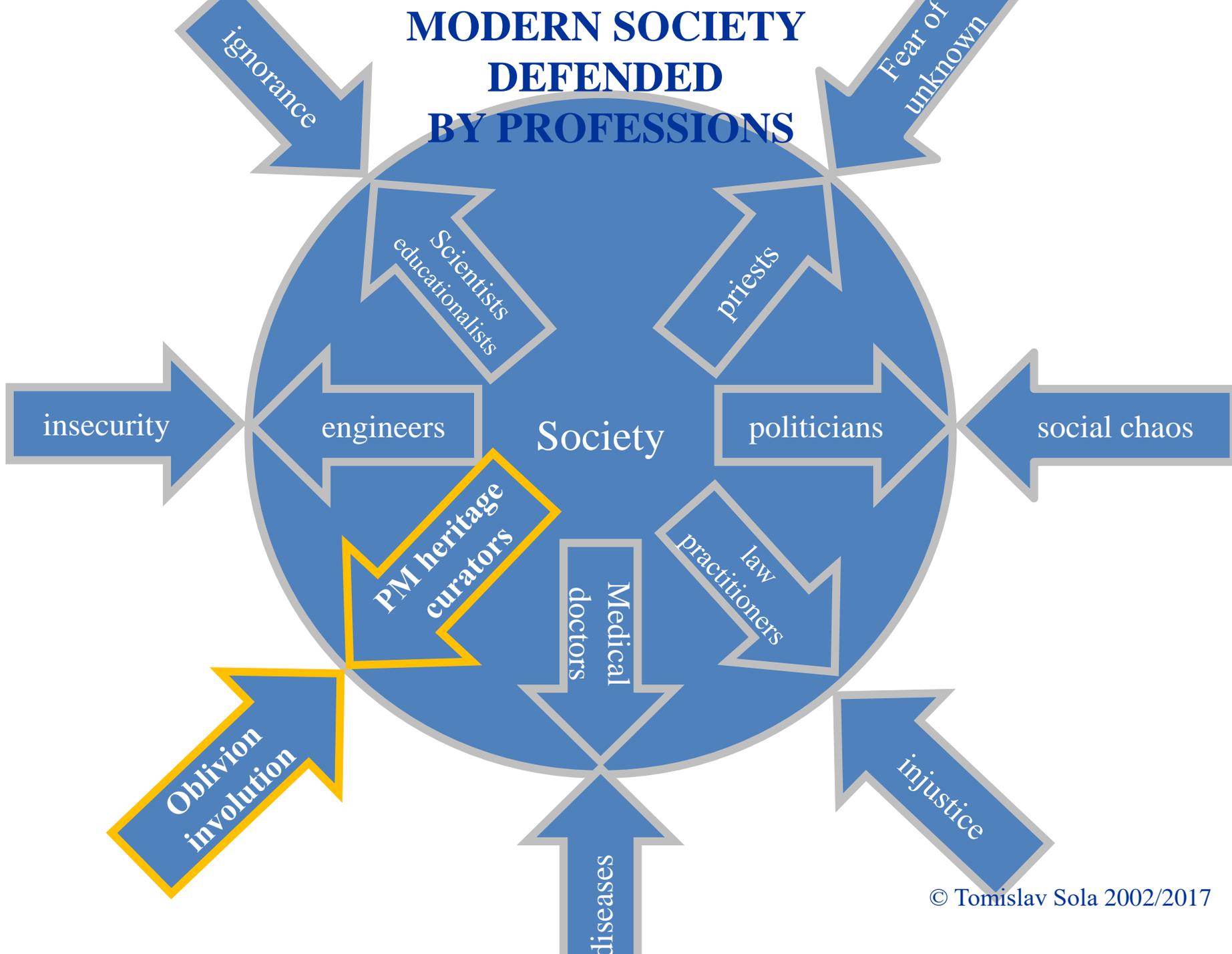
- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Political illiteracy | 1. Educate voters |
| 2. Consumerism | 2. Train and culture consumers |
| 3. Compulsive travelling | 3. Inspire passion for diversity |
| 4. Uncritical, indifferent consumption | 4. Educate hedonists |
| 5. Lack of inventiveness, unemployment | 5. Inspire and teach entrepreneurs |
| 6. Poor quality of family life | 6. Educate family members |
| 7. Lack of social discipline, solidarity | 7. Educate for social contract |
| 8. Lack of criteria in evaluation of services | 8. Teach values of professionalism |
| 9. Rudeness, aggression, imbalance, violence | 9. Teach ethics of quality and harmony |
| 10. Ugliness | 10. Inspire beauty and virtues |

**Since the early 1990s, almost 20 million
of young & ambitious people
have left their countries in Eastern Europe**



**Is there any trace of this insidious colonisation in museums?
What consequences upon identity & self appreciation?**

MODERN SOCIETY DEFENDED BY PROFESSIONS



Healing influence of heritage for community

- Consolidation of identity by maintenance of values
- Defense of the concept of quality
- Creation of development momentum

**(our future) PM profession is
about the noble alchemy
of turning knowledge into wisdom**



Ideally, heritage is wisdom



DECOLONISATION
IN THE AGE OF HERITAGE



Part of King Leopold II's original exhibit
at the colonial museum. (Wellcome Collection)

Colonizing nature of museums („settle among and establish control over”)

- Other cultures
- Other’s territories, countries, nations
- Other genders
- Other classes
- Other times (than present)
- Other’s values

We cannot decolonize our museum by changing its name, adjusting the story, making gifts and keeping the collection as it is, but only by minds and doors wide open.



Could museums be next ?





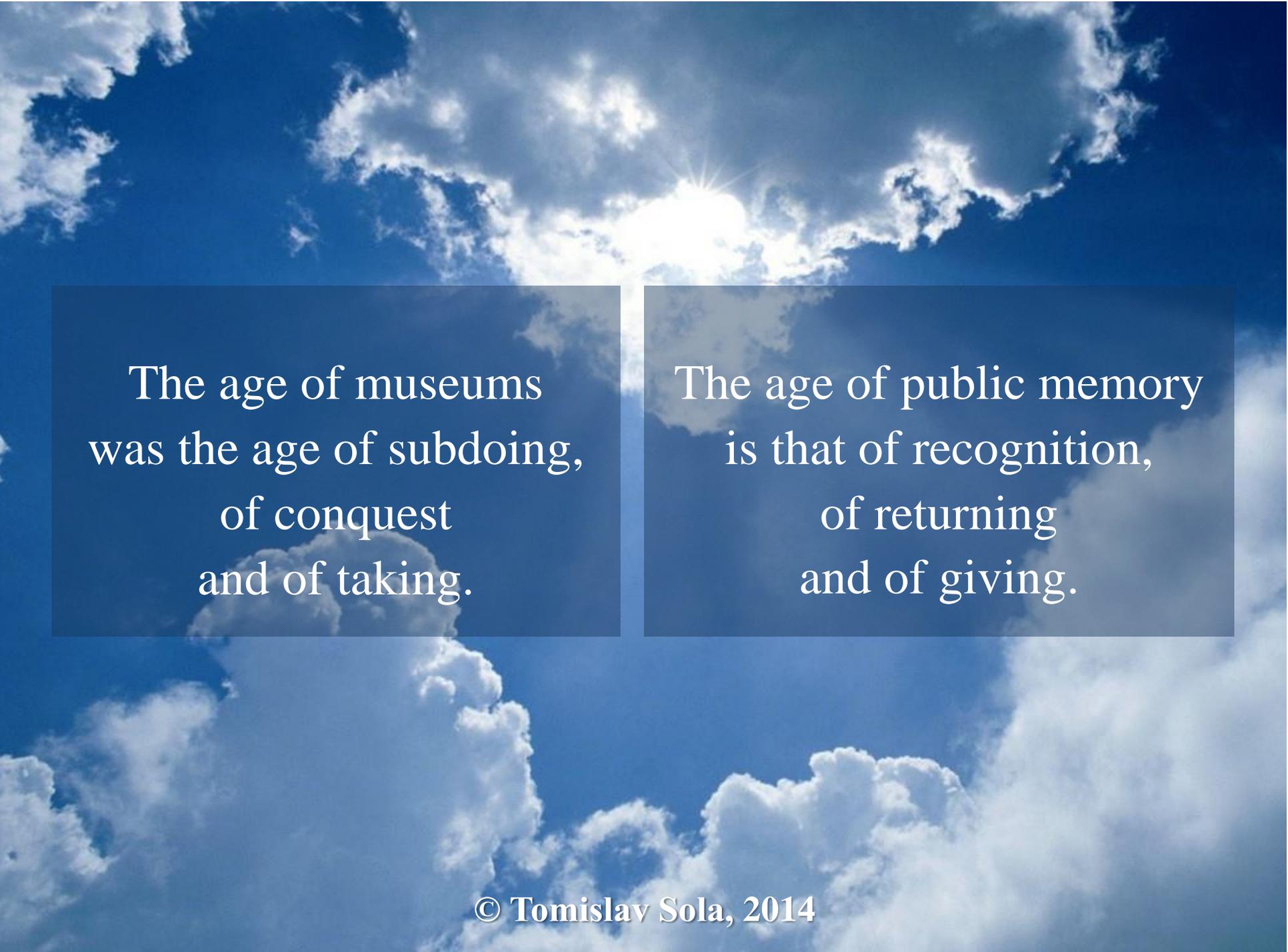
British Museum and other European institutions seek way to create a permanent exhibition of looted artefacts in Nigeria

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THE AGE OF HERITAGE

The age of heritage or the age of public memory

- Influencing/correcting the governing value system
- Building political, social literacy
for quality decision making
- Creating public perception of PMIs: actuality, truth and unbiased profession, responsibility and wisdom serving public good (in post-truth, post-fact, post-humanist soc.)



The age of museums
was the age of subdoing,
of conquest
and of taking.

The age of public memory
is that of recognition,
of returning
and of giving.

**Giving is the clue:
the giving back, contributing, sharing, giving away...
(as much as possible)**

- Return what does not belong to you
- Return to the places where the collections come from
- See what you can do in reinforcing or sustaining the value systems they belonged to.
- Be a pace-maker to dying hearts of identity.
- Do not resurect anything: leave it to the industries of heritage, entertainment and tourism.

Some 200 years
of heritage protection history
is long enough to inspire
and too short to oblige.
Why not finally a PM sector
and finally a profession?

Handbooks are done. The time for mindset.

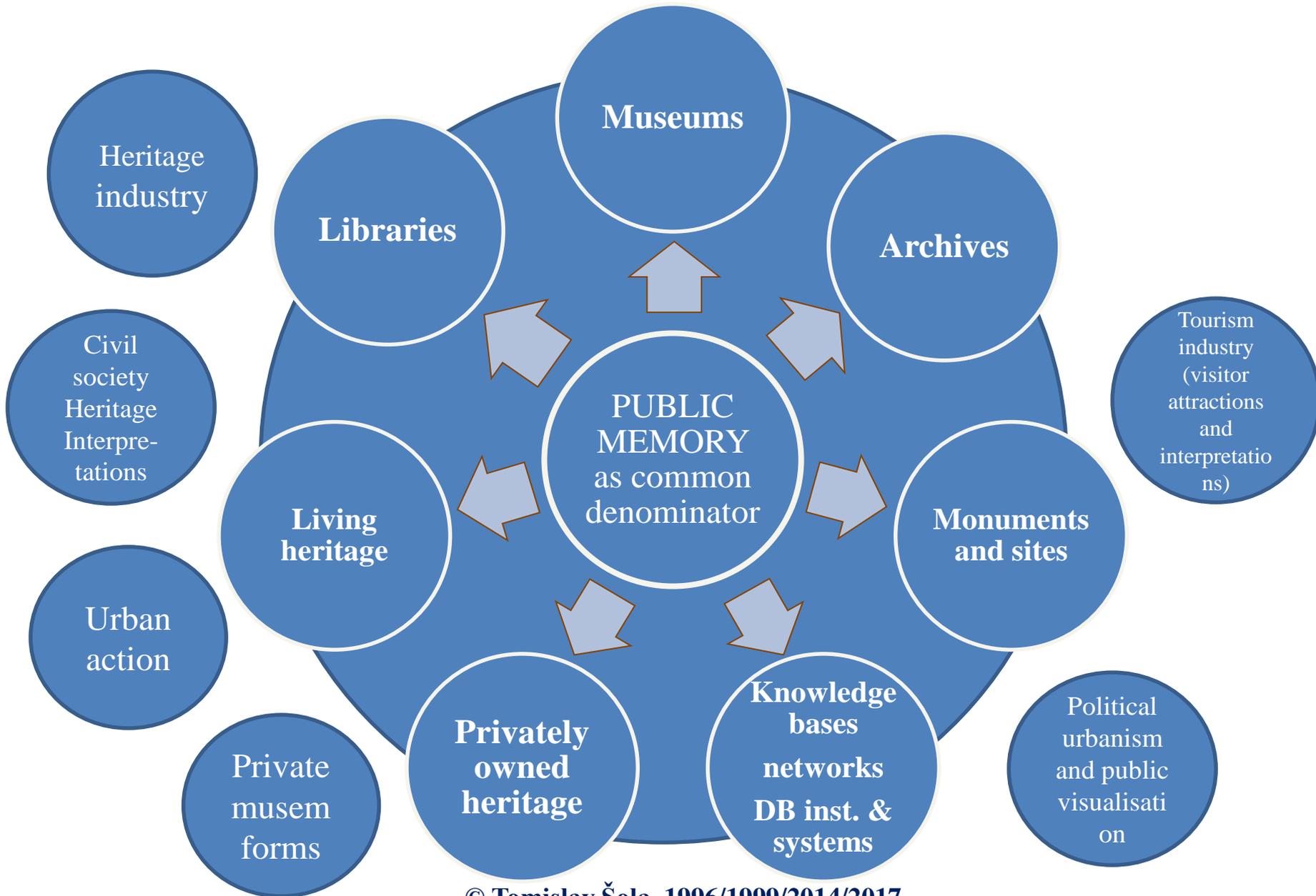
- **Museums Are Economic Engines**
- **Museums Are Community Anchors**
- **People Love Museums**
- **Museums Serve the Public**
- **Museums Partner with Schools**
- **Museums Are for Everyone**
- **Museums Are Trusted**
- **Museums Save Species**

**The rest is infinite striving for the contents:
OWN SCIENCE, AUTONOMOUS PROFESSION...**

Five main reasons for convergence of PM institutions and forming a profession



CURATING PUBLIC MEMORY



Unlike occupations, all professions are
respected and prosperous:

own science,
obligatory education,
autonomy,
ethics,
mission,
idealist goal,
legislation,
licence.

Global battle for survival of diversity:

All different – all equal: on all levels
Turning dominance into
internationalisation?
Creating the multi-polar world.
Planetary democracy as the rule of
justice, law and equal chances

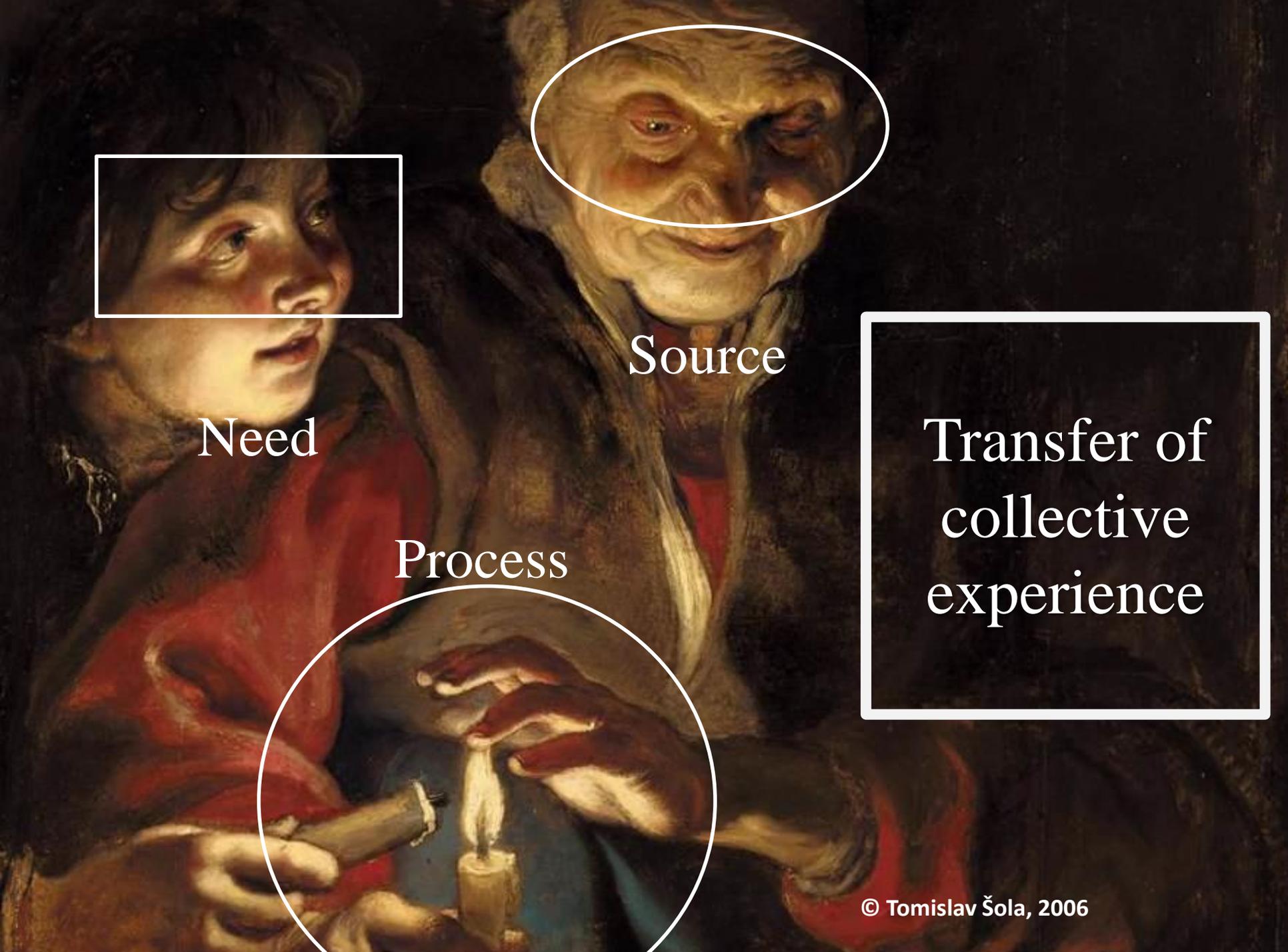
Can museums (PMI) become
part of the solution ?



Any professor
of Heritology or Mnemosophy
is a geek:

www.mnemosophy.com





Need



Source

Process



Transfer of
collective
experience



Thank you !

www.TheBestInHeritage.com