

INSTITUTE OF ART STUDIES, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences



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RELATING TO AUDIENCES IN BULGARIA
Modern Ideas and Trends in Public Communication in
Fine Arts Museums Based on the Experience of The
National Gallery of Art in Sofia, Bulgaria

AUTHORS' SUMMARY

OF DISSERTATION FOR AWARD OF
THE EDUCATIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC DEGREE *DOCTOR* (PhD)

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THE DISSERTATION IS PRESENTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE
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The Dissertation has been discussed at the large panel meeting of the *New Bulgarian Art* Academic Section on 20 September 2019 and has been approved and forwarded for public defence.

The Dissertation contains 253 pages incl. Foreword, five Chapters, Conclusion, Bibliography containing 203 titles, of which 65 are in the Cyrillic Script and 138 in the Latin Script; as well as an Appendix of 63 pages containing questionnaires, 13 tables and 49 illustrations.

The Public Defence will take place on 27.04.2020 at 11.00 hrs., in Hall 1 of the Art Research Institute at a meeting of a Research Committee with the following Members: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Alexander Kuyumdjiev, Prof. Dr. Antoaneta Ancheva, Prof. Dr. Boris Serginov, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Natalia Hristova, Assoc. Prof. Dr Architect Stella Tasheva.

The materials for the Public Defence can be found in the *Administrative Dept.* of the Institute, 21 Krakra St., Sofia.

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FOREWORD

The art museums are constantly facing new challenges and demands. *The orientation toward the publics* is no longer an unfamiliar concept – visitors' survey, marketing research, communication with the public are among the priorities of the museums in order to improve their activities and for attraction of visitors.

Globally is observed the tendency for reducing the consumption of the traditional forms of culture and art. This tendency is clearly prominent at European level, but especially visible in Bulgaria the last years. Exploring, analyzing and overcoming such attitudes are one of the key problems in many cultural and political debates. Shrinking of public subsidies and orienting cultural institutions - in particular the museums, to the market requires special attention in developing the publics and the consumption. Along with this, the theme of the publics appears more often in political debates at national as well at European level. One of the major challenges to which is oriented the program 'Creative Europe' of the EU¹ is the need to engage the publics as active participants and not solely as passive consumers of culture. At national level the theme is covered in a number of discussions, related to the development the policies for culture in general and the need for market orientation of the cultural institutes. It is currently proposed for discussion and adoption the Strategy for the Bulgarian Culture 2019-2029.

The publics are different. Essential meaning for the quantity, number and the type of the visits have the economical and the socio-cultural policy of the country, the richness of cultural heritage and the way of its presentation in the individual countries. Despite the long established international practice in museums of conducting market researches of the publics, the results of these studies are rarely published. The recommendations to museums *for the orientation toward the publics* are to conduct their own survey periodically – preferably every 1-3 months, including e.g. 100 people.

How does museum activity change based on research of the publics? In what circumstances the implementation of the study is effective?

¹ General direction 'Education, Youth, Sport and Culture' Program 'Creative Europe', 2017 EAC-2015-0440 BG.

Such research is needed in the construction of exhibitions, development of programs for museum pedagogy and public relations. Because public is concentrated in specific groups, may be identified target groups, which require focused addressing. The research of the publics hides huge potential as a tool for the realization and the improvement of *publics-oriented* museum work.

Aims and tasks of the dissertation:

The dissertation examines the approaches for the development of publics in the context of the museum practice. In addition, the research of the visitors is presented as part of a theoretical analysis, which include empirical researches as its tool. The aim is to be drawn recommendations for successful building of a strategy for development of publics in art museums and its possible applications.

The concept of *orientation toward publics* was introduced in discussions about the museum in Germany in the late 1980s as an expression of growing interest for the publics². In the dissertation the same is considered as uniting the process of museum development in recent years through the focus "public - museum". Key concepts are discussed, related to *orientation to the publics* such as 'access', 'engagement', etc.

Under focus are placed the types of public's researches, undertaken within the framework of institutions; there are identified the impacts that have the audience surveys; there are identified factors which contribute to the best practice in researches of audience and suggestions for improvements.

The dissertation seeks a balance between the theoretical study of the publics and the empirical one, related to the knowledge and giving of numerous examples of work in museums.

The many examples of successful *orientation of museums toward publics* are divided into chapters according to the location and the specifics for a given museum. A separate chapter in the study occupy the study of publics in Bulgaria, and in particular in the National Gallery as the largest art museum. The essential purpose of this analysis is the identifying and presentin the opportunities for applying successful factors in the sense of "good practices". The fundamental application is the ability to

² Wegner, Nora. *Besuchersforschung und Evaluation in Museen: Forschungsstand, Befunde und Perspektiven*. In: Glogner und Föhl (2010), S. 97-152.

be given to the visitor a voice and presence in the museum work, the viewer to be engaged actively, becoming a participant, not a passive consumer.

Chapter I. BUILDING OF AUDIENCES: THEORETICAL AND HISTORIC VIEW

The first Chapter examines the use of basic terms in publics' research and the introduction of new ones. In it are also outlined the basic thesis in relation to the history of research of the publics in museums, as well as the used for this methodology.

They are noted basic terms such as 'museum', 'public', the introduction and formation of new concepts - 'developing the publics', 'access', 'barriers to access', especially actual in recent years. Attention is drawn to the distinction between 'developing of the publics' and 'engagement of the publics', especially when talking about more lasting links between the museum and its visitors.

I. 1. Key concepts and terms. Emerging new concepts

The museum public includes itself the complexity of its constituent concepts: museum and public/publics. According to the International Council of Museums (ICOM), a museum is defined as follows: 'A museum (fr., musée; eng., museum) is a permanent, non-profit institution, in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, preserves, research, exhibit and popularize material and immaterial heritage of humanity and their environment, for the scientific, education and enjoyment purpose'³.

An important part of understanding the museum is its connection with the public. And if in the past years museum institutions pay basic attention on the research and scientific achievements of the museum, it is only in recent years that the focus of their main activity is oriented to the visitors. So for the last 10 years we have been

³ It should be borne in mind, that the terms 'museum' and 'museum professionals', presented in this dictionary, are definitions, approved in the Statute of ICOM, adopted by the Extraordinary General Assembly of ICOM, Milano (Italy), 9 July 2016 (ICOM, ETHICAL CODE OF ICOM FOR THE MUSEUMS, Sofia 2017, http://icombulgaria.org/papers/2018code_ethics2017_bg.pdf).

talking in the art marketing about the activity of museum *orientation to the publics* at the expense of its organizational activity. As a result, more and more marketing strategies are being arise and apply for their development.

The public⁴ is a collective term that includes different and often opposing points of view: there are many terms used to describe the public in the cultural sphere (viewers, visitors, members, customers, users⁵, participants, paid viewers, attendees⁶, and rare visitors). Today, we use the term "public" more often in its plural form, because we are talking about different types of publics. Publicly funded cultural organizations typically view the audience in terms of 'attendees', 'viewers', or 'visitors' as receivers who 'seal' a contract, and more or less are part of the community. In contrast to this, there is a far less monolithic, definitely larger and more diverse group, made up of those, who are 'not' part of this contract - the so-called 'non-public'⁷.

Along with the basic concepts in research of the publics, are outlined terms such as, for example, 'development of the publics', 'engagement of the publics', 'participation'⁸. They have been systematized over the years, with some of them changing meaningfully according to the latest museum requirements: e.g. 'access'⁹. A glossary of terms and terms is drawn up by work group by request of an EU¹⁰. Based on the literature related to museum publics¹¹, the group offers different interpretations of these concepts, outlining nine originating from the meaning of 'public' with a reflection on 'access', 'participation', 'obstacles' or 'non-visitors'.

⁴ The public are the audience, listeners, viewers etc. of a given event, performance, execution, transmission and etc. Often is used in combination *general public*, to be marked the community of spectators, observers. Unlike *audience*, which most often have the sense of people, who listen, for example a lecture, at which the etymology originates from *audit* (eng.) – I attend as a listener, the public much more give emphasis at attendance and visual complicity, monitoring, tracking etc (Duden).

⁵ In English language there is distinction between *users u cconsumers*.

⁶ In this case *attendance* rather, it is thought as a single or random visit.

⁷ The term I refer to in the study is '*non-visitor*'.

⁸ Although apparently there is some overlap in the meaning of these three terms, they are determined individually because of their specific importance to museum activities.
Last visit at 05.04.2019.

⁹ The topic of 'access' has been one of the key issues in EU cultural policy in recent years.

¹⁰ Bollo, Alessandro, Cristina Da Milano, Alessandra Gariboldi and Chris Torch. (2017). *Study on Audience Development - How to place audiences at the centre of cultural organizations*. Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture. Creative Europe programme. p. 5-6.

¹¹ Same there.

The problem of the access is extremely important, as it is not only related to physical, economic or geographical access, but also concerns probably to the less visible - the cultural access.

Following the development of the publics, we should note relevant and interesting definition of 'early stages' to the latest actual achievements. The social and economic profile of the consumer and the relationship with the artist are at the basis of the financial statement for developing of the publics.

I. 2. Surveying audiences in museums: a history

The beginning of the study of museum publics and its relationship with the museums can be traced to the time of making museums from a private space into a public space; the moment when the museum opens to the society and acquires a public role and tasks. The ideas of the Enlightenment for free access of the whole population are also transmitted to the museums. In 1683 is opened the Ashmolean Museum at the University of Oxford¹². It is considered to be the first museum founded by a public authority in the public interest. The British Museum was officially opened on January 15, 1759. It was established by an act of Parliament stating that the museum would serve 'not only for the viewing and amusement of scientists and the inquisitive, but also for the common good and for the benefit of the society'¹³. The Louvre Museum was officially opened to the citizens of the French Republic on November 19, 1793¹⁴. The Louvre is the first national public museum open for the sole purpose of enabling ordinary visitors to experience the masterpieces of world culture. Berlin museums since the 1870s have extended their working hours, modernized exhibition lighting. The Central Administration of the Royal Prussian Museums (Königlich Preussischen Museen) required in 1893 the counting of visitors on Sundays, in order to calculate the success of individual events. In addition to this, begin a partial but systematic recording of publics, which, after the separate attempts of Gustav Theodor Fechner in

¹² Lewis, Geoffrey D. (last updated Feb 7, 2019). *History. Museum, CULTURAL INSTITUTION*, In: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/museum-cultural-institution>. Last visited at 05.04.2019.

¹³ Lewis, Jeffrey. (2004). The role of museums and code of ethics for museums In: *Museum management: A Practical guide*. ICOM. Paris, p. 2.

¹⁴ Same , p. 22.

the 1870s to count, could be considered as the first significant beginning of a statistical survey of publics in Germany.

Focused research on museum publics can be traced back to the beginning of the twentieth century. We find them in the United States. Due to its public accessibility, even then American museums are among the first dealing with work, connected with *orientation to public*. The first empirical studies examine the directions of visitors' movement and the duration of observation of museum exhibits. These are the publications of Gilman (1916), the psychologists Robinson (1928) and Melton (1935)¹⁵, who comment that visitors move most often to the right clockwise rather than in the order of exposition. Other data are the duration of observation and the amount of time which the visitor spends on a given work in the exposition. These results are considered to be valid decades later by Klein and Bachmeyer studies¹⁶.

The founding of the International Museum Council (ICOM) in 1946 and the formation of the Committee on Education (since 1959 the Committee on Education and Cultural Activity) provide a platform for museum work and professional research for museum publics.

System studies begin in the United States after the 1950s, becoming a purposefully organized instrument for planning. These are the studies of Screven¹⁷, Loomis¹⁸, followed by European studies, e.g. Miles (1985)¹⁹. In Germany, the beginning of a systematic study of museum audiences is in the 1980s, with special contributions from Klein (1971) и Treinen (1974)²⁰.

The numerous publications of Graf, Treinen, Noschka-Roos²¹ are indicative of efforts to establish a systematic separation and division of visitors. Of major

¹⁵ Waidacher Friedrich. (2005). *Museologie - knapp gefasst*, UTB/BRO, 2005, S. 128

¹⁶ Klein, Hans-Joachim und Monika Bachmeyer. (1981). *Museum und Öffentlichkeit: Fakten und Daten, Motive und Barrieren*. Gebrüder Mann, 1981, S. 59.

¹⁷ Screven, Chandler. (1993). *Visitor Studies in the U. S.* Museum 2.0.

¹⁸ Loomis, R.J. (1987). *Museum visitor evaluation. New tool for management*. Nashville Ten: American Association of State and Local History.

¹⁹ Bitgood, Stephen. (1997). *The Hein - Miles debate: an introduction, explanation and commentary*. In: Visitor Behaviour 12; p. 3 -7.

²⁰ Treinen, Heiner. (1997). Museumsbesuch und Museumsbesucher als Forschungsgegenstand. Ergebnisse und Konsequenzen fuer die Besucherorientierung, in: Landschaftsverband Rheinland, Rheinisches Arhiv- und Museumsamt, Pulheim, S. 44-53.

²¹ Noschka-Roos, Annette. (2003). *Besuchersforschung in Museen. Instrumentarien zur Verbesserung der Ausstellungskommunikation*. München. Deutsches Museum.

importance is “Der gläserne Besucher” of Klein (1990).²² It includes a huge survey of museum visitors between 1984 and 1986. Since 1979, the Berlin Institute of Museum Studies²³ has played a major role as a state institution, unifying together research, statistical and archival guidelines. There is reported every year the number of visitors to every museum in Germany. The individual museums also keep their own statistics, sometimes in collaboration with universities and research centers.²⁴

Today the functions of the museum extend far beyond the exhibition space and collections. Social networks are creating new digital worlds and public relations. New museum features also involve new museum specialists and a different approach to publics.²⁵

I. 3. Surveying the visitors: the Bulgarian experience

The beginning of museum work in Bulgaria is laid during the Renaissance. Its mainstay is the local community centre - a typically Bulgarian cultural phenomenon. The local community centers and the emerging museum collections to them have 'a definite social function with one main task - the affirmation of the Bulgarian national consciousness'²⁶.

The National Museum is established in 1892, when the established in 1879 Department of Values was separated from the structure of the National Library.

The first statistics for museum visitors in Bulgaria is from 1929, according to which in that year the Archaeological Museum was visited by 29,000 people and the Ethnographic by 55,000 or 150 visitors per day, indicating that there were days when their number was approaching 1,000 per day. From 1910 to 1941 annually is published the ‘Statistical Yearbook of the Kingdom of Bulgaria’ with a rather voluminous content - about 800 pages. It mainly includes tables and data, but from them we can

²² It is quoted in a set of following researches, also outside of Germany. It force also the term 'transparent visitor'.

²³ Das Berliner Institut für Museumskunde, a ot 2006 г. is named also the Institute for museum study. (Institut für Museumsforschung).

²⁴ See <http://deutscher museumsbund.de>, last visit at 25.07.2019.

²⁵ More in Chapter 'Social media as a shared place for dialogue'. An important research in this direction is: The paper *Job profiles for museums in the digital era: research conducted in Portugal, Italy and Greece within the Mu.SA project*. Antonia Silvaggi and Federica Pesce. In the [ENCATC](#) Journal of Cultural Management and Policy Volume 8.

²⁶ Nedkov, Simeon. (2006). *History in museum work in Bulgaria*. S., p. 11.

judge for different aspects of social life in the country. The analysis of the data and the specifics for life then were made by the film expert Alexander Yanakiev in his study 'The Publics before 1941 in the Mirror of Statistics'.²⁷

Visitor counting is maintained around for just over two decades. However, the most frequently used data is after 1999, probably because most museums fill electronically the information collected by the National Statistical Institute. In this lacks data for the socio-demographic composition of museum publics. It is also important to be noted how counting is conducted. Usually, this is done based on the number of tickets sold, but in this way the statistics does not include the visitors with open access: i.e. artists, members of art organizations; art students, journalists, disadvantaged people. To this statistic are not included the opening of exhibitions, as well as an accompanying program, which include seminars, lectures, workshops, as they are usually free entry.

Among the few studies in Bulgaria that include a survey of museums about their publics is this of Iglia Mishkova.²⁸

The only publication on the marketing survey and evaluation of the interaction between museums, the school and young users is of the National Museum of History (NIM). The results of the study were presented during a workshop held in 2012 at the the National Museum of History on the topic: 'Museums, schools and young consumers'.²⁹

I. 4. Methodological approaches to the study of audiences

Publics' research is distinguished by its multidisciplinary character. It uses theories, research strategies and methods, depending on the goals set. This often includes aspects of the sphere of the sociology; communication and marketing; psychology; exposition construction; digital development The issues involved in such

²⁷ Yanakiev, Alexander. (2013). *The audiences before 1941 in the mirror of the statistics*. In: Collection *The arts, the market, the audiences, Institute of Art Studies*. Bulgarian Academy of Science

²⁸ The main topic in her research is education in the museum, but also adds a brief overview of museum publics in Bulgaria, as well as a survey: Mishkova, Iglia. *Education in the museum. Status and Prospects in Bulgaria*. 2015. Sofia, Gutenberg NAS

²⁹ National Museum of History. (2013). *Marketing survey and evaluation of the interaction between museums – the school and the young users*. Collection of reports, NIH.

a study relate to the processes of reaching the exposition object to the viewer in the museum and how it is perceived.

When looking at the basic methods of publics' research and publics' development in museums, we analyze additional research. They are often incomparable as they depend on the goals set, the projected expectations. Against different museums and their specificities there are observed different approaches to the study.

If there are considered the researches of the publics, there will be highlighted several key pillars³⁰:

- socio-demographic indicators: e.g. age, gender, nationality;
- expectations, impact, motive: for example why I visit the museum, opinions, associations, needs, preferences, research on decision-making processes at the visitor, barriers, study of the impact and perception
- behavioral data: frequency, intensity of visitation, organized visits, used sources of information such as maps, networks, visitor awareness;
- others: for example potential visitors according to the population.

Chapter II. THE MUSEUMS AND THEIR AUDIENCES IN THE INTERNET ERA

In this chapter are examined examples of museum expositions and what is the relationship between museum - architectural environment - expositions - public. Of this stage particular interest represents the question of how the museum is present in the age of the digital technologies. The 'La grande conversion numérique' (Digital cultures)³¹ opens up new opportunities for museum access to the public. Through the prism of several key concepts such as access, participation, interactivity, we can find the application of new media and technologies in the museum. Big part of the world's museums offer open and, most often, free access to their digitized collections, virtual

³⁰ See Hausmann, Andrea and Bernd Günter. (2009). *Kulturmarketing*. Wiesbaden: VG Verlag; Glogner-Pilz, Patrick and Föhl, Patrick. (2016). *Handbuch Kulturpublikum*. Forschungsfragen und –befunde. Springer VS; Klein, Armin. (2008). *Besucherbindung im Kulturbetrieb*. Ein Handbuch. 2. Auflage: Wiesbaden: VS Verlag, 44; Reussner, Eva Maria. (2010). *Publikumsforschung für Museen. Internationale Erfolgsbeispiele*. Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag.

³¹ Doueihy Milad (2011). *La grande conversion numérique. (Digital cultures)* NBU.

tours of their museum space and expositions; 3D projections of museum objects. Social media offers new opportunities for public relations.

II. 1. Museum Exhibitions and Visitors' Access to Them

How should collections be presented in a new way, the permanent exposures - modified, arranged in an unusual context so that the visitor would approach them differently? We find the first empirical research into using instructions for the visitor on where to go and how long to observe a work.

When opening the museum to the general public in the nineteenth century, it is necessary to install regulating and checking mechanisms, which ensure the proper behaviour of the viewer. First of all is required, a "visibility" policy, whereby the visitor is both the subject and the object of one controlling gaze. This is possible with the construction of exhibition spaces in which not only the subject is at the center of observation but also the visitor is constantly monitored.³² The expositions are so constructed as to ensure visitor paths by which he can be observed, ie the visitor is visible as well as the work. In the debates on museum reforms since the beginning of the twentieth century, the focus shifts from presenting the historical context of objects to a form of observation whereby we have an identification of the viewer with the work. Julia Noordegraaf writes in her book, 'Strategies of Displaying', that 'the visitor receives a significant connection between the intentions of the artist expressed in his work and their display in the museum: the retelling of the artist's emotions must find a place in the mind of the observer.'³³

Thus, at the beginning of the twentieth century, by museologists is adopted the demand for the creation if possible of 'quietest' observation spaces. Consistently disappear the special places for general view, as well as the controlled paths, along which the visitor moves.

In the 1970s, the idea of the viewer as a recipient, who watch from a secured, autonomous position, without himself being observed, became dominant in the relationship viewer-space. Another reading of this attitude is made by Henri Lefebvre

³² Benett, Tony. (1995). *The Birth of the Museum. History, theory, politics*. London, New York.

³³ Noordegraaf, Julia. (2004). *Strategies of Display. Museum Presentation in the Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Visual Culture*. Rotterdam, p. 94.

in his book 'The Production of Space'³⁴, in which he develops the thesis, that the room is a product of social relationships and at the same time provokes them.

In the book, 'Art as a Social Space', Nina Möntman shows how spatial references are shifting from the processing of a physical space, observed, for example, in minimalism, to an increased contextualisation of social space in the 1990s.

In 'new exposure'³⁵, on the contrary, the work is not presented as the latest hit, but as a display, ie. is presented as an act, an action, in dialogical fullness. 'The museum is looking for a place outside of time where it can safely place its objects. The exhibition seeks interaction from the present. She confronts, she's a podium, a lab', says Peter Schneemann³⁶. In September 2015, the Museum of Modern Art in New York announced the adoption of new principles for the construction of its major exhibitions and expositions. The museum decides to move from exhibitions structured by genres and historical periods to an experimental approach. The Chief curator Anne Tamkin puts it in this way: 'Let's unlearn from what we have learned. The museum will present many narratives, it will not imposes many declarations, but will provoke curiosity'³⁷.

II. 2. Branding of Museums

Today, many museums struggle for their own cultural and economic survival due to reduced finances and increased competition. Museum directors must always be open to the idea of applying management techniques from commerce.

Visual encapsulation of identity is essential to the identity of the museum brand. It uses clear messages and creates an opportunity for to communicate of the institution with the public. The purpose is to contain the concept of the museum, seen not from the perspective of the museum specialist, but of the visitor.

³⁴ Lefebvre, Henri. (1992). *The Production of Space*. Wiley.

³⁵ To the „new exposure“ is dedicated a separate issue of the magazine *Kunstforum*, 2007, Bd. 186).

³⁶ Schneemann, Peter. (2007). *Wenn Kunst stattfindet! Über die Ausstellung als Ort und Ereignis der Kunst*. In *Kunstforum. Das Neue Ausstellen*, Bd. 186, S. 65.

³⁷ See. Artgid, published 17.12.2015

Today, the strength of brands lies in their ability to elicit recognition and positive feelings. The branding strategy aims to develop a museum positioning strategy so that it will be embedded in all museum decisions and activities.

Brand images include in themselves symbols, logos. These forms should be the result of a museum mission and concentrate their values in a rich symbolic scenography. Once developed, these symbols of museum identity must be used consistently to advance the goals of the museum. Consistency means the application of these symbols in every action and in every degree of museum activity. Only in this way will brand identities communicate effectively and the public will have a clear choice about the museum and what it offers. Brand identities are imposed through the activities of a group of people from the museum, who work to promote the museum among visitors, members, sponsors, and more.

There are successful examples of the use of brand management in individual museums and exhibitions (eg Guggenheim, MOMA exhibitions, the British Museum). However, most museums have a very low level of professionalism in brand management. Even in countries such as Germany, Switzerland, we still cannot speak about a purposeful policy for building a visual identity, which is most likely due to financial and, often, internal organizational reasons.

II. 3. Social Media as a Shared Dialogue Platform

Today the functions of the museum extend far beyond the exhibition space and collections. Social networks are creating new digital worlds and relations with the public. The museum is transformed from a place of research into a place of communication. The future of museums is to quickly and easily reach a wider public through the digital technologies and the opportunities for access they offer. It is necessary the further development of the museum sites by adding an online sector; improving the system for loading information and using social media for greater visibility and participation, adding opportunities for sharing on instagram, facebook, twitter, etc. Alternative opportunity is offering digital products such as online courses, ebooks, multimedia tours, online ticket sales, enrollment in museum education events; online stores.

Strategies for the Digital Development of Museums: Tate Modern (2013–15), Andy Warhol Museum (2015–17), Museum of Science (2015–17), National Portrait Gallery (2016–2020), and Städel Museum an example of the five museums joining the digital game as part of a new reality. Examining these strategies brings us closer to the latest world museum practices to attract new publics, in which the online space is becoming a major expanding field of many museum activities, incl. of creating a new type of public³⁸. The measures taken by museums are aimed namely at organizing and controlling this digital space.

Chapter III. ADDRESSING AUDIENCES IN THE MUSEUMS OF ART IN EUROPE. EUROPEAN PROJECTS FOR AUDIENCE BUILDING: THE MUSEUMS IN GERMANY

The dissertation focuses on the factors for effective work with the publics, based on the experience of reputable art museums from Europe and North America, which work especially active and successfully with the public. Especially are considered the strategies for developing of publics as a cultural policy of individual countries. There have been drawn numerous examples of successful implementation of the *orientation toward publics*, as well as the best and most attended museum events and programs in recent years. Particular attention is paid to funded projects by the European Commission, which, by their content and aims, develop the projected strategy for development over the next 10 years. The essential purpose of this study is to identify and present opportunities for applying successful factors in the context of 'good practices'.

III. 1. Trends

Museums are part of the cultural and political situation of the country, in which they are located, and when comparing the development of publics in different countries, it is important to take these links into account. In my research, I focus

³⁸ <https://museumsdigitalculture.prattsi.org/review-of-different-museum-digital-strategies-6ec009d2f80b>
Last visited at: 20.03.2019.

mainly on the situation and examples from museums in Germany, as well as good examples of orientation toward publics noted by the European Union³⁹. The reason for this is not only because I know from the 'inside' the museums in Germany because of my specialization there, but also because I believe, that Bulgarian museums should develop, following the successful model of overall organization in their museum activity. These museums use the tools of the research of the publics primarily in museum work - in building expositions, planning temporary exhibitions, accompanying programs. Unlike the US, where in the research of the publics is given a high priority on the places for consumption, e.g. museum shops for souvenirs, cafes, etc. and there we rather consider the economic impact of this study. According to Thomas Renz, in Germany we still cannot speak about a purposeful cultural policy for the development of publics (Renz 2016)⁴⁰. In a study of cultural policies, Renz notes a similarity in the role of the state in Germany and the United Kingdom, but he notes a difference in their activities with regard to the orientation towards the publics. According to him, if in the UK this was a purposeful policy since the end of World War II, then in Germany there is noticed a purposeful interest only in recent years. He notes the contribution of individual research in this direction, but stresses, that there is no genuine debate on the topic of publics' development so far. In the past, we observe some target groups with guidance programs (Fohrbeck, Wiessand 1980)⁴¹, but only in 2004 there are scientific publications, noting Reussner's contribution (Reussner 2004)⁴². In the next years, a dozen thesis and dissertations emerge, that focus on specific cultural projects, which have in their basis the intend to develop publics (for example Schryen, 2005; Weichel, 2007)⁴³. In specialized publications are published

³⁹ Successful examples of public attraction according European Commission are part of the project 'Creative Europe' to EU. See Chapter III.2.

⁴⁰ See. Renz, Thomas, 2016, Nicht-Besucherforschung, Die Förderung kultureller Teilhabe durch Audience Development, transcript Verlag, Bielefeld, S. 54.

⁴¹ Fohrbeck, Karla and Wiessand, Andreas Johannes (1980). *Kulturelle Öffentlichkeit in Bremen*. Bremen

⁴² Reussner, Eva Maria. (2004). *Audience Development – Das Publikum von morgen. Konzepte und Strategien der Besucherentwicklung Bericht über das 6. Berliner Forum für Kultur- und Medienmanagement am 18./19. Juni 2004*. online www.kulturmanagement.net/downloads/audiencedevelopment.doc, last visited on 10.04.2017.

⁴³ Schryen, Anette (2005). Audience Development am Beispiel des Museum of Modern Art. Berlin
Weichel, Kathrin (2007). Audience Development. Besucherbindung in Kultureinrichtungen am Beispiel. Hildesheim.

researches for intercultural development of the publics of Birgit Mandel's (Mandel 2008, 2013)⁴⁴.

In Germany, unlike in the UK, there is no tax exemption law for sponsoring events in the field of culture. This frees up somewhat of the politically motivated strategies, but does not lead to an organized strategy for the development of public by the state⁴⁵.

The Institute for Museum Studies (Institut für Museumsforschung) reports annually the attendance of visitors to all museums in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)⁴⁶. The government, at both the federal and at level the 16- 'Member States', as well as regional and local political bodies and cultural organizations in Germany, consider these statistics to be the most comprehensive tool in this area.

These statistics are a good base for comparison the evolution of culture at European level in recent years. Noteworthy is the increase in the number of visitors in 2/3 of the questioned museums and as a general tendency.

It is important to be noted the separation of the authorities in the management of museums, as well as greater freedom of funding compared to Bulgaria. If we do not have yet private museums registered in Bulgaria, then in Germany the half of the museums are entirely privately managed and funded.

Their activities are entirely targeted on museum exhibitions and educational programs in the museum as a means of attracting and developing publics. The examples which are reviewed show the overall policy of orientation toward publics, particularly actual in recent years: through EU support, the programs 'Creative Europe', the European Capital of Culture and others.

⁴⁴ Mandel, Birgit, 2008, Audience Development, Kulturmanagement, kulturelle Bildung. Konzeption und Handlungsfelder der Kulturvermittlung, Muenchen; Mandel, Birgit 2013, Interkulturelles Audience Development. Zukunftsstrategien fuer oeffentlich gefoerderte Kultureinrichtungen (unter Mitarbeit von Melanie Redlberger). Bielefeld

⁴⁵ See. Renz, Thomas, 2016, Nicht-Besucherforschung, Die Förderung kultureller Teilhabe durch Audience Development, transcript Verlag, Bielefeld, S. 70.

⁴⁶ The institute for museum researches belongs to federal museums in Berlin-Prussian cultural area (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz)

See. <https://www.smb.museum/en/museums-institutions/institut-fuer-museumsforschung/home.html>

Last visited in 30.08.2018.

III. 2. Examples of Audience Building. Good Practices. Comparisons

What kind of publics to expect and how to develop them are key questions in the programs for creative development and financial support from the European Commission to the European Union. In its study "European audiences 2020 and beyond", the European Commission presents selected good practices for developing audiences⁴⁷. Among other arts such as dance, theater, music, in their selection there are examples of successful audience expansion and in the visual arts, such as transformations at the Ashmolean Museum, the Kinetic Sculpture Platform 'Artichoke', and more.

My acquaintance with the art museums in the Ruhr area in Germany⁴⁸ - meeting with directors, discussing museum programs, financing methods, public strategies, thanks to my specialization with the assistance of NRW Kultursekretariat⁴⁹ in 2015, is an opportunity to share my experience.

The project 'Museums in Ruhr area' created for 'Ruhr. 2010 - European Capital of Culture', includes a series of creative and educational initiatives such as Mapping the Region and Collection Tours, bringing together such diverse museums and publics. Their program for networking and collaborative activity of openness and attraction of new publics can serve as a good example for many other museums around the world.

'Mapping the Region' is the first joint project and covers 14 exhibitions curated by individual museums. Accompanying program - organized tours: 'Twice Art and Back' - for two days continuation, students visit two museums - the first being in their hometown and one of their choice. The educational visits are sponsored by Deutsche Bank. The tours 'East - West' are aimed at adult visitors, including a visit to three museums in one day, accompanied by a guide.

⁴⁷ European Commission. (2012). *European audiences 2020 and beyond*. EU, Belgium

⁴⁸ The highest density of museums in the world and one of the largest collections of modern and contemporary art: this offer the Ruhr area in Germany. More than twenty museums from fifteen cities find a great common purpose – with different buildings, different in their architectural appearance, ownership, management, collections they are uniting their forces in presenting their collections and in attracting audiences, starting a large scale project 'The museums of the Ruhr area' (RuhrKunstMuseen).

⁴⁹ See. <https://www.nrw-kultur.de/de/home/#/>

The tours 'Conversation on the road' includes select exhibitions from the project 'Mapping of the Region'. They are accompanied by both an art historian and another expert such as an architect, an artist, a philosopher, an interior designer.

Chapter IV. ADDRESSING THE AUDIENCES IN THE MUSEUMS OF ART IN NORTH AMERICA

In this chapter is discussed the *orientation toward publics in USA*, as an example of different policies in the area of culture because of differences in funding and governance there. The goals and achievements of *orientation toward publics* are seen as a means of supporting the social role of the museum.

IV. 1. Trends

In the US, when considering *orientation toward publics* in museum, who is leading to development toward publics, financial reasons are highlighted and issues in sphere of marketing. At the core are the few public funds which are provided to support the culture in comparison to, for example. with Germany. The principle of self-financing museums in the United States of America, where the incomes comes from sponsorship or ticket sales, requires better knowledge of the market and consumption. The aim is to reach a greater consumption from the public, to be attracted new groups of visitors and thus to be ensured longer-term investment in the museum. The reason for considering in a separate chapter the example of museums in the USA is the changing policy of financing the museums in Bulgaria and the need for knowledge in this direction. With the transition to a delegated budget of museum institutions in Bulgaria, they become financially dependent on the number of tickets sold and revenues from their own financial business - practices that are still little known in the field of museum work in Bulgaria. The example that I note in support of this thesis is the study of MoMA on the museum's online presence and the digital reach and communication with the audience⁵⁰.

⁵⁰ Miller, Burke, Brianna Rape, Adriana Reynolds, Olivia Rawlings. (2016), *MoMA Social Media Evaluation*. MoMA, New York.

The Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) is the largest and most comprehensive study of arts participation in the United States, with a total sample size of over 37,000 people aged 18 and older. The latest SPPA compares levels of participation in the arts based on surveys from 2002, 2008 and 2012, as well as statistics data for regional, state and metropolitan areas.

A new question from the 2012 survey shows that adults who have attended the performing arts or have visited museums as children are three to four times more likely to see an exhibition or visit museums as adults. Access to art during childhood is a stronger indicator of adult participation in the arts than education, gender, age or income.

- Technology is an important factor in creating and participating in the arts. During 2012, nearly three-quarters of American adults - about 167 million people - use electronic media to watch or listen art, and big part of adults use electronic media to create music or visual art

- Women participate in arts with a higher percentage than men in all categories, with the exception of a few. For example, men are more than twice as likely as women to use electronic media to create or perform music, and are also more likely to create visual art online.

- More than half (54%) of all American adults have attended at least one live music, theater, or dance performance in the last year, or went to see an art exhibition. That's about 120 million people.⁵¹

IV. 2. Examples

The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) is building model for exhibition which is followed worldwide. The standards that have been set in museum work are still actual and today: a new approach to building exhibitions; digitizing the collection; an online access; a spectacular visualization and memorable branding over the years. Now the Museum of Modern Art is developing a strategy for development that is fully focused on the museum's virtual presence and the online feedback connection, which it expects

⁵¹ See. Data Data Profile # 5.

<https://www.arts.gov/artistic-fields/research-analysis/arts-data-profiles/arts-data-profile-5>

from its public. For this purpose, the Museum of Modern Art analyzes the data with content that is generated and published online.

The High Museum of Art in Atlanta is changing its permanent exhibition, putting in the centre of its work the focus on exhibits and on the visitors. The renovated exhibit was opened in October 2018 based on project by studio Selldorf Architects.

What to expect from the museum today?

In 2018, the most visited museum is the Louvre - this is due both to the overall interest in the museum and to the great success of the Delacroix anniversary exhibition. The Louvre recorded a 26% increase in total attendance for the previous year due to three factors. On first place, it is attracting viewers through the exhibition of Delacroix. Great importance to the promotion of the museum is devoted to his advertising strategy and in particular the popularity of the music clip of Beyonce and Jay-Z, who was shot in the museum building. He shows hip-hop couples moving in front of museum attractions, including and in front of a Leonardo da Vinci's 'Mona Lisa' painting. As third reason, is emphasized the calmer atmosphere in the city and the normalization following the deadly terrorist attacks during 2015, which also led to an increase in foreign tourists.

Chapter V. ADDRESSING THE AUDIENCES IN BULGARIA: THE EXAMPLE OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY

Sociological analysis of publics and own research also occupies a certain place in the dissertation in the part research of publics in the National Gallery. The study has the aim to contribute to a better understanding of publics in Bulgaria - still a huge void in our museology. The museums in Bulgaria are keeping some fragmentary statistics about the number and type of visitors. Collecting, classifying and organizing these databases will serve for the research of publics in museums in Bulgaria.

V. 1. Museum Audiences in the Official Documents, an Analysis

The analysis of *orientation toward publics* in art museums in Bulgaria is linked to a review of the legal framework in which we find references to museum publics. Due to the nature of museums in Bulgaria: 19 state museums, 151 municipal, 4 other public museums and none private⁵² it is important to clarify the mechanisms for defining and regulating their activity, which is based on the legal framework. The main normative acts and strategic documents related to the museum activity and the publics in Bulgaria are: Cultural Heritage Act⁵³, Act for Protection and Development of Culture⁵⁴, Three-year Action Plan for the implementation of the National Development Program: Bulgaria 2020 in the period 2018-2020⁵⁵, Law on Pre-school and School Education⁵⁶ The National Statistical Institute (NSI) provides data for the culture⁵⁷ containing information on the number of museums, exhibitions, etc.

It is important to note that, unfortunately, in all the documents cited here, 'public', 'publics', 'visitors' are not mentioned anywhere as a priority, but only in separate sentences as part of ancillary or explanatory activity, such as. in the section on public funding programs.

V. 2. Museum Audiences as subject of Social Research in Bulgaria

According to data from the National Statistical Institute⁵⁸, museum visits in 2016 were 5 230 thousands and compared to 2015 are increased by 9.8%, but on the other hand in 2018 are observed a lower attendance in comparison with the previous year - to 5 084 thousands. What is this due to? A rather alarming tendency, especially when compared to data from museums around the world, where we have seen an increase in attendance in recent years. Approximately one quarter of these visits (1 223 000 in 2016 and 1 024 000 in 2018) were made on days with free entrance.

⁵² According to the data of the National Institute for Statistics (NSI) www.nci.bg

⁵³ Cultural Heritage Act, publ. SG, No. 19 since 13.03.2009.

⁵⁴ Act for Protection and Development of Culture publ. SG, No. 50 since 01.06.1999.

⁵⁵ Three year action plan for the implementation of the nation program for development: Bulgaria 2020 in the period 2018-2020 it is a continuation of Government's program for sustainable development of Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2016 – 2018 , See: National program for development Bulgaria 2018 – 2020, <http://www.strategy.bg/StrategicDocuments/View.aspx?Id=765>

Law for Pre- School and School education, publ. SG, No. 79 since 13.10.2015.

⁵⁶ Law for Pre- School and School education, publ. SG, No. 79 since 13.10.2015.

⁵⁷ NSI, statistical data for the culture, <http://nsi.bg/bg/content/3552/culture>.

⁵⁸ www.nci.bg

There was an increase in the number of visits of foreigners to museums - by 271 thousands or with 36.8%, compared to the previous year for 2016 and 1,230 thousands for 2018. There is a regular and surely increase of foreign visitors at the expense of the Bulgarian ones. This fact is especially important when the museum is developing its exhibition program; when preparing supporting information; when dealing with the permanent exposition and its educational programs.

Unfortunately, many museums do not recognize the foreign public as their own - very often there is a lack of information in a foreign language; directions, special tours for foreigners. The most problematic are the texts accompanying the exhibitions. Very often, in them lack basic information about the event, participants, history and context, usually at the entrance there is an introductory text without referring to more extensive research. There are missing also and accompanying catalogues. The main reason, for this, as the museums themselves point out, is the lack of funds. If we consider at the financial framework of the museums, we find that the basic part of the incomes goes to budget support, which does not include the research activity of the museum. Despite the requests for development of museum work and orientation toward publics as a priority in their work, we observe a decline in the attendance.

What is impressive is the still low percentage income from tickets. Compared to the financial policies of museums in the United States, where much of the funding for museums comes from tickets sales, here public engagement is not still considered a marketing strategy.

Within the framework of the dissertation I made an inquiry to the sociological agencies in Bulgaria to provide data related to museum publics. From the inquiry it was revealed that in our social agencies there haven't been conducted researches in the cultural sector. The lack of interest for this field also leads to her poor knowledge, as well as obstruction of any actual work in the area of museums. The statistical data are not specialized for museum publics, but inform about the general attitudes and interest or lack thereof in events, connected to art.

V. 3. The Example of the National Gallery of Bulgaria

In 2016 at the Night of Museums and Galleries, I did my own survey of the

National Gallery's publics through a survey, conducted at all its branches (Palace, Square 500, Crypt of the Temple - Monument 'St. Alexander Nevski', Museum of Socialist Art, Sofia Arsenal - Museum of Contemporary Art)⁵⁹. In the public consultation there are involved many volunteers helping to be interviewed over 570 people. The survey can serve as a major source of information in the preparation of the strategy for the development of the National Gallery, as well as a model for work in the study of publics of other museums.

In first place as motive for visiting the museum is indicated the education, the interest in a given topic. The younger visitors see the museum as a place for fun and social discussion, while the older visitors see a place for aesthetic enjoyment.

Segmenting the Museum Public: today, we are increasingly talking not about research of public according socio-demographic characteristics, but rather about the profile of the visitor: many researchers deny this method, especially because of empirical ambiguity, but it is used especially actively in more and more museums - mainly in art, and especially in contemporary art.

The provided answers, as are diverse at first glance, have a common content in some of them. A few key points related to the public and the museum make an impressions. The word that is present in both groups of answers: what you expect and what you miss in the National Gallery is 'interactivity'. The introduction of new technologies as well the participation of the public are among the priorities. It is not surprising the polarity of some of the answers: there are in demand exhibitions of 'old authors', but 'young' are also present; 'classic aesthetic works of art'; 'Modern Art (XX Century) - impressionism, post-impressionism, expressionism'. This is due to the perception that art in its various forms and periods should be present in the National Gallery. There are two main points that are highlighted, which should be taken into special consideration: the first is the requirement for more information: about exposure, authors, art works; in the media and the second is the desire for more educational programs, especially aimed at the children's audience, family visits, the inclusion of more conversations, organized visits.

⁵⁹ The poll, which I conduct in the National Gallery, as well as the published data here, is with the permission of the National Gallery Management.

The survey I conduct at the Sofia Arsenal - Museum of Contemporary Art precedes the opening of the branch. It is open to the public, uploaded to the museum's website. This survey does not contain data on socio-demographic data including gender, age, education, etc., but does contain questions about the content side of museum activity. The questions I set are again directed at publics and their research. In this poll, I focus entirely on the tendencies in the development of the museum program, including exposition, collection, accompanying events, public participation. It is interesting to note some repetition as in the answers to the activities of the National Gallery: more interactivity; impressionist exhibitions; representatives of modernism. It is noteworthy that the answers are more in-depth and better substantiated. However, in some of the answers do not seem to be taken into account the different profile of the museum.

In this poll can also be included foreign visitors - only with them we have answers for the socio-cultural nature of art; links with European cultural heritage, etc.

In 2017, the National Gallery was nominated for the prestigious European Museum of the Year Award at the European Museum Forum⁶⁰. The prize is divided in two directions: for innovation in the exhibition space when presenting collections and for developing the publics in the museum. The National Gallery Award nomination is in the second category: successful programs for development of publics. I have been initiating three of these projects at SAMSI (Sofia Arsenal - Museum of Contemporary Art) in recent years in response to the expectations for the museum to be a place for meetings, talks, interactions.

⁶⁰ The European Museum forum (EMF), acting under the auspice of the Council of Europe, organize the prize since its establishment. EMF are independent, non-profit and voluntary association, registered in the United Kingdom, which awards the 'European Museum of the Year' award "(EMYA), also established in 1977 EMP e:

- committed to enhance the protection of the European museums ;
- a starting point for the whole world of museums;
- widely available information center;
- organizer of meetings designed to develop experience and knowledge.

See. HYPERLINK "<https://europeanforum.museum/>"<https://europeanforum.museum/>
Last visit on 15.03.2018

CONCLUSIONS

The topic of development of publics is becoming more and more actual in recent years. However, very few museums have conducted their own survey toward publics.

The present work confirmed that this research cannot be done 'in a hurry' or 'among others'. It is important in advance to be clarified the goals and tasks of the study, so that it can become a tool for strategic and operational museum work. It became clear that one larger survey of publics, including all museums in the country, can be organized only with the involvement from the side of the state institutions. It needs to include regular, systematic analyzes to be complete, not just one-time surveys.

The lack of all, enough valuable attention to museum publications in Bulgaria makes more difficult the in-depth research on this theme; also is impeded the work of museums. We dispose a small number of studies ordered by individual museums.

Main attention of the study is given for the changes in the museums due to their *orientation toward publics*. More and more museums announce for their priority the work with publics. Based on their own survey to visitors they develop museum activity in close contact with topics relating to public for example in the analysis of their organizational work; the process of exposure the expositions; communication strategies. New museum activities are being introduced, the qualification of museum specialists is being developed, there are attracted new ones with actual duties and profile - for example expert 'publics' to the department 'Public relations', also expert 'social media', expert 'digital communications'; the activity of the Education Department is expanded, the responsibilities of the curators in planning the exhibitions are changing.

The dissertation has expanded the theme of orientation to publics, through including questions about the digital, expositional and communicational development of the museum. It has been emphasized, that over the years world museums also follow tendencies, this can most easily be traced through their strategies for development. If in the past the museum activities were focused to exploring the collections, later they included building of expositions; today they are discussing the place of the museum in the digital age. In the study found a special place the 'new exposure', namely the

confrontation with spatial and institutional conditions of contemporary practice of exposure as constant dialogue between the architectural environment, the exposition and the public. The space should be easily modified according to the artistic intervention and curatorial solution in accordance with the specific exhibition architecture.

There was emphasized the importance of visual identity - the branding of the modern museum, which uses clear messages and communication of the institutions with the public. The purpose is to contain the concept of the museum, seen not from the perspective of the museum specialist, but of the visitor.

The museum is changing and the clearest example of this is the proposal to change the definition of 'museum' that ICOM submits for discussion. If this will be adopted by Council at the September 2019 meeting in Kyoto, *orientation toward publics* will be considered as a priority activity for the museum.

The relationship of the museum with future I find it again in *the orientation to the publics* and the fact⁶¹ that the possibility to visit the museum again and again is much greater if you have done it as a child.

The future of the National Gallery is in the engagement of the public and special of the youngest, so that we can expect it again. The mission of the gallery is to encourage and develop this sense of continuity and to design it to the future, becoming a place for cultural innovation, a laboratory for artistic experiments, knowledge and a new type of communication. Only in this way it will meet the new museum requirements set out in the ICOM proposal.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE DISSERTATION WORK

- There has been conducted a first study oriented toward publics to art museum in Bulgaria.
- Successful conducted survey of a large number of visitors to the National Gallery, analyzed results and comprehended in the specific work of the museum.

⁶¹ See. Chapter IV.1. The museums in the USA. Tendencies.

- Analyzed and refined a number of concepts - basic terms such as 'museum', 'audience', as well as new concepts formed: 'developing the publics', 'access', 'barriers to access', etc.;
- There are presented a numerous statistically data from Bulgaria, Germany and the USA, that provide an opportunity to record changes in museum attendance in recent years.
- Work with the public is considered within the existing legal framework in our country, and they are offered opportunities for improvement over the normative regulations affecting the activity of the museums.
- It is considered the introduction of European public relations practices in a national context.
- They are given practical guidelines for museum work in art museums that can be applied in museum work in Bulgaria when planning and organizing a permanent exposition; temporary exhibitions; branding of the museum; digital and communication strategy; educational activity according to the profile of the museum visitor.

PUBLICATIONS RELATING TO THE DISSERTATION TOPIC

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