

***MIGRATIONS MUSEUMS  
A JOURNEY THROUGH THE ITINERARY OF  
NATIONAL HISTORY***



@ Manuel Meira

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## 1. Museums and Museology

**M**useology is not a new science: when the pleasure and the practice of collecting objects, due to its exotic, rare, beautiful or inherently valuable nature gave way to the institutionalization of public spaces designed to have them be enjoyed at will, museums were born as organized systems. Museology studies the methods and the appropriate techniques to collect, sort, preserve and display those items.

All the progress achieved in the scientific world, advances operated by new technologies and the evolution of values and behaviours of human societies have given way to new concepts applicable to this kind of spaces. New models for such institutions have been theorised, tested and perfected by means of a greater rigor and systematization of the records. Different forms of gathering information and classification were developed – steps that although independent require an

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<sup>1</sup> **BIO-NOTE** - Maria Beatriz Rocha-Trindade, is a Sociologist and a Full Professor at Universidade Aberta (the Portuguese Open University). Her research career began with a Ph D at Université René Descartes – Sorbonne, Paris (1970) with a thesis on Portuguese emigration to France. Since then she published more than two hundred scientific works, in different languages, in Portugal and in various countries in the world; among them, she is the author of several books, including a well-known Portuguese textbook, *Sociologia das Migrações*. International as well as internal migrations and cultural relations have always been her dominant fields of interest. She was the founder of the Centro de Estudos das Migrações e das Relações Interculturais, in Lisbon (a R&D Unit of the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology) where she works as a senior researcher. She belongs to several international scientific associations and networks and is a member of editorial boards or referee for journals and revues dedicated to the study of migration issues. In recognition for her teaching and research work, she has been awarded by the French Government with Ordre Nationale du Mérite and the Portuguese Grã-Cruz da Ordem da Instrução Pública.

articulation between them – and conservation and restoration techniques were invented, developed, adapted or improved. Finally, museums began searching for new publics, taking advantage of the evolution of habits and tastes, extending and diversifying interests through more effective liaison processes between the museum and its visitors.

From the academic institution, only dedicated to a small fringe of cultivated people, to experts, aesthetes or simply to the curious, the museum of today seeks to reach new audiences in an attempt to expand the number of its regular visitors and diversify targeted sources and age groups.

Instead of the cold and gloomy rooms of the past, the stiff and closed showcases featuring a multitude of untouchable distant pieces, institutions are now drawn to more contemporary and participative exhibition layouts where the objects presented are much closer to the visitor.

We have entered the domain of staging and spectacle, of seduction and interactive communication. The muteness of the objects has given way to an ambient sound, to background music, to the rotation of the work piece, to the variation of light; the electronic guide that talks to us as we approach an object; the various processes of creating interactive dialogues between image and sound, between the curator and the visitor.

Techniques to guide the visitors introduced alternative routes within each museum or even thematic pathways that allow those who have less time to direct their visit to what really matters to them. Another example concerns the adaptation of means to receive an audience with specific characteristics such as the hearing or the visual impaired.

As a result of developments in major museums or simply as a parallel trend, we have been witnessing a newfound interest for preserving all that is at risk of being lost forever, in terms of both material and cultural heritage. In this context, ancient abandoned mansions are being recovered and what had previously been ignored, despised or thought of as junk is now being dug up, classified and archived (Rocha-Trindade 1993, p. 17).

The individual pieces no longer constitute the core of the displays; they are intertwined with their social context, giving them a wider dimension. Themes,

situations and problems are evoked linking past and present, connecting locations, different ways of thinking, of producing, of feeling and living. In this perspective, as international mobility is "a phenomenon which inherently crosses spaces and reproduces itself through time, it is important to 'musealize' migrations" (Rocha-Trindade 2014, p. 289). Due to their importance, migrations have gathered private and public interest, especially within the countries that know and deal with it closely.

## 2. Social and Cultural Ancestry

For migratory flows that have reached a certain degree of stability and continuity, the search for ancestral roots is quite a common issue. While the first generation of immigrants have the characteristic cultural traits of their country of origin in mind, the immediate descendants, possibly born abroad and acculturated in the country where their parents settled, ignore the cultural roots of the ascendants: because they refuse the immigrant status (so often negative in the receiving country) and because of the pressure of the surrounding society.

Social studies on various migratory contexts, where the sociological and anthropological perspectives stand out, reveal that it is natural and frequent - to see in the following generations a revival of curiosity toward the original culture of their ascendants, accompanied by a desire of belonging. In other words, it is as if a period of two or three generations was enough to erase the memories of the difficulties endured by immigrants in the moment of arrival (finding residence and work), the discrimination, abuse and the citizenship deficits – a whole set of unpleasant situations to which they were exposed. Instead, these younger generations have an imagined picture, an even mythicized, almost romantic and idealized notion of the origins of their families.

It is thus justified, that so many Brazilians enthusiastically claim their Portuguese, Italian or German ancestry: the success of "genealogic consultants", who, especially in the Americas, seek to find family names and lands of origin; and



Quite often, this search for more or less ancient roots also gives rise to committed initiatives and active interventions, such as the establishment of clubs and associations, learning the language and culture, the practice of traditional (or ethnic) cuisine<sup>3</sup> and even the organization and commemoration of traditional celebrations and festivities.

In an updated outlook, the conscious assumption of a hybrid affiliation – a web of elements that combine and recombine various cultural traits, referring both to local society and culture of origin– allowed the recognition of "new" cultures, which are an enriching factor on both an individual as collective level. To the extent that diversity becomes accepted and differences are relativized and conditions to strengthen the self-esteem of minority populations are created.

At a time where diverse globalizations are established – among which human mobility stands out, the rupture of cultural isolation, of ethnic or religious fundamentalism and ethnocentrism can only be translated into something essentially positive – a philosophy of inclusive highly constructive nature but whose implementation is not always easy.

### 3. Migrations Museums - Recording Memory for the Future

The designation proposed for this point is nothing more than an attempt of extrapolation of comprehensive experiences already implemented in several countries of the world, in issuing countries in addition to receiving countries. The examples presented compose an illustrative selection of varied typologies<sup>4</sup>, without the intention of putting forth an exhaustive survey (Rocha-Trindade 2014, pp. 293-303). In this sense it is useful to consider that, every migratory current has its own characteristics given by the time frame in which they took place and where they took place, therefore, there is a specific group of elements relevant for each one of them. Nonetheless, the strategies taken to adapt these elements into a

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<sup>3</sup> Ethnic restaurants are widely known and have an increasing and diverse clientele.

<sup>4</sup> Among the two hundred and twenty-one thousand references found in Google, which are linked to the words: "Migration Museum", numerous museums, grouped by characteristics in different typologies, can be found.

museological concept are generalizable; mostly due to the generic character they assume within a universal social route.

In reality and in diagrammatic terms, the migratory movement process starts with the moment and the way the decision to leave is made; it continues with the materialization of that decision; with the way found to overcome distances between the place of departure and of arrival; the settlement and establishment in the country of arrival and closes its cycle with the projects and ways of returning to the land of origin (Rocha-Trindade 1995, pp. 37-9). This succession of events can be adjusted to emigration as well as immigration concerning one or several countries.

In this perspective, the museums dedicated to international migrations, may appear very different in their design and content in different parts of the world. However, they all resemble each other regarding the purpose for which they were founded, their internal organization in addition to the typology of materials put at the disposal of visitors.

In addition to the general conception of the project to create any museum, many aspects have to be considered: specific spaces intended for the storage or display of existing items and those that are intended for permanent or temporary presentations; a documentation centre where information can be deposited and accessed. This centre enables the development of associated research and the basic elements required for the implementation of cultural initiatives.

All categories of systematically gathered documents – written (as chronicles, letters, diaries), pictures (photographs, videos), sound recordings (interviews, tales, songs), personal objects and even the reconstruction of environments related to the migratory process – become increasingly important. If classified and archived in a relevant manner they leave clues to be found, not only for those searching for relevant references but also for those who wish to pursue based scientific research.

Shipping manifests and ship's passenger lists; permits or granted passports records, which allowed admission or departure to another country; residence or work permits assigned; foreign labour collective contracts; in short, all demographic censuses; lists or simple counts referring to migrant populations are precious elements in a migrations museum.

From an affective point of view, it is of course gratifying to find the common thread that may lead to the identification of an individual past and a better knowledge of the spaces and contexts in which this past was experienced. Nevertheless, it is no easy task, especially when the generational backtrack increases and when a spatial divergence that can reach other continents occurs. However, personal documents are seldom kept for more than one or two generations. Moreover, the facts and story telling, mainly done by elders, progressively lose accuracy as something always gradually vanishes in the process of oral transmission. The reality of that past can be twisted for as every different person tells a story, one or more elements will be subtracted, added or changed...

#### 4. The "Museumization" of Migration in Portugal

As a result of intense political changes that have occurred in Portugal after the April Revolution (1974), there is a combination of the two strands of international mobility: emigration and immigration. For this reason, it is important to illustrate the presence of Portuguese and their descendants all over the world, as well as the vast groups of foreign communities that now live or will live in the country. These communities may decide to stay definitively, originating successive generations of descendants.

Portuguese Population – 2016		
Living in Portugal	10.325.500	
Foreign residents in Portugal	397.731	
Emigrants:	> 2.200.000	(Estimate)

*Source: INE, SEF/MAI, PORDATA*

To do justice to the relevance of this phenomenon, it is necessary to acknowledge the projects, organization and installation of the migration museums that have been created.



*Portuguese Migration - Museological Initiatives*

As a matter of fact, in spite of the existence of various initiatives of exhibitions that have dealt with this subject, a qualitative leap to convert the circumstantial into structural is essential, because many initiatives are, despite their great quality, ephemeral and should have a more permanent character. Accordingly, to understand the extent of the migratory phenomenon and its manifestations, it is important to locate and to be able to access a vast amount of documents, which became scattered over the decades in distinct governmental entities, police and administrative departments and many other private archives. Thus, it is imperative to digitalize and classify the gathered information, so as to give continuity to the archive in development, and lastly, make it accessible to current and future generations.

A database of this sort, properly classified and indexed, could be designated as the migration archive and could integrate a virtual migrations museum. Landscapes from countries of origin and destination could also be included, in addition to social experiences and cultural manifestations in one and other countries, products of artistic and intellectual creation, oral recordings of memories and expression of expectations developed under specific time and space frames.

Professional or amateur film collections could also be a part of this archive, exhibition or festival records, radio and television reports, musical works recordings or oral narratives, in short, anything related to the topic of migrations as leitmotiv.

As a complement of an archive and a virtual museum, a library dedicated to the theme would constitute a documental stock composed of books and publications, in paper or optical record, generally following the universal theme of human mobility and the aspects specifically linked to Portugal.

Simple common sense tells us how long the process of creating a specialized library is particularly when its central theme manifests the diversity and dynamic that this one inherently covers. In this sense, the priority of its construction would be focused, above all, in an extensive archive, backed by an effective and comprehensive classification structure and user-friendly navigation system. There is no need to insist on the necessity to, on a national level, officially recognize the value of a cultural institution of this kind, for the memory it preserves and for the didactic value it represents, not only now but also as a legacy for future generations.

#### 5. Museological "Speech" – Permanent Exhibitions and Temporary Exhibitions

Despite the permanent existence of a demographic mobility in Portugal, the value it holds in social history hasn't always been recognized. When it assumes the configuration of an "imposed" displacement by lack of existing opportunities—whether it is called political or economic migration – regarding both exits and arrivals, its existence is generally silenced. However, several measures have been taken and the text that follows includes the existing institutions following their foundation's timeline.

##### 5.1. Memory Space of Exiles (Espaço Memória dos Exílios) – Cascais (Portugal), 1999

<https://www.cascais.pt/equipamento/espaco-memoria-dos-exilios>

Because of the nature and the motivations of the protagonists involved, consisting of generically by families of overthrown Royal houses from all over Europe who sought Portugal as a host country, the Exile Museum meets the same methodological principles of migration museums. Regardless of their very prosperous economic situation and although their material conditions of existence are not in any way comparable, the exiled families went through a process of

transition, away from their roots, psychologically, not very dissimilar from the generic migrant's experience.

The Museum was born from the exhibition "Cascais-Estoril, a Place of Exile", an initiative that commemorated the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, referring to high personalities (not only Royal families, but also writers such as Hemingway and personalities from the financial world such as Calouste Gulbenkian), who took refuge in Portugal during that conflict and making it permanent. Its historical nature enables a recreation of the atmosphere lived locally, mostly through the period pictures presented.

## 5.2. Museum of Migrations and Communities (Museu das Migrações e das Comunidades), Fafe (Portugal), 2001<sup>5</sup>

<http://museudasmigracoes.blogspot.pt/>



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Fafe's Museum – "Museum of Migrations and Communities"<sup>6</sup>, is installed in the House of Culture of Fafe, built by the "Brazilian"<sup>7</sup> Fernando Castro Abreu e Magalhães, in 1868. It integrates a repository of information, whose characteristics provide face-to-face or distant access to the rich collection it holds. I think that

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<sup>5</sup> A set of several articles by this author or written in collaboration with the historian Miguel Monteiro, referred to in the bibliography of this text, provide extensive information about the current Museum of migrations and communities.

<sup>6</sup> The Migrations and Communities Museum founded by the initiative of Fafe's City Hall, recalling the strong migration tradition of the municipality, the Brazilian destination had a particular expression in the 19th century, leaving several architectural vestiges of very high quality both in the city and in the region.

<sup>7</sup> "Brazilian" was the designation given to the Portuguese who were returning to their country of origin, after achieving visible economic success in Brazil.

even today few acknowledge the value that this institution represents for the preservation and transmission of memory that is part of Portuguese history. The interaction developed with national and international institutions will undoubtedly continue and multiply the results that have been achieved. It results of an initiative taken forth by the City Hall, and it maintains a close relationship with the House of Culture of Porto Seguro (Brazil) and with several Portuguese associations in France.

Recalling the strong emigration tradition of this council, first to Brazil, mainly in the 19th century, leaving the city with several great quality architectural vestiges, the Museum aims to value a heritage with its own characteristics all originated by Portuguese emigrants rooted in or returning from Brazil, who there developed a remarkable economic activity.<sup>8</sup> This heritage consists of small palaces (with magnificent skylights), industrial and other buildings, gardens and the city's Promenade (the Calvário Garden) whose construction is due to the Comendador Albino de Oliveira Guimarães (1892).



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Being a Web Museum, a project understood as an information platform for the promotion of research and dissemination activities, it is organized in the following ways: thematic rooms, archive, house museum, museological nucleus and historical sites.

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<sup>8</sup> The theme has received the interest of many researchers and great photographers that result in valuable publications (see collection of images held by Júlio de Matos, and 2008 by Paula Torres Peixoto, 2013). The architecture of this time was not fully appreciated, having for many years been object of severe criticism, a situation that is completely outdated. Today, it integrates national patrimony, and the owners and the architects responsible for the respective construction plans are widely known.

The *Memory Room* gives particular visibility to material and symbolic expressions of emigration on places of destination and return, to architecture, to the circulation of ideas, the development of cultural, social and economic initiatives and to philanthropy. Also considered are the influences in behaviour on a more private level.

The *Diaspora Room* integrates a database organized by geographical areas.

The *Communities Room* is dedicated to associations of immigrants in South America, especially Brazil, in North America, in Europe, Africa and Asia.

The *Ascendance Room* provides access to ancestry genealogies from the Population and Society Studies of the University of Minho/NEPS, elaborated through the parish reconstitution method by Norberta Amorim, complemented by many other aspects of their "life stories".

The *Lusophony Room* projects the life and work of figures related to the construction of the Portuguese speaking world, highlighting significant cultural expressions, which are situated at the time of the appropriation of colonial territories and the time when an important city - Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) - was the capital of the Kingdom.

The *Knowledge Room* disseminates scientific works in the various fields of mobility: knowledge of colonization and emigration.

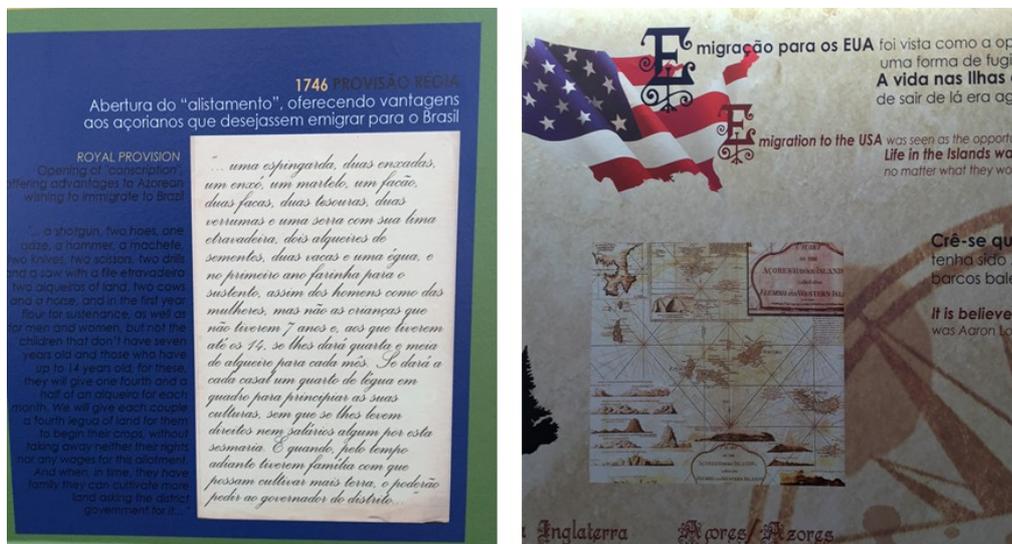
An important part of the set of components that make up the collection of this Museum enables the tracing of a cultural itinerary, which allows visitors to collect individualized information with a complementary value of great quality.



Although the topic is considered in all its comprehensiveness the records that integrate it focus predominantly on the emigration to Brazil and the transnational relationship established by this route. Public activities related to the commemoration of this important phase of local history are integrated in the cultural panorama developed by the municipality every year.

The innovative value that it holds and all the initial development that characterized it have not had, unfortunately, the expected continuity. The public announcement of new projects of renewal and update allows, however, recovering the expectations developed when of its foundation.

### 5.3. Azorean Emigration Museum (Museu da Emigração Açoriana), São Miguel, Azores (Portugal), 2005



<http://www.ribeiragrande.pt/geo/museu-da-emigracao-a-oriana/>

© Manuel Meira



Another museum dedicated to the migratory phenomenon is located in the Atlantic area - the island of São Miguel, in the Azores Autonomous Region – and it keeps memories of the population that left. During the 1990s, some emigrants asked the Ribeira Grande City Hall to start something in order to evoke the history of the Azorean communities and their emigration.

The implementation of the project was achieved through the Museu da Emigração Açoriana (Museum of Emigration of the Azores), inaugurated on September 9th, 2005, which is located in the former premises of the Barracão do Peixe (The Fish Shack), where the opening exhibition "Os Cabral de Mello, New Bedford, 1890-1930" organized by José de Mello was presented. This approach is a great example of the importance that the United States of America have since always had within the local mobility.

However, many other destinations are remembered through evocative displays of the Azorean presence in many other countries.

Through the presentation of objects, charts and photographs, complemented by narratives, the visitor will have a general idea of the most important points of an emigration that has for a very long time been a decisive factor in the life of the archipelago. It is contained in an ample space, of rectangular size, restricted to a single room. This is more taking advantage of an available space, than a presentation inserted in a project previously designed for a purpose. Not wanting this assessment to be taken as a negative review, it should be noted that the materials collected are exposed according to the today obsolete collectionism featuring techniques. It would be important to update the presentation following the current techniques of museology, in which the "interactivity" has become an imperative.

**5.4. Memory, Space and Frontier Museum (Museu Espaço Memória e Fronteira), Melgaço (Portugal), 2007**



<http://www.cm-melgaco.pt/visitar/o-que-fazer/rede-melgaco-museus/espaco-memoria-e-fronteira/>

Seeking to preserve the memory of the county, closely related to smuggling and emigration, this border area takes the visitor through the stories reminiscent of the past of this region. It possesses a room dedicated to the smuggling activity and a ramp, along which the various moments related to all stages of migration are presented alongside the causes that motivated the departures; the preparation of the trip and the trip itself; the arrival and the experience in the country of destination, without forgetting the reflections produced by the movement in the country of origin.



© Manuel Meira

This is a nationwide subject illustrated by the local experience lived through the cross border relationship between Portugal and Spain. The participation of the University of Minho through research carried out by deep connoisseurs of this reality greatly contributed to the quality of the exhibition, the objects exhibited and the associated information (text and image).<sup>9</sup>

The building is located in the surroundings of the river Porto on which a jetty was built to connect it to the center of the village of Melgaço. The investment in restoration, expansion and adaptation of the old slaughterhouse was partly sponsored by the EU Interreg programme. The structure also hosts a service for emigrants and immigrants, to promote the return of the first and give all the information and guidance needed by the latter.

5.5. Museum of the Discoveries "Discovering of the New World,"  
Belmonte (Portugal), 2009

<https://cm-belmonte.pt/diretorio/museu-dos-descobrimentos/>

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<sup>9</sup> Among the teachers of the Universidade do Minho, stands out the name of the researcher Professor Albertino Gonçalves. The knowledge and experience that this prestigious sociologist holds on the migratory phenomenon in general, and on the French destination in particular, left high quality trademarks in all that institution.

Although all would make us assume that the Museum of the Discoveries, located in Belmonte (Beira Interior region), had as its main concern the exhaustive treatment of the subject after which it is named, it is not so. Although the evocation of the Discoveries exists, as a way of introduction, Brazil is the main reference in the entire exhibition space.

The municipal program that integrates this institution gives continuity to the historical valuation of its assets, through the figure of Pedro Álvares Cabral. This illustrious townie, whose discovery of a new transatlantic space, which would rise to the great country in which Brazil is transformed, made him a worldwide celebrity.

Mobility is the underlying concept present throughout the whole itinerary offered to the visitors and Portuguese immigrants in that country are also evoked. The technological automation that animates the entire installation allows a permanent interaction with the visitors and giving it a state of the art, innovative quality.

5.6. Museum of the Family Teixeira, Fajã da Murta, Faial,  
Santana, Madeira (Portugal), 2012

<https://pt-pt.facebook.com/museufamiliateixeira/>

Situated in Santana (interior North of Madeira Island) in Fajã da Murta, the family Teixeira Museum is a unique piece, born from the intent of a single person, responsible for its all conception, and that was able to achieve it.

Anaclet Teixeira, the son of an immigrant from Madeira (let us call it the "first wave", from around the 1950's) leaves for Venezuela, considered today as a priority target in the region, having obtained there a recognized economic success. To hear him describe his "life story", allows a better understanding of the strategy that got him to the top level where he now stands. The cult/worship of himself and all his family of origin, whose permanent and extended cohabitation he encouraged, is materialized in a complex of individualized buildings set in the highest quality landscaped grounds, which evoke each of the elements that constitutes the family.

The multiple pictures lining the walls of every room illustrate situations experienced and allow us to reconstitute the relationship type and standard of living of each character. A relationship with the divine stands out here and there, revealing the existence of a religious conviction, which materializes in a chapel and several representations - Our Lady of Fátima, is one example. The bell ring marks the regularity of a time in which religious songs are broadcasted.

You won't be able to say that the family Teixeira Museum is a museum on migrations; you might, however, say that it is a museal space built by a migrant,



© MBR-T

revealing many facts that are closely linked to his personal life.

The abundance of data that it contains allows the understanding of a life path full of struggle and successes; It cannot be extrapolated to all the diverse reality of Madeira emigrants in Venezuela, but it provides qualitative information that best enlightens the larger reality of which he belonged.

**5.7. Cais – Language and Migration Museum (Museu da Língua e das Migrações), Matosinhos/ Porto (Portugal) –**

**Work in Progress**

The Language and Migration Museum, which project phase ended and is to be built in Portugal by the Câmara Municipal de Matosinhos - Pelouro da Cultura (Matosinhos Town Hall- Department of Culture), is fully justified by the thematic association, which constitutes its main originality. A multidisciplinary approach will allow to put in perspective under the light of contemporary understanding, the memory of Portuguese migrations; the language will be approached in close connection with migratory flows, in their evolution, expansion and internationalization.

The dimension of the "lusophone" space that spans throughout all continents opened way for Portuguese to become the fourth most spoken language in the world; on the other hand, the volume of Portuguese living abroad is equivalent to about half of those who reside in the country.

Aiming to translate both strands of the migratory phenomenon, aspects that have always characterized the national context within human mobility, an extension of the subject matter will arouse very diverse interests. In each of the phases of the migration understood as a dual reality it is relevant to focus both on each country of origin as well as on the corresponding country (or countries) of destination.

The starting idea is a PIER (the meaning of CAIS), a metaphor translating the idea of the Portuguese identity - a people marked by the permanent outflow of population, scattered all over the world, where it has been anchoring and continuing to reside (174 countries).

The classical conception of an inert museum condemned to contemplation on the part of the visitor is now overcome and new projects are being undertaken. Using the potential of the latest information technologies and animation - education and cultural dissemination - to create new forms of interaction between what is presented and the visitor, museums enable the development of a dialogue on a process that reduces human monitoring and encourages interactivity.

#### **5.8. Portuguese Migration Museum, Sabugal (Portugal) - Work in progress**

Recently (2017) the Municipality of Sabugal launched the project of a great theme-inspired historical Museum. Sabugal is a frontier territory, close to nearby Spain, situated in the central region (sub-region of Beiras and Serra da Estrela), whose geographical and economic features led its inhabitants to seek survival and improvement of their situation elsewhere.

The "Portuguese Migration Museum", conceived as a place of interpretation of the migratory cycles of the country, seeks to relate the local dynamics with the perspective taken by the global phenomenon, having in mind the presence of Portugal in the world. Its dimension encompasses clearly the time dimension, which extends to the present.

Having already been assigned a physical space (a former elementary school now disabled) the whole plan could take in account the precise knowledge of the location and the exact dimensions of the building, allowing the detailed constructive design of all the exterior and interior arrangements – in which the programming of the floors was considered both in the functional and the museological aspects.

The five themes of the Museum program (central themes: local, national, European and global scales; integration processes; borders; migration in the world today) were distributed by the spaces available where, of course, the proper environments will be rebuilt.

The implementation calendar, already started, plans that the works will proceed in such a way that the inauguration will take place in 2019.

#### **6. Other museum projects abroad on Portuguese migrants (developed and without sequence)**

In addition to the abovementioned information, it is important to recall the success and failure of museological projects in locations where the presence of Portuguese is remarkable.

There are two Brazilian museological initiatives, which unfortunately have not left the sketchbook, but also deserve mentioning. The first, resulted from the idea of Councilman Wilson Leite Passos, from Rio de Janeiro, in the form of a draft bill presented to the municipality of this city (draft bill no. 512/83), for the creation of a "Museum of Portuguese Colonization". It was vetoed the following year by Mayor Marcello Alencar invoking arguments of financial and bureaucratic nature.

The second is from the beginning of the nineties, with the substance of law no. 1988 of June 8<sup>th</sup>, 1993 and Decree-Law N<sup>o</sup>. 12116, of June 24<sup>th</sup>, 1993, determining the creation and establishment of a program referred to as "Museum of the Portuguese Presence in the City of Rio de Janeiro". In this program, art. 2<sup>o</sup> p mosits "the creation, led by Municipal Education Office, of a historical exhibition intended to collect, conserve and to exhibit to public visitation, on a permanent basis, documents concerning the Portuguese presence in the city of Rio de Janeiro". In article 5<sup>o</sup> it is said that: "Annually, the month of June will be assigned as the month of the Portuguese-Brazilian Community, with festive programming, including solemn session at the City Hall (...)."

As far as it is known, it had no visible follow-up, despite the interest, until today kept by the President of the Federation of Portuguese and Brazilian-Portuguese Associations. A similar Portuguese initiative was also not implemented: by decree of August 24<sup>th</sup>, 1984, the then Secretary of State for Emigration (Manuela Aguiar), was assigned the mission of creating "the embryo of a future living museum of emigration and Portuguese communities, with the creation of a documental and Iconographic Fund".

Despite it being well structured, in terms of both its objectives and its functions, this project was not followed through, in large part due to the lack of human resources, materials and logistics mobilization.

Just a note to refer two research centers whose relevant developed work cannot be forgotten.

Although not constituting museological spaces, in the true sense of the term, they can be considered "engines" of research, greatly contributing to the knowledge of the Social History of the Portuguese immigration in the USA.

The "Portuguese Genealogical Society of Hawaii" (founded in 1981) and the Portuguese-American Historical Research Foundation (founded in 1996) deserve congratulatory mentioning. They are nonprofit organizations created to investigate, preserve and disseminate information, memories and relevant events on the Portuguese presence, with the support of volunteers, in order to give continuity to the knowledge they seek to record.

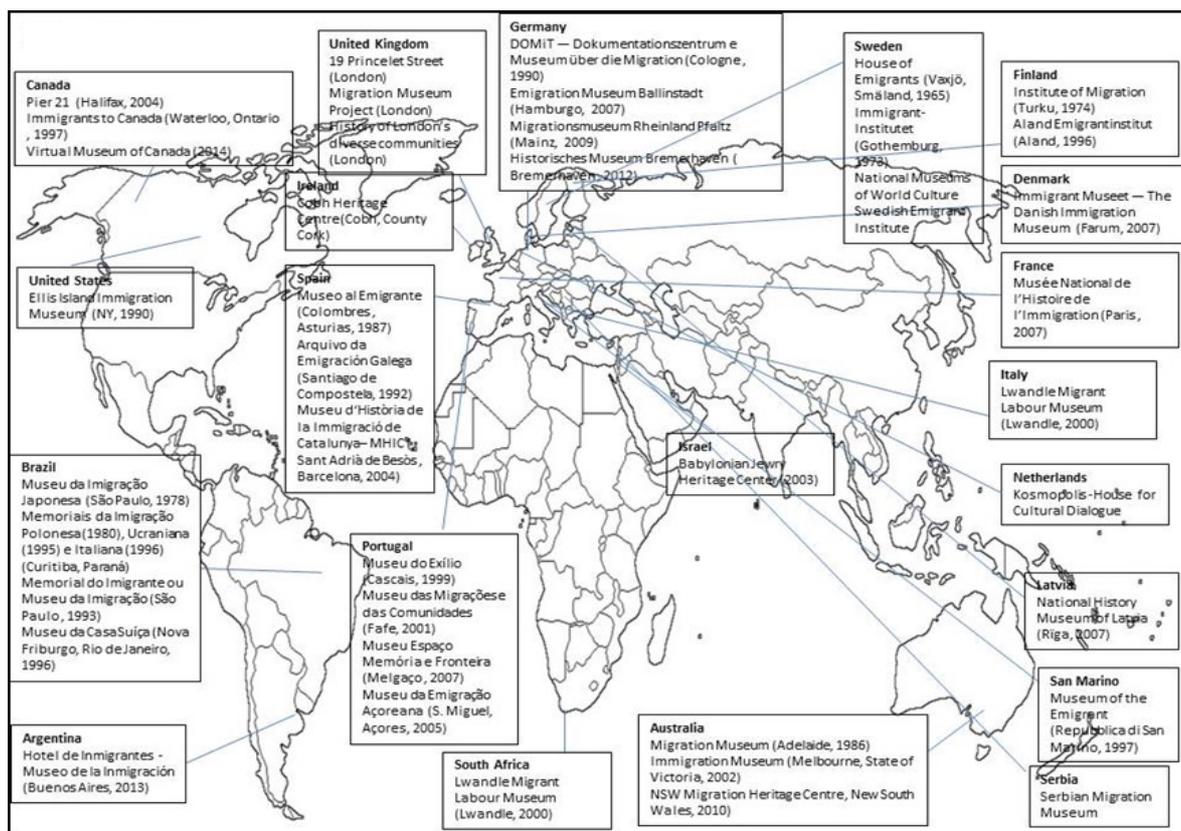
The New Bedford Whaling Museum, in the State of Massachusetts (U.S.A.), recently opened the Azores Whaleman Gallery on September 10th, 2010. Related to the Portuguese culture, its initial planning is due to Mary T. Vermette, a College Professor of Portuguese origin who presented the proposal (1999) to the then Foreign Affairs Minister, Jaime Gama. Later on, the Portuguese contribution of seven hundred thousand dollars was joined by the Federal Government's sponsorship that contributed to this wing of the Museum with one point two million.

## 7. A Galaxy of Museums on Migration

By the dispersion of the situation where they are currently located and the respective dates of their foundation, migration museums reveal how an interest in the phenomenon has hatched and intensified.

The list below does not in any way cover the general panorama of the museums organized around the subject; spread all over the world, they are itemized by chronological orientation selecting the foundation date for the respective presentation sequence, as above mentioned. The image that follows shows their implementation.

## Migration Museums



### 7.1. The House of Emigrants, Vaxjö (Sweden, Småland), 1965

<http://www.utvandrnashus.se/eng/>

Given the importance of Swedish emigration to the United States of America in the 19th and 20th centuries, the Museum of Vaxjö is dedicated to this migratory stream. In terms of scientific activity and services provided to the communities of Swedish origin in that country, it developed a praiseworthy work of reconstitution of families and locations of origin.

### 7.2. The Museum of Japanese Immigration to Brazil (Museu da Imigração Japonesa), São Paulo (Brazil), 1978

<http://www.museubunkyo.org.br/>

The Museum, installed in the Liberdade neighborhood of São Paulo, was inaugurated in celebration of the seven decades of Japanese immigration to Brazil (1908). It has a collection of more than 97,000 items belonging to Japanese immigrants, such as written documents (books, magazines, newspapers); images (photos, films, microfilms, videos); LP discs; paintings; household and work

utensils, in addition to garments including remarkably kimonos, which record their presence in that country. On the third floor of the same building is the library and a diversified collection that is not exposed, but can be consulted by scholars and others interested in the history of Japanese Immigration.

7.3. Memorials of Polish (Memorial da Imigração Polonesa), 1980; Ukrainian (Memorial da Imigração Ucraniana), 1995 and Italian Immigration (Memorial da Imigração Italiana), 1996, set of Memorials Located in Curitiba (Brazil, State of Paraná)  
<http://www.fundacaoculturaldecuritiba.com.br>

The small size of these museological spaces more than anything expresses the concern to make the memory of resident communities from each of the three countries mentioned last. The exhibited pieces and elements evoked reflect the symbolism they contain, reactivating the sense of belonging of those who identify with them. As they are installed in the city of Curitiba (known as the most European city in Brazil), in which people from any one of these three nationalities assumes a particular expression, the criterion was to group them in one location, subdividing their enumeration.

7.3.1. The Polish Immigration Memorial consists of a set of seven houses in wooden trunks, representing a Polish village. The houses are furnished with reproductions of objects evoking the beginning of an immigration chain that began in 1871.

7.3.2. The Ukrainian Immigration Memorial consists of a chapel dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel, a traditional Ukrainian House, an outdoor stage and a votive portal, all built in wood, including the roofs.

7.3.3. The Italian Immigration Memorial is situated in the Italian Forest, where there is a replica of the first Church of Santa Felicidade (Saint Felicity), a stage for artistic presentations, kiosks, arcades and fountains evoking Roman architecture and a location suitable for the manufacture of polenta (a sort of bread).

7.4. Museo al Emigrant, Colombres, Principality of Asturias (Spain), 1987

<http://www.archivodeindianos.es/>

The Principality of Asturias, the Caja de Asturias and the Universidad de Oviedo promoted the Fundación Archivo Indians, constituted on May 22nd, 1987. It is installed in Colombres, Ribadedeva, in the House-Museum built (1906) by Iñigo Noriega Laso, who emigrated to Mexico. The mansion is a clear example of Indian architecture on the Cantabrian coast.<sup>10</sup> The Foundation has a library and an important documental archive on the various Centres of Asturias (Argentina, Chile, Cuba, United States, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Uruguay, Buenos Aires, Tampa-Florida, USA) and Asturian and Spanish companies in America.

7.5. Ellis Island Immigration Museum, New York (USA), 1990

<http://www.ellisland.org/>

Ellis Island, at the estuary of the Hudson River in New York, was the point of mandatory concentration upon arrival of immigrants who came to North America. It is where proceeded the identification operations, medical surveillance, and documentation needed to enter the United States.

The Oral History project was launched in 1973 and the idea was to interview people (the project is still active) who migrated through that location, searching to rebuild their life stories. Audio and video transcripts are available for scientific research purposes (v.d. [http: www.genealogyblog.com](http://www.genealogyblog.com)).

7.6. The Immigrant Memorial or Immigration Museum (Memorial do Imigrante or Museu da Imigração), São Paulo (Brazil), 1993

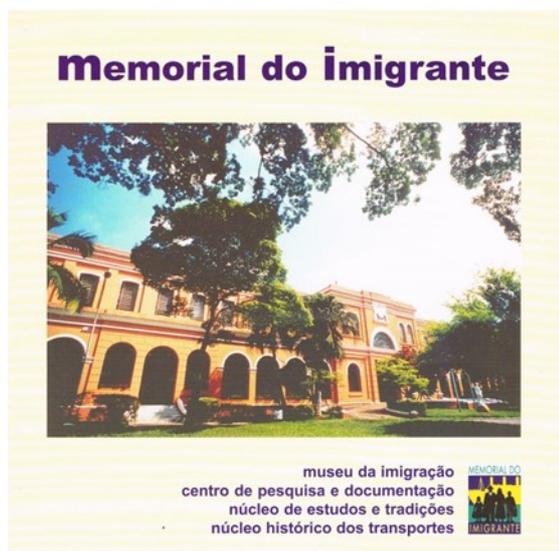
<http://www.memorialdoimigrante.org.br/>

Installed in the grandiose building built by the Sociedade Promotora de Imigração (Immigration Promoting Society), in 1888 (during the Presidency of the Count de Parnaíba, Antônio de Queiroz Telles), at the train terminal station linked to the Santos pier, was an inn for the immigrants arriving from Europe or Asia. Since 1993, it became a museum, preserving the memory of all the immigration currents that converged there.

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<sup>10</sup> A number of houses and palaces was built by people who emigrated to Mexico and through this act ensured their belonging to the region of origin. Evidence shows that the building of homes, behavior shared by several migrants in their area of origin, constitutes one of the purposes of those who emigrate and manage to achieve the expected success.

Integrated into the museum are a Research and Documentation Center, a Study and Traditions Center and a Bookstore.



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The recent remodeling (2014) gives it all the features of the modern museology and the design of the new interior architecture is the result of a diversified programming translates in a very high quality. Using the most modern techniques of communication with the public pays particular attention to the relationship between the country of origin and that which was sought by immigrants, where it is installed.

**7.7. The Swiss Home Museum (Museu da Casa Suíça), Nova Friburgo (Brazil, State of Rio de Janeiro), 1996**

<http://www.casasuica.info/>

The Swiss Home, inaugurated in 1996, following the construction of the Swiss Cheese Factory and School in 1987, aims to illustrate and document the installation of the people who have been coming from Switzerland to Brazil since 1819.<sup>11</sup> Faithful to its original motivations, the museum continues to develop historical and genealogical studies and focuses on a varied document repository dedicated to the immigration current, as well as objects related to the referenced period.

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<sup>11</sup> These initiatives resulted in the interest aroused by the publication of the doctoral thesis of Martin Nicoulin, dedicated to the study of the process of the Swiss colonization of Nova Friburgo, which uncovered reasons to intensify and consolidate the cultural relations between the two countries.

**7.8. Museo Dell'Emigrante, Republic of San Marino, 1997**

<http://www.museoemigrante.sm/on-line/home/museo-dellemigrante.html>

The Museo Dell' Emigrante, is installed in some rooms of the monastery of Santa Chiara, and was officially opened in 1997. Its organization was supported by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and has received contributions from public and private entities, including the UNESCO. Once again, the Research Centre and the Archive, associated with the museum, are the core of the development of the project.

**7.9. Portuguese Historical Museum, San Jose (USA, California), 1997**

<http://www.portuguesemuseum.org>

The Portuguese Historical Museum, cultural institution that evokes the Portuguese settling in the United States and, in particular, in California, seeks to portray life in Santa Clara Valley, especially in the period corresponding to the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The building is a replica of the first Empire (Chapel of the Holy Spirit), built circa 1915, associates religious activities to many other of social nature, allowing the knowledge of the permanence of cultural traditions that still remain. Its features give it the ability to act as a catalyst pole for the relationships that give shape to the Portuguese presence.

The Portuguese Heritage Society of California built the space with the support of the community that it represents and obtained support from local organizations and both Governments (Portuguese and American) in order to serve as an exhibition center of culture and heritage. In addition to the permanent exhibitions it houses temporary expositions and develops cultural programs in conjunction with several organizations and many of the Portuguese communities of the United States of America and from around the world. The exhibitions represent essentially the story of the Portuguese immigrants that is presented in successive steps: the position of Portugal in the Discoveries; Portuguese migrations in the world; the

Portuguese immigration in the United States namely in California, where the one headed to the Santa Clara Valley is highlighted.

7.10. Gallery of the Portuguese Pioneers (Galeria dos Pioneiros Portugueses), Toronto (Canada, Ontario), 2003

<https://pioneersgallery.ca/>

The Portuguese emigration to Canada began in the middle of the 20th century's fifties (1950's). The years 1953, 1954 and 1955 should be highlighted. A presence that was growing and spreading across the country, assumes a very special relevance in Montreal and in Toronto. Due to this fact, the Portuguese Pioneer Museum was founded in 2003 in Toronto. It evokes the role of pioneers in the founding the Portuguese community in Canada.

The building is located on St. Clair Avenue West, an historic site where were located the dwellings of the first Portuguese settlers. Professional instruments, artifacts, objects of personal use constitute an entire collection that illustrates their living conditions. Many and varied images related to the migratory route help to understand it.

7.11. Emigration History Museum of Catalonia - Mhic, Sant Adrià de Besòs (Spain, Barcelona), 2004

<http://www.mhic.net/>

This initiative constitutes a cultural proposal that is associated with a "Studies and Documentation Centre" on the history of immigration in Catalonia. In addition to a permanent exhibition it has been organizing a set of temporary exhibitions, continuously presented to the public and focused on topics of great relevance, presenting many of the aspects of local migratory phenomenon.

7.12. National History Museum of Latvia, Rīga (Latvia), 2007

<http://www.lapamuzejs.lv/>

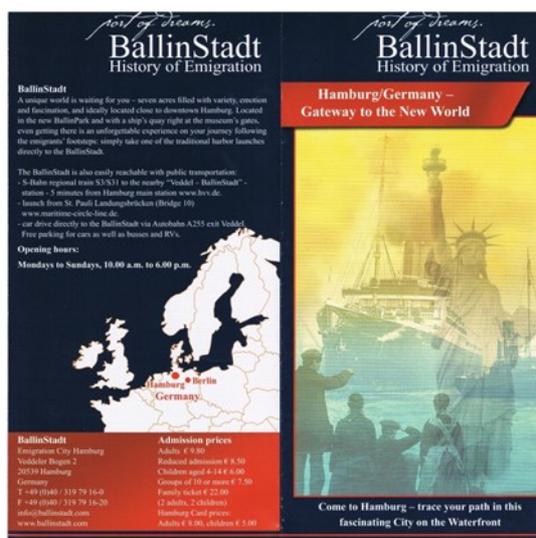
In 2007, a group of enthusiasts from Latvia sought to give voice to their experiences<sup>12</sup> creating a new museum, to report the lives of Latvians abroad. Thus

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<sup>12</sup> In spite of being from a small sized nation, Latvian descendants can be found in all parts of the world. The terror of war and the tyranny of political power, economic pressure and survival are all part of a historical heritage in which they take pride and seek to maintain. However, new cultures were being adopted, new languages were learnt and new paths were travelled.

the Latvians Abroad – Museum and Research Centre (LA-MRC) was born. It associates its investigation purposes to the intention of disseminating the experience lived by those who departed from the country (but stayed connected to it) to a wider audience.

7.13. The Ballinstadt Emigration Museum, Hamburg (Germany),  
2007



<http://www.ballinstadt.de/>

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The Ballinstadt Emigration Museum opened its doors in July 2007 and seeks to tell the story of more than two million people who emigrated between 1850 and 1934, from the port city of Hamburg. Three of its buildings were rebuilt in the historic site where were the designated "Emigration Halls" were located.

Ballinstadt provides a large "Research Center" for its public on the family theme, in cooperation with global leading researchers, suppliers of genealogical databases. Queries are free and carried out in the main building of the Research Center.

7.14. Musee National de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, Paris (France),  
2007

<http://www.histoire-immigration.fr/>

One of the decisions taken by the Inter-ministerial Committee on Integration, held in April 2003, refers to the delineation of a mission, which prefigures a "Resource Center for the Memory of Immigration". The project gave way to the

History of Immigration National City (CNHI), which aims to acknowledge and recognize the contributions made by immigration in France. The Museum has a permanent exhibition about the development of this social phenomenon, covering the last two hundred years of the history of immigration in the country and it develops a continuous program of cultural initiatives. The entire set of thematic exhibitions that animate this museum space, accompanied by conferences, seminars and lectures is also worth mentioning.

7.15. Museum of S. Filipe (Museu de S. Filipe), Island of Fogo (Republic of Cape Verde), 2009

<http://museumsaofilipe-fogo.blogspot.pt/>

Migrations are one of the subjects addressed in the Municipal Museum of St. Philip, situated on the island of Fogo. The dry weather has, since the beginning of the colonization of the Cape Verde Islands, brought periods of starvation; which associated with diseases and pests, were responsible for the deaths of thousands of people between 1900 and 1947. Since the 19th century, the American whaling ships that stopped in the archipelago attracted local populations overseas.

Some pieces collected from the company that owns the Ernestina<sup>13</sup> (a ship immortalized on the two hundred Cape Verdean escudos bill and evoked in public demonstrations such as the parade of Carnival in Mindelo/ São Vicente) are presented in the Museum and remember its life. The sailboat was one of the leading boats that transported waves of emigrants from the Fogo Island to the United States of America, after beginning its transatlantic service in 1947.

7.16. Pier 21, Halifax, Nova Scotia, (Canada, British Columbia) 2011  
<https://www.pier21.ca/>

Pier 21, can be considered an old terminal of transatlantic ships located in Halifax (Nova Scotia, Canada). It became an "immigration depot" for more than 1 million people, in the period from 1928 to 1971. In 1997, its facilities would be

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<sup>13</sup> Built in Massachusetts and baptized with the name of Effie M. Morrisey (1894), it was one of the last sailing ships taking emigrants from Cape Verde to America now called Ernestina. It carried hundreds of passengers and cargo in trips made between the ports of the archipelago and Providence and New Bedford, on the East coast of the United States. It continued to sail until 1974, when it was deprecated by faster ships. After the independence, on July 5, 1975, after a major remodeling in the shipyards of San Vicente, the "Ernestina" was offered in 1982 "by the people of Cape Verde to the people of the United States of America, in a gesture of friendship between the two Nations".

designated as National Historic Site of Canada. In its interior was created an interpretation center, which would later give way to the Immigration Museum (1999), becoming officially the National Museum of Canada of Immigration from 2011.

Although without exclusivity the Canadian Museum of Immigration provides the Portuguese situation an attention that deserves mentioning.

The approach extends from the discovery of the territory up to the nowadays and presents figures who have distinguished themselves in that space. While the number of the first residents from Portuguese origin was tiny compared with those who arrived in the beginning of the 1950's (second half of the 20th century), it is interesting to notice the importance given to them within the historical framework of Canada. From those years, the volume increased exponentially. In 2003, the celebration of the 50 years of residence of this last flow, the names of those who have played important roles were revealed and publicized. Just as an example, we could mention the stamp issued by the Canadian Post Office, dedicated to Pedro da Silva (1647-1717), the first postman that distributed mail in a canoe between Montreal and the city of Québec.

Recently (2016) an exhibition celebrating the more than 500 years of Portuguese presence in the country was displayed. The library of the Museum has set up a database that offers a query service to all parties interested in the Portuguese presence in Canada, either through migration, or fishing activities in Newfoundland.

7.17. Historisches Museum Bremerhaven, Bremerhaven (Germany, Bremen), 2012

<http://www.historisches-museum-bremerhaven.de/>

The city of Bremerhaven in Northern Germany, benefits, not only from the Auswandererhaus Museum, dedicated to the history of those who have left the land of origin to live abroad, but also of a space dedicated to the history of those who left their homeland in search of a new life in Germany: the Migrationshaus, opened in April 21, 2012.

Both museums are interconnected by a bridge and are practically in the same building. A pioneer situation in Europe: stories of immigrants and emigrants

exhibited in the same location. Within its current research projects there are records of about five million people who emigrated from 1820 to 1897 and from 1904 to 1907. The data is available online, for research purposes (vd. <http://www.dad-recherche.dehmbindex.html>)

7.18. Virtual Museum of Canada, Gatineau (Canada, Quebec), 2014  
<http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/>

In 2014, the Federal Government transferred the Virtual Museum of Canada to the Museum of the history of Canada. With more than 500 virtual exhibitions, it is the largest descriptive online source of knowledge on social experiences. Shared information not only among Canadian museological institutions, but also, with a huge set of organizations interested in the subject (whatever the respective dimension).

Having as the main objective to make the history, the culture, the arts and many other aspects known, it presents a diverse and rich acquisition resident communities throughout the country. The significant quantity and quality of educational resources at its disposal, allows it to provide support to teachers and researchers.

#### Final Summary

A Museum is, above all, an instrument of education and cultural dissemination intended to create visible and concrete references, which exceed time. The research centers, which integrate or are associated with the institutions, as well as the collections that are being established produce memories for the future. In a contemporary perspective, these institutions cannot be considered merely as contemplative spaces; they are now appealing interactive spaces, in which a universal story that reveals the specificities of each place and each time is told.

The idea of trying to exhaustively collect authentic objects, evocative of their historical eras, in an attempt to illustrate the respective national or regional affiliation is outdated. Its location in the geographical environments, temporal and social, can be performed in digitally, by means of mixed media. The current museological discourse is a wholesome vehicle for the diffusion of the migratory phenomenon. Reaching a very broad target audience it has the ability to bring

awareness, in an attractive manner, to many aspects of the routes traversed by migrants. The multiple facets of this complex universe reveal perspectives that focus as much on each of the countries of origin and countries of destination. It's the intersection of these angles that reflects the dynamics of a reality anchored in diversity and in the cultural wealth of a social polyhedron.

The intentions of founding of a new museal institution and the preparatory work leading to its realization have not always been able to achieve the expected result. Failure usually occurs, due to the lack of funds to complete the project or sustainability issues, consequence of inefficient planning.

The functions that are associated with the new conception of what a museum can fuel the development of cultural and educational policy for each State or each regional or local administration. The need to create cultural publics, optimize existing resources, enhance conservation, research and interaction with the public constitute an ethical requirement, almost an obligation towards society.

Recently taken resolutions in the Assembly of the Republic not only pay particular attention to the migratory phenomenon, which is the public recognition of their dimension, but also specifically recommend the improvement of instruments to analyze it (Resolution No. 269/2017, D. R. (Portuguese Official Gazette) no 243, 20 December). In addition it is recommended to enhance the teaching of Portuguese emigration history both in Portugal as in destination countries (resolution 267/2017, D. R. (Portuguese Official Gazette) No. 237, 12 December) and to create a National Museum containing a studies and documentation center (Resolution No. 271/2017, D. R. (Portuguese official Gazette) no 243, 20 December). This governmental support to the preservation of memory is currently backed by the parties.

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## RESUMO

Em Portugal as migrações constituem um fenómeno que, pela sua permanência e dimensão, revela ser um dos elementos fundamentais para a compreensão da História Social do país. Pela relevância que assume, torna-se indispensável considerá-lo tanto no panorama demográfico como no panorama económico, devendo ser tidas em conta todas as alterações de natureza cultural por ele introduzidas. Torna-se indispensável considerar o tempo e o espaço como variáveis condicionantes do percurso migratório. Uma perspectiva diacrónica dá oportunidade de conhecer a articulação entre conjunturas nacionais e internacionais que, encontrando-se necessariamente associadas, produzem configurações diferentes em cada época. As alterações que, entretanto, se vão sucedendo nem sempre são detectáveis no imediato e só um olhar retrospectivo permite compreender muitas das situações responsáveis pela mobilidade. A designação em título que refere as migrações numa perspectiva de musealização implica considerar, ainda que de forma breve, vários aspectos que são próprios a cada um dos temas e a forma como se entrelaçam. O seu tratamento em espaço museológico possibilita a transmissão de conhecimentos essenciais a um público alargado.

### Palavras-chave

migrações portuguesas; museologia; memória

## **ABSTRACT**

**In Portugal, migrations constitute a phenomenon that, due to its permanence and dimension, is one of the fundamental elements to comprehend the country's social history. Because of its relevance, it becomes indispensable to consider it not only in a demographic but also economic framework, as well as the cultural changes it introduces. It is crucial to consider the time and the space as determinant variables of the migratory route. A diachronic perspective enables the articulation between national and international conjunctures, which are necessarily associated and produce different configurations in each epoch. The alterations that occur in the meantime aren't always immediately detected and only a retrospective look consents the understanding of many of the situations responsible for mobility. The title, which refers to migrations in a museological perspective, implies the consideration of various aspects (even if succinctly), which are specific of each and every theme and the way they interrelate. Their treatment in a museum space enables the transmission of essential knowledge to a wider audience.**

## **Keywords**

**Portuguese migrations; museology; memory**

**NOTA – As imagens que ilustram este artigo foram gentilmente cedidas pela autora.**