

MUSEUMS, POWER, KNOWLEDGE

SELECTED ESSAYS



TONY BENNETT

ROUTLEDGE 

Museums, Power, Knowledge

Few perspectives have invigorated the development of critical museum studies as much as Foucault's account of the relations between knowledge and power, and their role in processes of governing. Within this literature, Tony Bennett's work stands out as having marked a series of strategic engagements with Foucault's work to offer a critical genealogy of the public museum, providing an account of its nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century development that has been constantly alert to the politics of museums in the present.

Museums, Power, Knowledge brings together new research with a set of essays initially published in diverse contexts, making available for the first time the full range of Bennett's critical museology. Ranging across natural history, anthropological, art, geological and history museums and their precursors in earlier collecting institutions, it discusses museum practices in Britain, Australia, the USA, France and Japan. By doing so, the book offers a compelling account of the shifting political logics of museums over the modern period.

This collection will be of interest to researchers, teachers and students working in the fields of museum and heritage studies, cultural history, cultural studies and sociology, as well as to museum professionals and visitors.

Tony Bennett is Research Professor in Social and Cultural Theory in the Institute for Culture and Society at Western Sydney University, Australia. His research spans across museum studies, cultural studies and sociology. His contributions to museum studies include *The Birth of the Museum* (1995), *Pasts Beyond Memory: Evolution, Museums, Colonialism* (2004) and, as co-author, *Collecting, Ordering, Governing: Anthropology, Museums and Liberal Government* (2017).

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Selected Essays

Tony Bennett

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Preface

When I became interested in museums, some thirty years ago, the existing literature was quite sparse and, for the most part, had been written by people professionally involved with museums, usually as either directors or curators. This was particularly true of the historical literature. General accounts of the development of museums were hard to come by, and specific museum histories were often exclusively in-house products written to commemorate anniversaries of one kind or another. Serious engagements with museums and their relations to more general intellectual, cultural and social histories from within the academy were few and far between. The situation since has changed dramatically with a regular flow of titles reflecting different disciplinary engagements (historical, sociological, anthropological) with museum histories and practices and new journals augmenting the previous array of professional journals to provide a context for broader explorations of museum/society and museum/history relations. A number of publishers have developed museum studies lists, while analyses of museum practices have also provided occasions for more general theoretical excursions into critical social and cultural theory.

There had, of course, been earlier critical engagements with museums, particularly before the 1939–1945 war: Theodor Adorno's essays spring to mind as do the trenchant critiques of the Futurists. There was also, in the late 1960s and 1970s, a developing social critique of museums whose universalist credentials were roundly called into question. Caught, initially, in the pincers of sociological and feminist critiques, museums were shown to be key sites for the organisation of classed and gendered cultural hierarchies and, as such, to operate as sites of social exclusion. These critiques were rapidly followed by criticisms focused on the role of museums in the organisation of racialised cultural hierarchies and their relations to the histories of colonialism. These critiques have, of course, both prompted and been prompted by significant changes in museum practices, and they go far beyond the politics of what is put on display and how it is displayed to encompass new conceptions and relations of curatorial responsibility, new forms of custodianship, and more politically sensitive practices of conservation.

There are, however, other considerations that need to be factored into the equation to understand why museums have attracted such sustained attention. Foremost among these is the fact that museums have proved to be useful sites for engaging with a number of more general theoretical shifts that have taken place across the social and cultural disciplines over the last thirty to forty years. They found a place within the concerns of 'the cultural turn' in view of the emphasis this placed on the role of cultural practices – and the cultural institutions that organise them – as active forces in the make-up of social relations. And they have continued to find a place within the subsequent intellectual developments which have qualified and, ultimately, undermined the logic of the cultural turn to produce different vocabularies for, and conceptualisations of, the relations between cultural and social processes.

The work of Foucault has been important here. His concern with the relations between knowledge and power has brought a 'veridical twist' to questions of cultural analysis. Museums, as sites in which a number of distinctive truth effects have been produced by the deployment of a historically particular ensemble of knowledge practices, have provided an exemplary context for working through the implications of this perspective. The more recent 'material turn' that has been in evidence across the social sciences and humanities – from the concern with the agency of things in actor-network theory, the development of material culture studies, and the focus on the 'social life of things' that now characterises a good deal of anthropology – has had a certain elective affinity with museums in view not only of their evident concern with the exhibition and conservation of things but also their strong association with such materially-focused disciplines as archaeology.

These, then, are some of the intellectual developments that have informed my work on museums since – quite unexpectedly – I first became interested in them. I have since developed this interest in a number of different ways, sometimes on my own, and at other times in collaboration with others. I have not, however, worked in museum studies programmes. Nor have I ever worked in museums. Rather, as someone whose interests fall, broadly speaking, in the overlapping territories of cultural studies and cultural sociology, I have published a good deal of my work on museums in journals or book series addressed to readers in these disciplines. A large part of my purpose in this book has therefore been to bring together a collection of my essays on museums in a context addressed specifically to a museum studies readership at a time when that readership has itself been transformed by the critical histories with which most scholars and professionals working in the field now engage. The essays span a good range of museum history – from cabinets of curiosity through nineteenth-century public museums to contemporary national museums – and a diversity of museum types (art museums, museums of natural history, ethnography museums).

They also span the full period, from the 1980s to the present, in which I have addressed museum topics. All of the chapters in Parts 1 and 2, and the first two chapters in Part 3, have previously been published elsewhere. I identify the relevant sources for these in a note at the start of each of these chapters. The Introduction and chapters 10 and 11 are published here for the first time.

Bowral, NSW
March 2017

Acknowledgements

The essays that are collected here derive from work that has been presented in many contexts over quite an extended period, incurring more debts than I can properly acknowledge here and, in many cases, than I can recall.

It is perhaps more fitting, then, that I acknowledge my appreciation of the three contexts for collaborative work that have contributed to the general conceptions underlying my approaches to the analysis of the relations between museums and society.

My first debt goes to the colleagues at Griffith University who helped shape my initial interests in museums and the lines of approach I developed to their analysis drawing on the work of Michel Foucault. I especially appreciated the critical inputs I received from Mark Finnane, Stephen Garton, Ian Hunter and the late, and much missed, Colin Mercer.

My second debt is to the richly collaborative culture that informed the work of the Economic and Social Research Council's (ESRC) Centre for Research on Socio-cultural Change (CRESC) at the University of Manchester and the Open University. I learned a good deal from CRESC colleagues with special interests in museums, most notably Penny Harvey, Helen Rees Leahy, and Kevin Hetherington, as well as from those with special interests in Foucault's perspective on liberal government, particularly Patrick Joyce, Francis Dodsworth and – through our collaboration with him in an ESRC Seminar Series on *Freedom and Government* – Nikolas Rose.

My third debt is to the members of the research team with whom I worked in developing the Australian Research Council project *Museum, Field, Metropolis, Colony: Practices of Social Governance* (DP110103776). This brought together an exceptionally rich range of collaborators who pooled their expertise into various aspects of the relations between museums, anthropological fieldwork, and governing practices in an unusual spirit of generosity and productive dialogue. My special thanks then to Fiona Cameron, Nélia Dias, Ben Dibley, Rodney Harrison, Ira Jacknis, and Conal McCarthy. My thanks also to other colleagues in the Institute for Culture and Society (ICS) at Western Sydney University whose work on museum and heritage questions has also been of real value to me – particularly Ien Ang,

Denis Byrne and Emma Waterton. My thanks too to my ICS colleague Tim Rowse whose expertise in the histories of Indigenous Australians, especially as shaped by their relations to changing Australian governing practices, I have drawn on substantially.

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Note on the text

I have, when using the general category of ‘indigenous,’ used lower-case throughout this study, reserving the use of capitals for reference to specific indigenous peoples: Indigenous Australians, Native Americans, Māori and so on.

I have for the most part given the name of the museums under discussion in full throughout except in chapters 8 and 9 where I use acronyms in referring to the museums and scientific institutions under discussion.

Where chapters have been published previously, I have retained the style conventions enjoined by the original publisher. This leads to some minor stylistic inconsistencies between chapters.

Introduction

Museums, power, knowledge

At the end of his interview with Alessandro Fontana and Pasquale Pasquino on the subject of truth and power, Michel Foucault puts forward a few propositions to clarify the political implications of all that he had said before in seeking to detach truth from the idealist freight that had been placed on it as the moment of revelation that accompanies liberation, to insist that it must be understood as 'a thing of this world' (Foucault, 1980: 131). Truth, he says, is to be understood as 'a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements' (133). As such, it 'is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it' (133). Since such 'régimes of truth' are not ideological superstructures but material practices, the political task they pose for intellectuals is not one of ideology critique but that 'of ascertaining the possibility of constituting a new politics of truth' (133). The problem, Foucault goes on to say, 'is not changing people's consciousness – or what's in their heads – but the political, economic, institutional régime of the production of truth' (133). Truth is not to be emancipated from power; rather, its detachment from the economic, social and cultural hegemonies within which it currently operates is to serve as a prelude to the production of new regimes of truth which will, in turn, produce their own distinctive power effects. Such is the task to which Foucault summons specific intellectuals, urging that they eschew the illusory embrace of a truth and politics beyond power that had beckoned the universal intellectual.

The sedulous labour that informs the arrangement of the relations between things and texts through which statements in museums are organised; the different regimes of truth – archaeological, anthropological, aesthetic, geological – that have informed these labours; the successive rearrangements of the orderings of things that these have produced to yield new truths; the ways in which these realignments of museum statements have been shaped by the reverberations of social movements outside the museum's walls; the reconfigurations of museum regimes of truth produced by the incursions of hitherto excluded subaltern knowledges: in all of these ways, museums – modernity's 'citadels of truth' – invite analysis in the terms proposed by Foucault's conception of the relations between knowledge and power. And

2 *Introduction: museums, power, knowledge*

all the more so when account is taken of two further aspects of Foucault's work: his revision of the concerns of architectural theory to take account of how the organisation of the inner spaces of built forms carries the effects of power onto those who occupy those spaces, and the new conceptions of 'the politics of vision' emerging from the emphasis he placed on the architectural arrangement of lines of sight in the organisation of such power effects.

It is not surprising, then, that Foucault's work should have become a central point of reference for the debates which, while grouped together under the label of 'the new museology' in the 1980s, had been acquiring momentum since the late 1960s. Nor is it surprising that it has remained centrally implicated in the critical museum debates that have continued unabated into the present. This is not to suggest that its currency has been constant throughout this period. To the contrary, different aspects of Foucault's work have been highlighted in the light of the changing constellations of theoretical and political concerns in which museums have been embroiled as they have been brought into the fray of the incessantly mobile politics of the present.

For my part, I initially looked to Foucault in the context of the lively debates regarding the social role of museums that took place in Australia in the 1980s and 1990s when, in the lead-up to the bicentennial celebrations of 1988 and the parallel controversies informing the planning for the National Museum of Australia, the politics of the past were forcefully present. This was a multivalent politics in which many different, and often contradictory, imperatives were in play: the politics of the 'new nationalism' orientated to the production of an Australian past that would stand free of its colonial tutelage to Britain; a class politics that would shape an urban and industrial past in contrast to the pastoral heritage traditions fostered by Australia's squattocracy; feminist critiques of the male-centrism of the Australian War Memorial's presentation of Australia's military history; and multicultural critiques of White Australia. It was, however, the critiques of Indigenous Australians that raised the most fundamental questions, challenging not merely this or that particular aspect of museum practices but cutting deeply into the very history of the museum form as such, laying bare its constitutively racist and colonial histories.¹ Not just in Australia, of course. To the contrary, what indigenous critiques – in Canada (Phillips, 2011), New Zealand (McCarthy, 2007) and the United States (Lonetree and Cobb, 2008) just as much as in Australia – have forced onto today's critical agendas are the operations of a museum system which, from its origins, has been shaped by its articulations across the relations between metropolitan powers and colonial territories.

This is a museum system within which the politics of truth that I have been concerned with have focused principally on the relations between the disciplines of anthropology, archaeology, geology, history and – overlapping in some respects, but distinct in others – art history and aesthetics, and the counter-knowledges these have generated. The nature of my engagement with these has, however, varied as the changing politics of the present have required that attention be paid to different aspects of their histories. The

politics of deep time that are now so central an aspect of Indigenous Australians' critical engagements with contemporary museum practices framed my concern, in the 1990s, with the longer-term functioning of anthropology, archaeology and geology as a related set of historical sciences whose interactions shaped the temporalities of the modern museum system (Bennett, 2004). Shifting theoretical agendas in the humanities and social sciences have also provided different vantage points from which to interpret and assess the implications of Foucault's approach to the relations between truth and power for the analysis of museums. My first contributions to museum studies were inflected by the tensions between Foucault's politics of truth and interpretations of museums as instruments of cultural hegemony informed by cultural studies readings of Gramsci;² my readings of the relations between aesthetics and art museums have been shaped by the perspectives on their roles in practices of distinction or those of social governance derived from the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Foucault respectively;³ and my more recent interest in the light that assemblage theory throws on museums derives a good deal of its impetus from the broader thrust of post-human studies and the 'material turn' in their concern with the agency of non-human actors.⁴

I have not, however, in arranging the essays that are brought together in this book, aimed for a strict chronological ordering. There is, to be sure, a chronological drift in the relations between the three parts of the book, with the first part focused chiefly on essays penned during my period at Griffith University in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Those gathered in the second part tilt mainly to a later period of work. Initiated when I was still at Griffith University, they were completed after I had returned to the UK's Open University – where I had worked in the 1970s and early 1980s – in 1998. Part 3 represents a reverse movement, comprising both work begun at the Open University in the early noughties but brought to conclusion when I came back to Australia in 2009 to join Western Sydney University and, in the case of the last two essays, work initiated in this period. That said, the logic I have aimed for in the arrangement of the book is that the materials included in each of its parts should speak to one another in illuminating how museums function as and at the junctions of knowledge/power relations that are signalled by the titles I have chosen for the different parts of the book. It is to these matters that I now turn in outlining what I mean by referring to museums as 'civic engines' and 'machineries of modernity,' and what is involved in focusing on their role in 'assembling and governing cultures.' The introductions to the different parts of the book will then indicate how the chapters that are brought together within them speak to these concerns.

Civic engines⁵

My title here draws on what was, in the second part of the nineteenth century, a widespread tendency to bring together the languages of engineering and civics in conceptualising the roles of public museums alongside those

of a range of new public cultural institutions (libraries, for example) developed over the same period. These were variously referred to as ‘engines for operating on the poorer parts of the population’ (Jevons, 1883: 32) or as ‘educational engines’ (Rudler, 1876: 4) whose power was to be brought to bear on the working classes congregated in Britain’s newly industrialised towns and cities. In aiming to extend the reach of museums beyond the socially limited publics that had been encompassed by their earlier conception within the practices of civic humanism, these museums were also charged with the task of, so to speak, scrubbing the working classes up to make them fit to receive the improving lessons that their entry into museums would expose them to. While initiated in Britain, these conceptions of the function of museums and of their publics rapidly gained an international currency in the Anglophone world, radiating out through its colonies and serving as a point of reference for similar initiatives in the United States (Goode, 1895).

This moment in the development of the museum represented a step-change in the forms of its publicness. The seizure of the Louvre in the name of the people remains, insofar as there are such things, *the* founding moment of the modern public museum, and the extent of its influence is beyond dispute. Yet its innovations were, in some respects, quite limited. Its appropriation in the name of a democratic citizenry was, in practice, accompanied by little, if any, attempt to make the art on display democratically accessible (McClellan, 1994). While the Revolution had opened the Louvre to the public and celebrated its status as a venue for new forms of what I have called ‘civic seeing’ (Bennett, 2006) in which the virtues of a republican citizenry would be strengthened, the actual practices of the museum assumed a public that was much the same as that which had informed pre-revolutionary plans for both the Louvre and the Luxembourg Gallery. There was no attempt to instruct the museum’s new publics on how to read and interpret the art displayed any more than the Louvre was opened to popular arts rooted in the everyday lives of the people. And nature was made to sing to an entirely different museological score: there was little connection between the republican ethos of the Louvre and that of the Muséum National d’Histoire Naturelle, where the reconstructions of nature’s ruined orders served as a counterpoint to the disordering effects of revolutionary change (Brown, 1997).

The scripts of the Louvre, in short, remained largely those of sovereignty, with the citizen – and, later, the Emperor – occupying the place of the sovereign. The moment that was symbolically marked by the Great Exhibition of 1851 differed in a number of respects. First, it inaugurated what was to prove a significant (but by no means complete) reordering of museum scripts as, across a broad spectrum of museum disciplines, these effected an evolutionary ordering of things – of all things, and all peoples – that was connected to a clearly capitalist and industrial economic and social order. Second, while by no means departing from the scripts of sovereignty, British museums – particularly those in provincial towns and cities – were also

stitched into, and became places for the exercise of, new forms of governmental power through which the citizen was brought under the influence of the museum as one amongst many machineries of civic governance. Third and finally, metropolitan museums became truly global centres of gathering in contrast to the Louvre, which had operated as a more localised centre of gathering for the redistribution of cultural materials within Europe that was effected by the Napoleonic wars of conquest. Finally, toward the end of the century, museums were locked in with a whole battery of mechanisms for racialised forms of collecting and ordering that played a crucial role in the development of practices of colonial governance.

This was a period, in short, that witnessed the transformation of the museum from serving primarily as an instrument of sovereign power into a mechanism for the organisation and relay of the new forms of power that Foucault variously calls governmental and biopolitical (Foucault, 1991, 2008). This is a different argument from one that would see museums as instruments of disciplinary power. I stress this by way of disentangling two lines of criticism that have been levelled against the concept of ‘the exhibitionary complex’ through which I first sought to identify the specific politics of truth that shaped the nineteenth-century development of the public museum and related exhibition forms, notably those of national and international exhibitions. One line of criticism has taken me to task for relying too much on the ways in which the social role of the museum was envisaged in the dreams and schemes of reformers – from parliamentarians through to museum directors and curators – at the expense of considering how museums were interpreted and interacted with on the part of the newly extended publics they sought to reach. This is a fair criticism and one whose force has been admirably demonstrated in Lara Kriegel’s (2007) discussion of the varied ‘vulgarised’ forms characterising the different kinds of practical service into which aesthetics was pressed in the mid- to late nineteenth-century debates accompanying the rush of museum development that followed the Great Exhibition (Dowling, 1996). While outlining the ways in which such conceptions were mobilised by cultural and intellectual authorities, Kriegel’s attention is more absorbed by the ways in which these were engaged with, and transformed by, skilled sections of the working classes who negotiated their relations to official aesthetic culture through the distinctive optic provided by their artisanal skills.

A second line of criticism contends that I drew too close a parallel between the institutions and practices of the exhibitionary complex and those of Foucault’s disciplinary archipelago.⁶ I think this is mistaken. In considering the nineteenth-century development of the public museum alongside that of the penitentiary, I argued that these were similar inasmuch as their architectural forms sought to regulate the conduct of, respectively, their visitors and their inmates. They did so, however, in different ways and to different effect. The oligoptic arrangement of lines of sight within nineteenth-century museums and exhibitions complemented the disciplinary function of museum guards

by organising relations of self-watching. These had many parallels in other nineteenth-century public and commercial institutions (Otter, 2008), and differed significantly from the totalising gaze of the penitentiary – in which the prisoner is subjected to the unseen gaze of a distant power – in the freedom of movement they afford between the position of observer and observed, watcher and watched. The architectural spaces of new museum and exhibition forms thus certainly exercised a regulatory function, but in relation to publics who were free to come and go rather than to enclosed populations, providing a means of shaping conduct by so arranging the lines of sight that the museum's public, in being made visible to itself, would also be able to monitor itself. Their aspiration was to transform both the political crowd and the idlers who had earlier got up to all sorts of mischief in the dark and secluded corners of the British Museum or Westminster Abbey into well-regulated publics, members of a citizenry watching over and governing itself by bringing each visitor under the controlling gaze of other visitors. Like the prison, the asylum, and the factory in effecting a functional articulation of relations of space and vision, the museum was at the same time unlike these in the specific articulations of these relations that it instantiated.

Perhaps the more important point, however, concerns the respects in which the politics of truth engendered by the disciplines associated with the exhibitionary complex differed from those associated with the psy disciplines that held sway in the carceral archipelago. Far from adopting the individualising orientation of the psy disciplines, the exhibitionary disciplines that ruled the roost in museums and international exhibitions from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries aimed 'at the representation of a type and its insertion in a developmental sequence for display to a public' (Bennett, 1988: 88). By tracing the transition from the orders of classification that governed eighteenth-century natural history collections to the evolutionary ordering of the histories of the earth and of forms of life associated with mid- to late-nineteenth-century developments in geology and biology, I connected these to the parallel emergence of a developmental disposition in the disciplines of art history, history, archaeology and anthropology. Taken as a whole, I argued, these constructed a totalising order of things, forms of life and peoples, which presented bourgeois civilization as the heir to, and culmination of, the developmental dynamic that the exhibitionary disciplines inscribed in the entire course – natural, social, cultural, technological, scientific and economic – of preceding history.

The argument is a historical one concerning the relations between the institutions and knowledges that constituted the exhibitionary complex at a particular phase in its development rather than one proposing a necessary and enduring set of such connections. At the same time, the exhibitionary disciplines have exercised an influence that has reached beyond the period of their initial formation and into the present through the distinctive political rationality they have produced (Bennett, 1990). By generating the demand that the museum should – across the relations between its different types – aim

to offer a universally inclusive depiction of the history of Man as the culmination of the history of life on earth, they constructed a normative ideal which rendered particular museum exhibits liable to criticism on the grounds that the position of Man can always be shown to be occupied by historically exclusive examples: usually white, bourgeois, male, and European or North American. The intellectual disposition of the exhibitionary disciplines, in other words, opened up the museum to a distinctive politics of truth in generating a reforming discourse that has sought to correct the social, cultural and political partialities that have informed the particular ways in which museums have instantiated the position of Man. This has generated an incessant demand that this position be deconstructed and reconstructed so as to achieve a greater degree of representational adequacy in relation to the norms of universality that the exhibitionary disciplines construct by including, on equal terms, the various histories, groups, or cultures that have been excluded from this position: the histories of women, of indigenous peoples, of racial and ethnic minorities, of subordinate classes, of non-Western religions, and so on.

Where, as in the case of absolutist royal collections, exhibition served the purpose of making royal power manifest and where, accordingly, the pinnacle of representation governing the ordering of things was occupied by the prince or monarch, there could be no question of generating a principle of general inclusiveness from within such a representational regime. Nor did such collections generate political concerns focused on questions of public access and participation. The relations between museums and the general populace associated with royal collections concerned rather a particular politics of spectacle: their capacity, through the symbolism of their external architecture, to carry a message of power and magnificence to a population which remained entirely on their outsides as, like Kant's estimation of palaces, things 'merely to be gaped at' (Kant, 1987: 45). The requirements of public access and participation that have accompanied the development of the public museum have, however, been of two different, but never entirely separable, kinds. On the one hand, such requirements articulate a democratic demand for free and open access to museums in what has been a progressively expanding conception of their publics – beyond, initially, limitations of class and, subsequently, those of gender and race. This has been the source of a tension that has recurred throughout the history of the modern museum: between their claims to serve all those who count as members of a democratic public, and the socially restricted patterns of participation in them. Bourdieu's arguments concerning the tension between the obligation he places on the art museum to make the heritage of universal culture universally available to all and the actual patterns of its use as a means of enacting and publicly symbolising middle-class distinction from the working and other subordinate classes is the most influential analysis of this tension (Bourdieu and Darbel, 1991). The other side to the access and participation coin, however, has been the significance that has

been accorded to getting new and expanded publics inside the museum in order that they might be brought under its reforming influence – combatting, as the case may be, poor sanitation practices or male drunkenness and domestic violence in the nineteenth century, or racially discriminatory attitudes and practices today.

These, then, are some of the respects in which the development of the public museum has been written over by multiple scripts of power. The relations between these are brought into useful focus by the distinction Foucault proposes between sovereign, governmental and disciplinary forms of power which, he insisted, have to be understood in accordance with a principle of historical accumulation rather than one of historical succession (Foucault, 1991). Sovereign power, that is, is not eclipsed by the later development of governmental and disciplinary forms of power but continues to operate alongside these albeit that its *modus operandi* is now radically transformed. The principle of sovereignty that was once restricted to royal collections subsequently migrated to the role played by museums in relation to the power of the people-nation. This was evident in the development of national museums which, in the public symbolism of their architectures just as much as in the thematic organization of their exhibits, embodied a new articulation of the principle of sovereignty in making the power of the people-nation publicly manifest to itself. That said, this transfer of sovereignty from its dynastic to its nationalist forms can be exaggerated. This is a question I turn to in the concluding chapter of Part 1 where I examine the continuing significance of earlier transnational forms of imagined community – dynastic, imperial, colonial and religious – for the practices of European museums throughout the greater part of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In doing so, I also consider the relations between museums and religions from a second perspective: that provided by Michel Foucault's account of the relations – simultaneously ones of historical affiliation and ones of rupture and discontinuity – between pastoral and governmental forms of power. My concern here is to show how, for the greater part, the alignments between museums and religions forged in the course of Western modernity are ones that have subordinated pastoral to governmental forms of power by invoking religion as a form of moral supplement to secular practices of social governance.

We should, then, be wary of imputing a singular form to the public museum or to the disposition of the knowledge practices that have shaped its histories. The nineteenth-century forms of the exhibitionary complex never entirely supplanted earlier museum forms and practices. And they have themselves since been subject to multiple transformations, most notably perhaps, as Terry Smith (2012: chapter 2) has shown in his account of recent transformations of the exhibitionary complex, in the proliferation of new contexts for the exhibition of art.⁷ I shall come back to these matters later. First, though, I look more closely at an issue which, although I have invoked it at a number of points in the foregoing discussion, I

have largely taken for granted: that is, the relations between museums and modernity.

Machineries of modernity

Properly speaking, of course, when referring to the relations between museums and modernity, 'modernity' should be placed in quotes given the force of Bruno Latour's (1993) contention that we have never been modern; never differentiated by a divide that separates us irrevocably from our forebears or, in discourses of colonialism, from those other peoples who are alleged to have remained stuck in the pasts from which we have laboriously detached ourselves. Nonetheless, while clearly a fabrication – a temporality which, as Latour once put it, is the product of the 'harsh disciplining' imposed on entities that would otherwise be dispersed across 'all sorts of times' (Latour, 1993: 72) – this does not detract from the real effects that discourses of modernity have exerted. Indeed, the ongoing work of dismantling these effects – through the challenges presented by varied forms of non-Western modernities, for example (Modest, 2012) – can only proceed on the basis of an acknowledgement of its historical reality as a set of discourses and institutions which, in the partitioning of peoples, territories and times that it has effected, has been only too consequential. But what does it mean to refer to these as 'machineries of modernity'? The phrase is one I take from John Law (1994) who, in his account of the processes of assembling, ordering and translation that go into organising modernity, stresses the significance of 'immutable mobiles' – that is, of things which retain their properties as they move through and make connections between different points in a network – to the socio-technical arrangements which constitute modernity as a set of durable, but always relational, effects. Writing, print, paper, money, postal systems and maps: these are among the examples he cites. He goes on to argue that these have always been considered in relation to the operations of various ordering centres which gather, represent, make calculations about, and act on the immutable mobiles that flow between centres and peripheries. Bureaucracy, double-entry book-keeping, cartographic offices and statistics are the instances he mentions.

Although not on Law's list, museums are strong candidates for inclusion among these machineries of modernity in view of their role as centres of calculation at which immutable mobiles are gathered from diverse points of collection and are conscripted, as material actors, into processes of ordering which act back on the sites from which they were collected as well as on the new relations that they are gathered into. Yet these processes are also ones in which, as a consequence of the orderings and re-orderings to which they are subjected, such immutable mobiles become, so to speak, 'mutable immobiles': that is, in the case of museum objects, things which take on new properties and become the sites of varied relational effects while staying (broadly) in the same place (Bennett, 2012). A similar conception informs

Latour's project of a *dingpolitik* focused on the roles played by things in the processes through which matters of fact are translated into matters of public concern (Latour, 2005). Latour's primary point of reference in developing this conception is to Heidegger's concept of the thing as the site of a gathering, albeit that, for Latour, this 'thingness' of the thing is always a relational property – a result of the capacities and affordances that are folded into it through the networks of its relations to other 'actants' – rather than a set of properties that are intrinsic to it.⁸

The issues to which these considerations point concern the processes through which things are gathered into museums; the properties they derive from being thus brought into relations of semiotic and material affiliation with one another; and the processes of presentation through which their arrangement within museum spaces is effected in order to achieve – or approximate to – certain kinds of effect on or among museum visitors. This challenges conceptions of museums as the sources of particular kinds of power in favour of a more mobile and fluid conception of the different kinds of power museums acquire from the constantly shifting forms of knowledge and expertise they deploy, their changing relations to governmental practices, and their relations to the socio-cultural dynamics of civic society. As such, it is a perspective that gels with Foucault's focus on the dispersal of power relations across capillary networks and flows lacking a controlling source. This is necessary if we are to engage adequately with the varied ways in which museums are able to act on society in view of the capability to produce and enact new realities that they acquire through the arrangement of what they collect and exhibit, the material environments in which they do so, and the other apparatuses to which they are connected.

Let me give an example. The processes through which earlier collections were transformed into public museums with a mandate for shaping their visitors into worthy citizens were protracted, hesitant, and often fragile in view of the resistance they encountered from earlier collections and exhibition practices. Jonah Siegel has interpreted these resistances in terms of an opposition between a regime based on the principles of wonder and curiosity and one based on the logic of signs, interpreting the latter as the logic of 'the *modern* museum' in its 'wish to establish a significance beyond the suspension of the understanding' that the ethos of wonder required (Siegel, 2008: 9). Stephanie Moser (2006) has offered a telling account of how long and how effectively the principles of wonder resisted attempts to transform the British Museum's Egyptian collections into signs – in the sense intended by Siegel – that would serve a more pedagogical purpose for an expanded public. In reviewing the different principles informing the British Museum's exhibition of Egyptian materials from its installation of Sir Hans Sloane's collection in 1759 through to the extension of its Smirke Galleries from 1854 to 1880, Moser also contrasts the careers of the Egyptian collections in these regards with those of the museum's Roman and, more particularly, Greek collections. The result is an account, as elegant as it is rigorous, of the

mobile intersections between a set of classificatory and evaluative regimes which held sway over the forms in which Egyptian collections were exhibited for more than a century. Old Testament assessments of Egyptian art and culture as idolatrous; Johan Joachim Winckelmann's influence on art history's interpretation of Egyptian art as less developed than Greek and Roman art; the lingering influence of the culture of curiosity in depriving Egyptian antiquities of any didactic qualities; the aestheticisation of Egyptian displays inherited from Renaissance sculpture galleries; the overloading of collections gathered in the aftermath of Britain's defeat of France in 1801 with the symbolic freight of British military power: these are among the discursive restraints which kept the British Museum's Egyptian collections off the pedagogic hooks that were being fashioned for Egyptian materials in other contexts – the development of historical principles for the exhibition of Egyptian antiquities at Munich's Glyptothek museum, for example. Dissociated from both a didactic function and from the forms of self-shaping associated with emerging conceptions of the aesthetic, the Egyptian collections were instead – as both Moser (2006) and Jenkins (1992) show – presented as 'wondrous curiosities' intended to surprise and entertain and, in their gigantism, to impress. It was only later, with the extension of the British Museum's Smirke Galleries and the arrangement of its sculpture collection chronologically, that Egyptian antiquities were redefined as historical documents rather than as inferior works of art. Even then their presentation retained earlier associations of a mysterious ancient society obsessed with death and the afterlife which kept them in a separate compartment from the projects of *Bildung* into which the Museum's Greek collections were conscripted.

Moser's discussion stops at 1880. But not without flagging the significance of the institutionalisation and professionalization of Egyptology that was marked by the establishment of the Egypt Exploration Fund (later Society) in 1882, and the role its excavations played in producing materials for the British Museum and, later, the Petrie Museum at University College London. William Matthew Flinders Petrie played a key role in bringing Egyptology and, indeed, the field of classical archaeology more generally, into contact with the developing field of prehistoric archaeology and the principles – of evolution, and of systematic fieldwork – on which, in the wake of John Lubbock and Henry Pitt Rivers, it rested. Samuel Alberti offers a telling postscript to Moser's account in discussing the difficult adjustments that had to be made to the evolutionary principles governing the Manchester Museum's exhibitions when, in 1908, it was obliged, much against its wishes, to extend its disciplinary remit beyond the natural sciences in order to accommodate the Flinders Petrie Collection of Egyptian Antiquities donated by Jesse Haworth, a local cotton magnate who had sponsored Petrie's digs. As its first curator, William Boyd Dawkins – an evolutionary palaeontologist who had been appointed on Thomas Huxley's recommendation – had arranged the museum's exhibits in accordance with rigorous evolutionary principles, excluding cultural materials except

insofar as they could be reconciled with evolutionary orderings of natural history exhibits. Anthropological and archaeological materials were thus admitted only as a means of exhibiting the culmination of natural evolutionary sequences which, in their turn, were interpreted as following on from a 'bedrock' of geological sequences. Dawkins was also radically didactic, committed to transforming the miscellany of curiosities that was the bequest from the Manchester Natural History Society on which the museum was founded into a lean, mean pedagogic machine based exclusively on typological principles. When, in 1890, the Petrie materials were loaned to the Manchester Museum, they were kept strictly apart from the universal evolutionary sequences that Dawkins had so painstakingly constructed. Their donation – which, initially, the museum had refused but was eventually obliged to accept owing to their exceptional popularity with the public – required a more permanent solution. This led to their installation in a new building where they served as a bridge between nature and culture in being presented typologically, in terms that resonated with Dawkins' evolutionary schema, as the point of connection between prehistoric archaeology and (written) history proper (Alberti, 2009: 68–70).

The machinery of modernity that was produced by the intersections of these late nineteenth and early twentieth-century formations of geology, natural history, archaeology, anthropology and, at the points of its highly troubled intersections with anthropology, aesthetics,⁹ was distinctive in its forms and effects. These derived from the historical disposition of these disciplines which, in their nineteenth-century forms, were governed by what I have called an 'archaeological gaze.' Combining the principles of eighteenth-century conjectural history with the commitment to scientific method that characterised their nineteenth-century development, these disciplines moved backwards and forwards between present and past, and past and present, by hypothesising a past set of conditions from which the present state of things was derived and then identifying the laws of causation that had governed the transition from that conjectural past to the present. In ways that applied equally to the relations between past and present forms of life, languages, customs, and social and political institutions, I argued:

the present was read to identify the pasts that had been sedimented within it as the remnants of one historical period [were] carried over and compressed into the next one, preserving a record of time's passage in the sequential layering of its accumulations

(Bennett, 2004: 37)

These historical sciences, as they were known at the time, were the key operators of a distinctive form of 'slow modernity' (Bennett, 2004: 187), a concept I proposed partly as a corrective to Latour's contention that the discourse of modernity institutes a temporal order that establishes a radical division between the past and the present in which 'nothing of the past

survives' (Latour, 1993: 68), and partly as a counter to those accounts which, in aligning the art museum with the time of modernity, assign natural history and ethnography museums to a temporal order that is modernity's antithesis (Bal, 1992, for example). There is, of course, a germ of truth in such contrasts between the time of the art museum and that of the museums associated with the historical sciences, particularly from the end of the nineteenth century when, as Pierre Bourdieu (2013) has argued, art museums acquired a new temporality marked by the sequence of ruptures with previous artistic styles produced by a succession of *avant-garde* movements.¹⁰ It is, however, a mistake to equate the 'shock of the new' constituted by a succession of aesthetic modernisms for the time of modernity *tout court*. Far from being anti-modern, late nineteenth-century public museums of geology, anthropology, archaeology and natural history – particularly in the Anglophone world – orchestrated a distinctive modern temporality in which the relations between past and present were characterised by developmental continuities which, while making the past an active force in the present, also interpreted it as a force that needed to be surpassed, moved beyond, if the developmental dynamic that characterised evolutionary conceptions of progress was to be maintained. Contra Latour, the problem was that far too much of the past survived in the present; it had, therefore, constantly – slowly and painstakingly – to be expunged.

This, then, is the perspective informing my concerns in the opening chapters of Part 2, where I look at the ways in which evolutionary arrangements of geological, natural history and ethnographic materials coded the messages of evolution into the museum environment, transforming progress into a performative requirement of the visitor who was called on not just to absorb but to enact the lessons of evolution. Viewed from this perspective, I argue, such museums comprised a machinery of modernity that operated through the archaeological structure of personhood which they produced. If this was a form of personhood in which the inherited past and the developmental requirements of a progressive present were placed into a productive tension with one another, this was also a tension that informed and shaped the distinctive visual regimes of evolutionary museums. At the same time, however, such machineries of modernity worked through the divisions they established between their publics, whom they addressed as constantly in the process of becoming (more) modern, and those, more typically present in museums as exhibits rather than as visitors, who were depicted as pre-modern 'primitives.' While these were increasingly presented as destined to exit from history through extinction, they nonetheless represented the force of that primitive past which, still surviving in the present, comprised a regressive layer in the make-up of the modern person that modernity's subjects had to constantly peel themselves away from in order to keep themselves on modernity's progressive tracks. While this particular historical form of personhood has now, so to speak, fallen by the wayside, the final chapter in Part 2 considers how aesthetic conceptions of culture inform the ways in which

a range of contemporary museums continue to function as ‘machineries of modernity’ by prompting their visitors to update themselves by jettisoning outdated practices.

Assembling and governing cultures

Another way of describing my concerns in Part 2 would be to say that they trace the processes through which earlier museum collections were dis-assembled in order that their constituent elements might then be re-assembled, alongside the new materials that the historical sciences earmarked for collection, to produce those ‘pasts beyond memories’ and their evolutionary sequencing into the present that informed the operations of museums as ‘machineries of modernity’. My interests in Part 3 focus on the processes through which these nineteenth-century museum orderings of the relations between things and peoples have, in their turn, been dis-assembled and then re-assembled in new configurations. This involves a more specific disciplinary focus centred on different moments in, and aspects of, the relations between museums and the more general political careers of anthropological concepts of culture. I pay some attention here to Edward Burnett Tylor’s initial formulation of culture as a set of customs, habits and traits. However, this is chiefly as a backdrop against which to set the later, twentieth-century development of the ‘culture concept’ associated with the Boasian tradition of American anthropology, and the parallel relativisation of culture by Paul Rivet at the Musée de l’Homme. These played a significant role in (partly) dismantling evolutionary and hierarchical orderings of the relations between peoples to produce, in their (more) relativist understandings of culture, a new set of discursive coordinates for managing the relations between populations that (partly) displaced the role earlier played by race in this regard. The qualifications I have placed in parentheses are important. While frequently hailed as marking moments of epistemological rupture with earlier racialised hierarchies, both the Boasian culture concept and Rivet’s more environmentalist conception of culture continued to be haunted by the racist categories they allegedly displaced.

However, the issues I address in Part 3 differ from those in Parts 1 and 2 not only in their more contemporary focus – mainly twentieth century but, in the final chapter, reaching into the present – and narrower disciplinary remit. They are also more centrally concerned with the role that museums have played, and continue to play, in relation to practices of governance in colonial contexts. Engaging with these questions has involved a shift in the focus of analytical attention from that associated with the concept of the exhibitionary complex. Since this accords a primary significance to the relations of truth and power that are exercised through the exhibition practices of museums, it pays little heed to the truth/power effects that arise from the deployment of museum knowledges in other contexts. Limiting attention to the ways of acting on conduct that museums are able to exercise

through their exhibition practices, whether directly on their visitors or indirectly on the wider publics they reach via the circulation of representations based on their collections, it neglects how museum practices are connected to processes of governance through their operations via other networks. Chris Otter illuminates the points at issue here in the contrast he draws between two different ways in which the Great Exhibition aimed at the improvement of the working classes. One tactic, comprising the housing and sanitary displays that the Exhibition directed toward its working-class visitors, aspired to educate these so that they would voluntarily mend their unhealthy domestic practices. At the same time, however, the Great Exhibition was also connected to other circuits for the distribution of knowledges which, premised on the working class's intellectual and sensory incapacity to respond to such programs, aimed to transform working-class milieus through sanitation programs which treated the population as an object to be acted on (Otter, 2008, 65–7).

Considerations of this kind are writ large in colonial contexts where indigenous peoples who may never have heard of or visited museums, or been part of the public spheres through which their activities circulate, have nonetheless been profoundly affected by their activities as a consequence of the influence that museum orderings of the relations between peoples have exercised on the classificatory grids through which programs of colonial administration have been organised and put into effect. Where this is so, the questions I broached in the previous section, concerning the ways in which museums operate on and work through specific 'architectures of personhood' in order to induct their publics into self-directed programmes of change, do not apply. But questions concerning how museums contribute to the management of bodies certainly do apply, and a different analytical optic is required to engage with these, one which places museums in a different institutional series from that suggested by the conception of the exhibitionary complex. Instead of considering museums alongside other exhibition practices – those of department stores, for example – it is the connections between museums and other means for collecting information from and about populations – censuses, for example – that need to be attended to in order to identify how the classificatory grids and frameworks to which those collections are subjected shape the varied forms of governmental action that are brought to bear back on those populations.

This requires methods that can engage adequately with the varied forms of action that museums acquire from the capacities – capacities to produce and enact new realities – that are folded into them through the arrangements of what they collect and exhibit, the material environments in which they do so, and the other apparatuses to which they are connected. This, certainly, is the perspective from which a large and growing literature now views museums: as places in which the things they exhibit and those which they do not exhibit derive particular capacities that are consequential for how museums act on and help to shape social worlds. These are not, though, capacities that

are intrinsic to the 'thingness' of the things that museums collect and exhibit. Nor do they derive from ideas or representations of things: from the thing as 'object' rather than from the self-sufficient thing, to invoke the terms of Heidegger's famous opposition (see the introduction to Daston, 2004). Rather, they are capacities which are brought into being via the varied routes through which things reach museums, and the manner in which they are classified and organised as they are processed by conservational, curatorial or educational staff, and the social and material networks to which, as a consequence, they are connected (Alberti, 2009). In all of these ways, museums are increasingly thought of as complex assemblages of distributed agency in which things and people derive their particular force and capacity from the mobile and plural networks into which they are provisionally 'stitched' (Gosden, Larson and Petch, 2007).

These ways of thinking about museums have varied provenances in different theoretical traditions: actor-network and assemblage theory, and the focus on the distribution of agency across the relations between human and non-human actors that typifies the 'material turn' in anthropology and archaeology.¹¹ The emphasis that science studies has placed on the processes through which scientific practices produce new entities in the field of knowledge also bears on how museum arrangements produce new aesthetic and epistemological realities which then enter into alliances with social and political agents to produce new ways of acting on and changing social worlds (Bennett, 2005). These, then, are some of the shifts of emphasis characterising the chapters collected in Part 3 where, in addition to the above, I draw on the 'social life of methods' tradition in sociology (Ruppert, Law and Savage, 2013), and the more general concern with the social and political consequences of the work of ordering effected by collections of various kind associated with the 'archival turn' (Stoler, 2009), to probe the role played by the relations between museums and anthropological discourses of culture in a range of governmental practices. In doing so I approach culture as an instance of what Foucault called 'transactional realities' (Foucault, 2008: 297) – a term he proposed when insisting that the relations between governing practices and governed populations are always mediated by, and take place through, intervening realities which, far from being naturally given, are the product of those governing practices and the knowledges informing them. Anthropological concepts of culture, in their varied forms – from Tylor through Boas and his followers to contemporary conceptions of the relations between cultures and communities – have operated precisely as such 'transactional realities' in providing the interfaces through which governing practices have been brought to bear on the governance of indigenous populations in colonial contexts and, indeed, on the governance of the relations between different sections of diverse societies more generally.

In examining how museums have contributed to the production of such transactional realities – or, as have called them, 'working surfaces on the social' (Bennett, 2013: 38–45) – I bring the concerns of assemblage theory

and the post-Foucaultian literature on governmentality into dialogue with one another. There is, of course, nothing strained about such a dialogue. The concept of assemblage, in its post-Deleuzian trajectories, is a development of Foucault's concept of the *dispositif* – or, as a loose translation (Bussolini, 2010), apparatus. In a much-quoted passage – it plays a central role in both Deleuze's (1992) and Giorgio Agamben's (2009) discussion of the concept – Foucault, in identifying the range of heterogeneous elements that go to make up an apparatus (discourses, institutions, architectures, statements, laws and regulations), defines the 'apparatus itself' as 'the system of relations that can be established between these elements' (Foucault, 1980: 194). This network, he goes on to argue, has to be understood as a strategic formation whose organization is a response to an urgency, an intervention into the existing relations of forces in order to develop, stabilize or block them. 'The apparatus,' he concludes, has thus to be understood as 'always inscribed in a play of power' and as also 'always linked to certain coordinates of knowledge which issue from it but, to an equal degree, condition it' (196). Bruce Braun, in highlighting this aspect of Foucault's definition, also usefully elaborates its implications in identifying the inherently reactive and essentially mobile properties of such apparatuses in responding tactically to changing circumstances. Given that the elements that are thus brought into association with one another within an apparatus 'have no more unity and no more necessity beyond the simple fact of being stitched together' in the context of a particular conjuncture, Braun argues that 'because a *dispositif* is a decentered totality that is *ad hoc* in its formation, it does not allow for any singular politics of "opposition"' (Braun, 2014: 52). Rather, he suggests, it calls for a range of different forms and styles of political engagement which aim at unstitching, and then re-stitching, the prevailing ordering of the relations between its elements. It is this perspective that underlies my discussion, in the final chapter, of the complex range of positions and negotiations that now characterize the relations between Indigenous knowledges and museological deployments of anthropology, archaeology, art history and aesthetics in contemporary Australia.

Notes

- 1 The force of this challenge was evident in the 'history wars' occasioned by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curated presentations of violent encounters along Australia's colonial frontiers at the National Museum of Australia. Right-wing criticisms of these – notably by Keith Windschuttle (2001) – resulted in significant realignments of the museum's governance. For discussions of the 'history wars' both generally and with specific reference to the National Museum of Australia, see Attwood (2015); Casey (2006); MacIntyre and Clark (2003); and Manne (2003).
- 2 See, for example, the conclusion to 'The exhibitionary complex', chapter 1 in this volume.
- 3 While the analytical perspectives of Foucault and Bourdieu are significantly different in a number of ways, there are points of productive connection between them. See further, Bennett (2010).

- 4 See, on these questions, the introduction to Bennett and Joyce (2010).
- 5 I draw on Bennett (2012) in some parts of my discussion in this section and the next.
- 6 For examples of these, and my response to them, see Bennett (2015).
- 7 These are questions that I have also considered; see Bennett (2017).
- 8 See Harman (2009) for a discussion of the relations between Latour and Heidegger on these questions.
- 9 I refer here to the role that references to both the art works of indigenous peoples and their sensory capacities played in admitting some ability for aesthetic judgement while at the same time devaluing that ability as underdeveloped. See, for example, Haddon (1895) for a telling discussion of the inability of the art practices of primitive peoples to rise above the level of mere copying traditional models to achieve genuine formal innovation. For more general discussions, see Dias (2004) and Nakata (2007).
- 10 This is not to say that Bourdieu's account is without its problems. Indeed, it is arguably too closely tied up with aesthetic modernism's constructions of its own temporalities. How far his account can stretch beyond modernist practices to engage with the flatter temporalities of contemporary art is disputed. The work of Alexander Nagel (2012) also casts doubt on the historical logic informing modernist accounts of the emergence of art's autonomy.
- 11 Two recent collections exemplifying these approaches are Bennett and Healy (2011) and Harrison, Byrne and Clarke (eds.) (2013).

Part I

Civic engines

As I have already indicated, my title for this section takes its bearings from the widespread tendency, in mid- to late nineteenth-century Anglophone settings, for the culture of reform to draw on the vocabularies of engineering in articulating new conceptions of the role of museums as instruments for acting on and shaping the civic attributes of their newly extended publics. If the scripts of museums were thus increasingly fashioned to accord with those new forms of power that Foucault called governmental, this did not mean that the earlier scripts of sovereign power or, indeed, of pastoral power were entirely jettisoned. To the contrary, these have remained significant aspects of museum practice, albeit ones that are in some degree of tension with one another as the principles of sovereignty, shifted from the monarch to the people-nation, have vied with the transnational force of imperial, colonial and religious imaginaries. These, then, are the questions that the chapters in Part 1 engage with alongside a consideration of the relations between the early development of public museums and the institutions and practices of disciplinary power.

In what has proved to be an influential argument, 'The exhibitionary complex' examines the rise of the public museum alongside a parallel series of exhibition apparatuses, particularly international exhibitions. These jointly comprised a complex distinguished by a particular set of knowledge/power relations which provided a counterpoint to those informing the operations of Foucault's disciplinary archipelago. There are three main aspects to the discussion. First, the reformatory orientation of the exhibitionary complex is contrasted to that of the institutions of discipline as one which sought to induct free publics into voluntary programmes of self-reform. Second, the specific qualities of the knowledges involved in late nineteenth-century exhibition practices are explored via an examination of the transition from Enlightenment systems of classification to the evolutionary ordering of things and peoples, and their connections to classed, gendered and racial hierarchies, effected by the exhibitionary disciplines of geology, archaeology, biology and art history. Third, the architectural forms of public museums and international exhibitions are considered with regard to the principles

of self-watching they developed as a means of banishing the spectre of the crowd by transforming it into a self-monitoring and self-regulating public.

The second chapter, 'The multiplication of culture's utility,' takes its title from William Stanley Jevons, who sought to give the emerging discipline of economics a public inflection in urging the need for the development of public museums, alongside public libraries and public sanitation, as a means of multiplying the utility of what would otherwise remain under-used private collections of art and books. Tracing the connections between this conception and those of Sir Henry Cole's earlier advocacy of public art museums and the later programmes of such museum administrators as Thomas Greenwood and, in the USA, George Brown Goode and John Cotton Dana, it examines how the development of the public art museum worked with and transformed the legacy of the earlier tradition of civic humanism in re-programming art collections so that they might function – as Jevons put it – as engines for acting on the poorer part of the population. The discussion ranges across the foundation and development of the South Kensington Museum, the influence of Goode's 'new museum idea' in America, and Dana's Newark Gallery. It concludes with an assessment of the respects in which these instances of the 'bureaucratisation of art' provide a counter to those accounts of the art museum – instanced by aspects of Theodor Adorno's and Walter Benjamin's work – which interpret the placing of art in public collections as a fall from the meaning that was vouchsafed them so long as they remained in personal collections.

The final chapter in Part 1, 'Museums, nations, empires, religions,' takes its initial bearings from Benedict Anderson's conception of nations as imagined communities whose trajectories, in being presented as emerging from a distant past and being projected into a limitless future, encompass a territorially defined population into an essential unity, a people-nation. In contrasting such forms of imagining to those of both imperial and religious transnational communities, Anderson's work has provided an influential framework for narrating the relations between the rise of the modern museum and that of the nation-state. While there can be no doubting the closeness of the museum/nation connection, it is also one which, on further inspection, proves to be more fragile than many accounts suggest. This is especially true of the relations between museums and nations in Europe which, if it provided the initial incubation for the museum/nation relationship, has also seen that relationship either unpicked or over-determined by other relations: those of a succession of intra-European empires – Napoleonic, Tsarist, Austro-Hungarian, Soviet, Nazi – which have subordinated the national repertoires of museums to larger transnational imaginaries. At the same time, the national museums of a number of European countries (Belgium, Denmark, France, Britain) have attached national histories and imaginaries to global colonialisms. The relations between museums and nations have thus been subject to constant mutations in the light of the unstable relations between nations and transnational flows (of people and

things) and imaginaries. The same is true of the relations between museums and religions. At a time when increasing diasporic flows have lent an increasingly religious inflection to questions of cultural diversity, it is becoming clear that the imaginary community of the nation has never displaced the transnational imaginary communities of different religions, and that the museum has always been engaged in complex negotiations – varying from one country to another – between the civic and secular space of the national and the rival claims of religions, initially mainly Christian but now insistently multi-faith. In examining these questions, the chapter draws on Foucault's account of pastoral power to illuminate the respects in which contemporary museums are caught in the cross-fire between pastoral and governmental forms of power.