FROM SCRIPTUAL TO SPATIAL: "LABELING" AS A METAPHOR TO UNDERSTAND MUSEUM SPACE

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis is a critical inquiry of the relationship between the architectural aspects of the museum space and the collection on display, regarding to the concept of flexibility. Inside the museum, displayed object can be thought as a two folded representation which can be termed as labeling. Museum space can be thought as the juxtaposed condition of these two bodies of the object. The flexible spatial organization of the museum space is accepted to support the ephemeral character of labeling. Within this context, the concept of flexibility will be analyzed through the cooperative reading of George Pompidou Center and Grand Egyptian Museum. With the aid of concepts of flexibility and hypertextuality that are adopted in these two cases, the study tries to reveal the relationship between the architectural potentials of museum space and the collection belongs to these particular museums. In that respect, the architectural programs of these competitions will be critically reconsidered in order to reveal how the institutions conceive the collections with their expected physical ramifications.

Keywords: Museum space, collection, exhibition, flexibility and hyper-textuality

ÖZ

YAZILI OLANDAN MEKANSAL OLANA: MÜZE MEKANININ DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİNDE METAFOR OLARAK "ETİKETLEME"

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Bu tez müze mekanının sergilenen koleksiyon ve onun mimari yorumları ilişkisi üzerine eleştirel bir incelemesidir. Müzenin içerisinde sergilenen nesneler 'etiketleme' olarak adlandırılacak olan iki temsil şekline sahiptirler : sahip oldukları fiziksel beden ve onlara yüklenmiş bilgi. Müze mekanı sergilenen nesnenin bu iki bedeninin cakıştığı durum olarak düşünülebilir. Etiketlemenin sahip olduğu geçici karakterin muze mekan organizasyonu destekler bir özellik oldugu iddia edilmektedir. Bu bağlamda, esneklik kavramı Center Pompidou ve Grand Egyptian Museum yarışmaları özelinde karşılaştırmalı bir okuma ile incelenmiştir. Buna bağlı olarak iki yarışmanın koleksiyonları ve koleksiyona bağlı fiziksel mekan yorumları eleştirel bir gözle yeniden ele alınacaktır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Müze mekanı, koleksiyon, sergileme, esneklik ve çok katmanlılık (hypertextuality)

to my family

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis will be a critical inquiry into the architectural properties of museum space. Throughout the study, "flexibility" will be the key term that will guide this re-conceptualization. At the turn of the twentieth century, flexibility emerged as an architectural concept and since then it had became a dominating term in architectural discourse. However, it is not the aim of this thesis to discuss architectural flexibility in its historical evolution, but benefit from its various implementations to be able to analyze the museum space.

International Council of Museums (ICOM) characterize museum as a non-profit making, permanent institution, which collects, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment of material evidence of man and his environment.[1] Among these five designated roles, collecting and exhibiting have specific significance because, museums have a parallel history that evolves both together with and in addition to the individual progress of these two identified functions. According to the definition above, the search for possible display environments for collections shape museum space. Moreover, the changing meanings of "museum objects" influence the final organization of the exhibition space.

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[1] Hilde S. Hein. "Introduction." <u>The Museum in Transition: A Philosophical Perspective</u>. Smithsonian Books, Wahington, 2000, p 2.

A displayed object has a two folded representation in a museum; its corporeal body, suggesting the aesthetic representation of the object within the museum, and its immaterial body that covers the information prescribed to it. The spatial arrangements of the exhibition have the power to give new meanings to the material things.[2] The act of displaying requires ordering, and this ordering may be generated from a concept, a narration, a chronological sequence or a periodic fiction which becomes visible through the immaterial body of the object. Hence, museum space not only displays the de-contextualized objects but also re-assembles them with respect to the other displayed objects.

The Canadian Center for Architecture (CCA) has a wide range of collection from the fifteenth century printed books to the twenty-first century websites. The CCA collection ranges from architectural design documentations to publications including drawings, models, prints, conceptual studies, and master photographs, archives and oral histories of individuals, lecture notes and toys.[3] In 1989, CCA published a catalog, *Architecture and Its Image*, accompanying the opening exhibition, which represents the collection of the institution. Just in the foreword of the catalog, Phyllis Lambert, the director of the institution, asserts that the collection is composed of architectural representations from different complexities of form and scale, function, and meaning, in their pictorial aspect and multi-layered technical information.[4]

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[2] Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean. "The Space of the Museum," *The Australian Journal of Media and Culture*, vol.3 no:1, 1990, p.5.

[3] Canadian Centre of the Architecture. "Institutional Overview." http://www.cca.qc.ca/. [Last accessed: 18.08.2007]

[4] Phyllis Lambert. "Foreword." Architecture and Its Image: Four Centuries of Architectural Representation: Works from the Collection of the Canadian Centre for Architecture/ Material. Eve Blau and Edward Kaufman, eds. Montreal: Centre Canadian d' Architecture / Canadian Center for Architecture (distributed by the MIT Press.), 1989, p 9.

The catalog acknowledged the independent nature of the objects within the collection and focused on the serial reading of groups of images exhibited. The serial reading of words that composes sentences and relationships between the exhibited objects can convey new understandings. For the purpose of the opening exhibition, images dating from the early sixteenth century to the late twentieth century including drawings, water colors, prints, photographs, maps, books, journals, documents, models, films, videotapes, and computer graphics have been assembled to exemplify sequential reading of autonomous artifacts.[5]

Particularly for the last three decades, it has been extensively discussed in museological studies that an object enters into the museum to be declared as autonomous.[6] Once declared as an autonomous object, it is placed in a new environment which is different from its original context. This "displacement" allows each object to become part of the objects to be exhibited individually or become part of different groups of objects under display. Here museum becomes a place where these collected objects are organized, and a particular unity is constructed. Therefore, museum can be considered as the medium where these artifacts— archeological or artistic objects, industrial objects or architectural representations or daily life objects— are classified and redefined as collections. Among many possible ways to bring together these different kinds of objects, in the case of CCA collections the architectural representations, CCA labels the collection under three sections: "Architecture in Three Dimensions," "Architecture in Place and Time," and "Architecture in Process." As clarified in the case of the exhibition of the CCA collections, museum

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[5] Eve Blau and Edward Kaufman, eds. "Introduction." <u>Architecture and Its Image: Four Centuries of Architectural Representation: Works from the Collection of the Canadian Centre for Architecture/ Material.</u> Eve Blau and Edward Kaufman, eds. Montreal: Centre Canadian d' Architecture / Canadian Center for Architecture (distributed by the MIT Press.), 1989, pp 13-15.

[6] In this thesis, the discussions on the autonomy of museum object refer to the studies of Eilean Hooper-Greenhill and Tony Bennett.

space not only displays the de-contextualized object but also re-assembles them with respect to their relation to the other displayed objects. Depending on the multiplicity of carried information, this relationship can be repeated in order to produce new readings of the same object. Museum space supports this ephemerality, and is able to present new configurations of narrations in new locations.

Material things can be understood in a multitude of different ways, that many narrations can be read from things, and that these stories can be manipulated as required.[7] This study suggests that, the museum manages the meanings of the object and communicates with the viewers in a very specific medium which will be named as "labeling." The definition of "label" can range from a simple description of the object to the textual background of the exhibition concept.

Label, in its very conventional definition, is understood as the fundamental tool through which a museum transforms the object into narrations in order to become part of a collection.[8] The labeling process that the object undergoes begins with the decision under which "name" the object will be labeled. This decision, indeed affects the complementary objects that will accompany it, and is shaped by the institutions' exhibition layout.

> The same material object, entering the disciplines of different ensembles of practices, would be differently classified. A silver teaspoon made during the eighteenth century in Sheffield would be classified as "Industrial Art" in Birmingham City Museum, "Decorative Art" at Stoke-on-Trent, "Silver" at the Victoria and

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[7] Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean. "Introduction," <u>Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge</u>. Routledge, London and New York, 1992, p 6.

[8] Edward P. Alexander. "The Art Museums." <u>Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums.</u> The American Association State and Local History, Tennessee, 1979, p 183.

> Albert Museum, and "Industry" at Kelham Museum in Sheffield.
> The other objects also classified would be different in each case,
> and the meaning and significance of the teaspoon itself
> correspondingly modified. [9]

This example illustrates the many possibilities constructing different narrations with the informational bodies of the objects. The label of the object may refer to different meanings depending on the other objects that it has been grouped together. The management of meaning is thus, controlled by the scriptural process of the labeling by making visible the intended characteristics of the objects and hiding the others. Therefore, what is framed in the museum can be considered as a constructed "way of seeing," that assembles things, puts them in an order to become collections on display.

> It is useful to ask how far does the form of the museum building
> and the arrangement of internal spaces in fact construct a way
> of seeing a particular subject matter? Is history to be seen as a
> chronological single tread narrative, or do the spaces permit a
> thematic comparative approach? Does the Knowing subject
> (curator, visitor) abstract the building from the perception of
> things or does the form and the material specificity of the
> building intimately shape the way things can be known? Does
> the building itself influence curatorial decisions as to what can
> be shown and what was remain invisible and if so how?[10]

In *Civilization Rituals*, Carol Duncan points out the negligence of the relationship between the collection and the architectural body of exhibition. The literature about museums tends to represent them discreetly, either in

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[9] Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean. "The Space of the Museum," *The Australian Journal of Media and Culture,* vol.3 no:1, 1990, p.7.

[10] Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean. "The Space of the Museum," *The Australian Journal of Media and Culture*, Vol.3 No.1, 1990, p. 6.

the form of collections of things or as the distinctive works of architecture. This distinction forces them to be seemed either the content or the container, as if there is no established relation between the container and the content. However the control of the visitors' understanding of the exhibition is a function of physicality[11]– the movement of the spectator and the physical arrangement of the exhibition space. Museum as a building type refers to the unfolding of the collection through the spectator's movement.   Therefore, it can be understood that there is a direct relation between the arrangement of the circulation and the conscious display of the objects. This conscious display which is provided through the narration of the exhibition can be modified by transforming the exhibition space.

Historically, the roots of displaying a specific collection consisting of rare objects have been founded at the Medici Palace. Eilean Hooper-Greenhill reveals Medici Palace of the fifteenth-century Florence, as the origin of European museums and collecting practices, with respect to the studies of F.H. Taylor (1948), E. P. Alexander (1979) and discusses the relation between the space and the collection on display.[12] The presence of rooms that were used to show the collections of the Palace and the presence of the occasional allowance of the visitors to these places demonstrated the need for making the collection visible.[13] At this point, the relationship between the collection and exhibition becomes the primary concern of both the organization of the collection and the design of the space. This

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[11] Annis, Sheldon, "The Museum as a Staging Ground for Symbolic Action," Kavanagh, Gaynor, ed. Museums Provision and Professionalism, Routledge, London and New York, 1994, p 22.

[12] Hopper-Greenhill, Eilean. "The First Museum of Europe?" Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge. Routledge, London and New York, 1992, pp. 23-26.

[13] Edward P. Alexander. "The Art Museums." Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums. The American Association State and Local History, Tennessee, 1979, p 22. The term "visible" here is used with reference to the Foucauldian concept of "visibility".

space can range from the drawer of a cupboard or a cabinet of curiosity to the entire building itself.

The transformation of the private collections to public museums influenced from the need for classifying the objects. That classification required a sense of choices regarding the process of ordering and its intellectual outputs. With this process the identity of the object shifted from the domain of rarity to the realm of science.

During the French Revolution, Alexander Lenoir collected paintings, sculptures, reliefs, tombs in order protect them against vandalism and stored them in the gardens of the Petit-Augustine.[14] Lenoir's success in collecting and preserving the artifacts laid the foundations of the famous collection of the Musée des Monuments Français. After the initial act of preserving, the collected objects required to be arranged in order to be publicly displayed. The chronologically classified collection was displayed in linearly organized exhibition galleries, or in better terms "period rooms," exemplified the relation between the exhibition space and the objects on display.

Between 1778 and 1814, the *Parisian Académie d'Architecture* offered several times the Grand Prix de Rome for designing museum buildings, in order to establish an autonomous building type.[15] Thereafter, museums became the subject and focus of architectural competitions. Projects which are acquired by an end product of a competition are significant since they reveal the many possible spatial configurations of the same programmatic requirements. Architectural program here is considered as a tool that

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[14] Greene, Christopher M. "Alexandre Lenoir and the Musée des Monuments Français during the French Revolution." French Historical Studies, Vol. 12, Autum 1982: 200-222.

[15] Naredi- Rainer, Paul von. "The Museum as a Building Type," A Design Manual: Principles of the Museum as a Building, Brikhause Publishers, Basel, Boston, 2004, p XI.

controls the necessary relations between the museum space and the collection. On the other extreme, the Tate Modern competition, to convert the former Bankside Power Station into a museum, in 1995, illustrates the search for the many possibilities of museum space rather than the sole adaptation of the infrastructure.

Beginning from the second half of the twentieth century, many museum competitions had been organized including: the International Idea Competition for The George Pompidou National Center for Art and Culture, Paris (1971), Restoration of Musée d'Orsay, Paris (1979), Dusseldorf Museum of Contemporary Art (1980), Acropolis Museum, Athens (1989), National Museum of Seoul (1994), Prado National Museum, Madrid (1995), Tate Modern International Competition, London (1995), Extension for Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2001), Eyebeam Museum of Art and Technology, New York (2002), Grand Egyptian Museum, Cairo (2002), Metz Pompidou Center (2003), New Acropolis Museum, Athens (2004), and finally the Extension for Tate Modern, London (2006). Most of these competition documents were organized around a key word to highlight the conceptual framework of the museum space: "flexibility".

Accordingly, this thesis will be a re-consideration of the relationship between the architectural aspects of the museum space and the collection on display, regarding to the concept of flexibility. In that respect, during this study, among the above listed competitions, "George Pompidou Center" and "The Grand Egyptian Museum" will be analyzed through their competition documents. Belonging to different geographies, having different programmatic requirements, taking place in different periods and exhibiting different objects it is hard to compare these two museums. However, there is one thing in common, that is the search for flexibility.

The architectural programs of these competitions reflect how the institutions conceive the collections with their expected physical ramifications. The Centre Pompidou competition brief has a chapter called "Flexibility" likewise Grand Egyptian Museum has one entitled "Hypertextuality." Though both of these terms, flexibility and hypertextuality, have many connotations either in architecture or in literary criticism, in these two competition briefs, they are specifically used to refer to the collections and their spatial organization. Through these keywords, which are used to describe the conceptual formations of the museums, the "conventional" means of flexibility is inquired. Thus hypertextuality is stated as a new form of flexibility.

CHAPTER 2

ORDERING THE "WAYS OF SEEING"

Displayed object can be thought as a two folded representation; its corporeal body and the immaterial body of the information prescribed to it. This study starts with the assumption that the museum space is shaped regarding this dual representation of the object. The corporeal body corresponds to the aesthetic representation of the object with respect to its material presence. The autonomous object, together with the others, is framed by the museum. Yet, the scientific body is created as an outcome of the studies that put the collection in an order. Some things are concealed while others are made visible with respect to the decisions for the part of the collection held by the museum.[16]

As discussed by Svetlana Alpers, the museum is a constructed "way of seeing,"[17] where; the way of seeing both refers to the sense of sight and the point of view that structures the collection. The object in a particular display case could only be known through the immediate perception of the visible, or through any other structuring context that the knowing subject brought to the interaction.[18] At the very beginning of her essay, Alpers exemplifies how the museum transformed a crab, displayed in the Museum of Comparative Zoology, into an object of visual interest.

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[16] Hopper-Greenhill, Eilean. "Introduction," <u>Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge</u>. Routledge, London and New York, 1992, p 15.

[17] In this chapter "the ways of seeing" is used with reference to the same titled book of John Berger.

[18] Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean. "The Space of the Museum," The Australian Journal of Media and Culture, Vol.3 No.1, 1990, p. 6.

It was placed at the corner of a case so that one could walk around from the front to the side and take it in another view: a smallish main body delicately supported on improbably long legs, like the tines of some huge fork or rake.[19]

The museum transformed the crab by isolating the necessary information about its habitat, nutrition, and movement, in which these aspects had encouraged one to look at it in that particular way.[20] Therefore, the primary feature of display as a mode of transmission is that it is structured on the principle of "visibility",[21] both material and informational.

In *Museum and the Shaping of Knowledge*, Eilean Hooper-Greenhill analyzes museum space with respect to the evolution of collecting and exhibiting. These two identified roles are demonstrated as the primary functions that shape the museum space. Collecting is generally considered as gathering of objects, while exhibiting finds its definition with the articulation of material things, subjects and knowing.[22] Here, it has to be stated that the aim of this thesis is neither to redefine these functions and the museum object, nor to construct historical evaluation of museum space, but to base the study on historical evidences.

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[19] Svetlana Alpers, "The Way of Seeing," Karp, Ivan and Lavine, Steven D. ed. The Poetics and Poltics of Museum Display, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, London, p 25-33.

[20] Ibid. p 25.

[21] Op.cit. Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean, 1990, p 5.

[22] Ibid. p 3.

2.1 Labeling as a Function of Museum

As it has been stated before, within the museum, objects are first declared as autonomous entities that are to be arranged according to the relations between them. This autonomy refers to splitting from origin. Rosalind Krauss identifies the translation of the object to the museum object as "cut loose from all preferentiality to the use, representational or ritual, for which they might be created."[23]   The exhibition policy of institution- thematic, chronologic, and temporal or permanent- represents an order of seeing of the collection.

> Artifacts are part of a larger whole, belong to the past, and can be taken of their original site. A painting for example, is charged with cultural meaning which can tell us something about a larger cultural situation, e.g. aesthetic conceptions or word views, conceptions of representation or the social relevance of art, and it only yields those meanings if we are able to "read" it, put it in some context that illuminates these cultural meanings.[24]

The act of "reading" refers to the interpretation of the object attained through the discursive formation of the institution. The notion of ordering and classification has been the major sources used to build up a narration from the fragmented objects. This narration is set up through the control of immaterial body and is able to be rearranged with the new readings. Thus, what is framed in the museum is a "way of seeing", that assembles things, puts them in an order to be presented to the public. The act of displaying requires a new kind of ordering, and this new ordering is generated from a concept, a narration, a chronological sequence or a

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[23] Krauss, Rosalind. "Post-modernisms' Museum Without Walls," Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson and Sandy Naime ed. <u>Thinking about Exhibitions</u>, Routledge, London and New York, 1996, p 335.

[24] Bal, Mike. "The Discourse of Museum," <u>Thinking About Exhibitions,</u> Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson and Sandy Naime ed. <u>Thinking about Exhibitions</u>, Routledge, London and New York, 1996, p 206.

periodic fiction which becomes visible through the immaterial-informational body of the objects. That is to say, museum space not only displays the de-contextualized object but also re-assembles them with respect to their relation to the other displayed objects. Because of this ephemeral nature of the object, this relation can repeat in order to produce new readings of it. This ephemerality is also supported by the museum space.

> The management of meanings is explicitly the goal of any strategy of representation that is any medium's prime objective. How exhibitions do this and under what conditions they do it in order to maintain essential identities or to disrupt them, then, is not just a matter of content but a matter of medium.[25]

Museum manages the meaning of the object and communicates with the viewer in a very specific medium which is called "labeling". Label can be understood as a simple description of the object in museum or the textual background of the conceptual organization of the exhibition. Labeling makes it all possible: either briefly stating the theme of the exhibition, or enabling visitors to understand the exhibition and provoking the visitors' curiosity.

The labeling process that the object undergoes begins with the decision under which "name" the object will be labeled. This decision, indeed affects the complementary objects that will accompany it, and is shaped by the institutions' exhibition layout. Label, in its very conventional definition, is understood as the fundamental tool through which a museum transforms the singularities of the objects into interrelations between the

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[25] Ferguson, W. Bruce, "Exhibition Rhetorics: Material Speech and Utter Sense," Greenberg, Reesa, Ferguson, W. Bruce and Nairne, Sandy edit <u>Thinking About Exhibitions</u>, Routledge, London and New York, 1996, p. 185.

objects to become part of a collection.[26] The label, which enables this interrelation, can either be in the form of inventory numbers that mark the objects for the institution, or it can carry the necessary information about the objects to communicate with the viewer. This definition of the label identifies how the collection is described within the museum.

Moreover, in its expanded definition the label authorizes the scriptual existence of the object thus makes the knowledge derived from its informational body visible. It reflects both the point of view from which the collection is organized and the characteristics of the object intended to be visible by the exhibition. It is the active recitations of the exhibition which emphasize and re-emphasize braided narratives with purposes and fictions of persuasion.[27] As a result, label reflects the scriptural format of the institutions' exhibition policy that shapes the exhibition space.

> "The space of museum partly constitutes the way in which material things can be grouped and made visible. The articulations of material things, gallery spaces, internal and external built structures affect both the desire of the curator and perception of the visitor. The physical 3 dimensional experience of the subject in the space of the museum is the knowing in the museum. It is spatialized perception, a form of knowledge environment where the possibilities of what may be known are partly defined in advance through both the processes of the collection management and the interrelationships of material things and museum space".[28]

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[26] Edward P. Alexander. "The Art Museums." <u>Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums.</u> The American Association State and Local History, Tennessee, 1979, p 183.

[27] Ferguson, W. Bruce, "Exhibition Rhetorics: Material Speech and Utter Sense," Greenberg, Reesa, Ferguson, W. Bruce and Nairne, Sandy edit <u>Thinking About Exhibitions</u>, Routledge, London and New York, 1996, p. 182.

[28] Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean. "The Space of the Museum," The Australian Journal of Media and Culture, Vol.3 No.1, 1990, p 8.

As Elian Hooper- Greenhill asserts, exhibition is not regarded as the sole presence of the object within the museum space but it is the medium where knowing, seeing and doing in museum are constituted through the articulation of material things and space at many levels.[29] Peter Davey, in the article "Museums in an N-dimensional World," explains the dilemma of a person faced with the problem of locating an object in three dimensional space as: "one and the same truth may be put in different places according to the terms it contains, the causes upon which it depends, and according to the inference and results it may have."[30]

> When objects become exhibits, they necessarily take on new meanings: they are transformed. The warehouse, among its other uses, serves as a linking place. The objects symbols twist in meaning between worlds; the world of their origin and the world of significance created by display.[31]

By selecting and framing the objects, museum redefines objects to legitimize their existence.[32] Comparable to a text, exhibition is meant to be read, interpreted, and experienced. The control of the visitors' understanding of these meanings is a function of physicality[33]– the movement of the spectator and the physical arrangement of the exhibition space. Therefore, displaying implies the spatialization of the relationship set up among the objects of the collection.

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[29] Ibid, p 8.

[30] For further information, Davey, Peter. "Museum in an N-dimensional World," *The Architectural Review: Evolving Museums*, August 2000, pp-36-37.

[31] Annis, Sheldon, "The Museum as a Staging Ground for Symbolic Action," Kavanagh, Gaynor, ed. Museums Provision and Professionalism, Routledge, London and New York, 1994, p 21-25.

[32] Ibid, p 21.

[33] Annis, Sheldon, "The Museum as a Staging Ground for Symbolic Action," Kavanagh, Gaynor, ed. Museums Provision and Professionalism, Routledge, London and New York, 1994, p 22.

2.2 Classification as a Function of Museum

Sharon MacDonald, in *The Politics of Display: Museum, Science and Culture,* discusses the curiosity cabinets of Renaissance Italy, which are the prototypes of disciplinary museum, as the places of collecting and exhibiting.[34] Collecting and exhibiting had been first seen together in the case of private collections of the individual patrons in which antiques, rare jewels and other objects on display reflect the pride of their owner.[35] The power, knowledge and wealth of the patrons were compared with the range of their exhibited collections.

Though restricted for a limited community, curiosity rooms of the palaces were available for the visitors from the aristocracy and scholars. Therefore, these museums were intended to provide pleasure to the visitors as well as to offer opportunities of discovery and learning.[36]

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[34] MacDonald, Sharon, ed. "Exhibition of Power and Powers of Exhibition: An Introduction to the Politics of Display." The Politics of Display: Museum, Science and Culture. London New York, 1998, p. 8-9.

[35] Pitman, Bonnie. "Muses, Museums, and Memories", *Deadalus* vol.128 issue 3, 1999,

[36] Ibid p 1.

Figure 1 . The cabinet of curiosities: Ferrante Imperato's museum in Naples. 1599

Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean. <u>Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge</u>. Routledge, London and New York, 1995, p.127.

Sixteenth and seventeenth century "cabinet of curiosities" were described as rooms that store a wide range of uncanny collections which are organized with respect to their resemblance. Resemblance made it possible to know things that were both visible and invisible, enabled the interpretation of texts, and organized endless play of symbols.[37] The object in the space is classified according to similitude.

In *The Formation of the Museum*, Tony Bennett distinguishes late eighteenth century museums and fairs, as being the ordered and disordered ways of exhibiting rarities. Within the case of the public

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[37] Hopper-Greenhill, Eilean. "Introduction," <u>Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge</u>. Routledge, London and New York, 1992, p 12.

museum, "ordering the things" denotes the classification of the collected objects and connotes its scientific and discursive qualities. As opposed to exhibiting the singularity of rarities, classifications diverted attention towards the implied system where the object takes part in within a particular taxonomy[38]. Therefore, it is the informational body that enables museum object to be categorized as parts of different taxonomies.

The Preface of Michel Foucault's renowned book, "The Order of Things", begins with a quoted passage from George Louis Borges. The passage is about the description of 'a certain Chinese Encyclopedia,' the *Celestial Emporium of Benevolent Knowledge,* which is:

> This book has rose out a passage in Borges, out of the laughter that shattered, as I read the passage, all the familiar landmarks of my thought— breaking up all the ordered surfaces and all the planes with which we are accustomed to tame the wild profusion of existing things, and continued long afterwards to disturb and threaten with collapse our age-old distinction between the Same and Other. This passage quotes a "certain Chinese encyclopedia" in which it is written that "animals are divided into: (a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) sucking pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dog, (h) included in the present classification, (i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camel-hair brush, (l) *et cetera,* (m) having just broken the water pitcher, (n) that from a long way off look like flies." In the wonderment of this taxonomy, the thing that we apprehend in one great leap, the thing that, by means of this fable, is demonstrated as the charm of another system of thought, is the limitation of our own, the stark impossibility of thinking that[39].

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[38] Bennett, Tony. The Birth of the Museum: history, theory, politics . Routledge, London and New York, 1995, p.44.

[39] Foucault, Michel. "Preface", The Order of Things: Archeology of the Human Sciences, *(trans. Les Mots et les choses)*, Vintage Books, New York, 1970, p xv.

Inspired from this quoted text, Foucault discusses the basics of classifying objects and the essentiality of a system of thought, which organizes the list of classification. According to Eillean Hooper-Greenhill the utilized reference system to order Chinese Encyclopedia, is fundamentally alien to "Western way of thinking." That is why, although listing was regarded as a rational and a valid way of knowing, the illustrated order of animals is called as "unthinkable", and indeed, "irrational"[40]. The system of thought that organizes the specific case of each classification, ordering or framing activity has to be known in order to comprehend the system of classification.

Foucault criticizes Borges for not adding illustrations of the classified object or at least obvious clues that may help one to figure out the setting of the organization. What has been removed is the famous "operating table"[41], which indicates the system of thought that could enlighten Foucault to comprehend the rationality of the classification. The purpose of Foucault's "archeology" is to show that, it is the site that provides the juxtaposition of heterogeneous entities in that of discourse.[42] The classification system constitutes a way of looking to the grouping of items, therefore structures a thought system towards the final form of the collection. Within the museum, this system operates on the grouping of objects and makes them "visible" in both literal and Foucaultian terms.

One of the first known guides published to inform "amateur collectors" of the eighteenth century on how to acquire and keep collections was Caspar

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[40] Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean. "Introduction,". <u>Museum and Shaping of Knowledge</u>. Routledge, London and New York, 1995, p.4.

[41] Foucault, Michel. "Preface", <u>The Order of Things: Archeology of the Human Sciences</u>, *(trans. Les Mots et les choses)*, Vintage Books, New York, 1970, p xvii.

[42] Douglas Crimp. <u>On the Musuem Ruins</u>, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1993, p222.

F. Nieckel's (Neicelius) Museographia (1727).[43] To illustrate his classification method and its spatial correspondence, Neickelius sketched a prototype of a curiosity cabinet for an ideal collection.[44] What takes attention in this cabinet is the purposeful distinction in between "natural" and "artificial" specimens. This categorization exemplifies the presence of a purposeful method to bring the objects together according to their scientific bodies and their spatial differentiation.

The labeling of specimens in the collection revealed the classification of the collection, thus the organization of knowledge. Moreover, Neickelius' ideal cabinet illustration demonstrated a space where the man studies, that would eventually help the development of "scientific knowledge", and had become the main agent for the discrimination, the separation of resemblance into taxonomies, classifications, and the hierarchies of knowledge.[45]

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[43] Savaş, Ayşen. "Between Document and Monument: Architectural Artifact in an Age of Specialized Institutions," Doctoral Research submitted to Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1994, p 28.

[44] Ibid, p 28.

[45] Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean. Museums and Shaping of Knowledge. Routledge, London and New York, 1995, p 15.

Figure 2 . C.F.Neickelius' Museographia Illustration. 1727

Peter van Mensch. <u>Towards a Methodology of Museology</u>. Doctoral Research submitted to University of Zagreb, 1992.

The eighteenth century transformation of the private collection into public institutions signifies the change in the understanding of the museum from the conservatory of the contained objects to a space embodying a representative publicness.[46] Together with the transition from "cabinets of curiosities" to public museums, collections had been rearranged in accordance with the principal of "representativeness" rather than that of "rarity."[47] Moreover, as claimed by Tony Bennett, while maintaining a representational shift, this transition enables a functional transformation, since collections are no longer thought of as means for stimulating the curiosity of the few but are re-conceptualized as a technique for instructing the many. The formation of the public museum forms part and parcel of the fashioning of a new discourse in which "man" functions as the meta-narrator of the story.[48]

During the French Revolution, Alexander Lenoir collects paintings, sculptures, reliefs, tombs, facades of buildings, in order protect them from vandalism which opposed to previous political and economic system.[49] Lenoir's intention to collect in order to preserve the artifacts resulted in the "Musée des Monuments Français", where collection was exhibited to the public.[50] The idea of national museum shaped the exhibition space of late eighteenth century.

> The history of French state, its glory made manifest in the
> chronological succession of tombs and relics that had been

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[46] Tony Bennett. "Formation of the Museum," The Birth of the Museum: history, theory, politics . Routledge, London and New York, 1995, p 36.

[47] Ibid, p 39.

[48] Ibid, p 45.

[49] Greene, Christopher M. "Alexandre Lenoir and the Musée des Monuments Français during the French Revolution." French Historical Studies, Vol. 12, Autum 1982: 200-222.

[50] Ibid, p 214.

rescued from revolutionary vandalism in order, precisely, to organize a national past and render it publicly visible and present.[51]

The need for displaying the collection publicly requires the arrangement of the collected objects. The exhibition space was arranged in such a way that, while visitors move from one room to other, chronological route passes from one period of display to another.[52] Therefore, the chronologically arranged galleries of Lenoir, indicates classification of the objects as a function of exhibiting. The preferred categorization of the collection influences the architecture of the exhibition space.

French Revolution also made adjustments to the program of the Louvre Palace— where Lenoir's collection was later transferred — to promote state and nation by the organization of the collection as national treasure instead of kings'.[53] That is to say, thematic conception of the collection was arranged with respect to the idea of nation. For the emergence of new categories of classifications, Hooper-Greenhill demonstrates, in the assembling, ordering, classifying, placing, cataloguing, labeling, conserving, and displaying of thousand of paintings, sculptures, clocks, tapestries, mirrors, jewels, coins, books that, new curatorial practices and values began to emerge in the Museum of Louvre.[54] The conversion of the Palace into museum is used to constitute masses as citizens of the Republic. This transformation caused the re-organization of the collection to interpret a new theme, the idea of Republican Government. New

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[51] Bennett, Tony. "Art and Theory: The politics of the Invisible," <u>The Birth of the Museum: history, theory, politics</u>, Routledge, London and New York, 1995, p 166.

[52] Ibid, p 167.

[53] Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean. "The Space of the Museum," *The Australian Journal of Media and Culture,* Vol.3 No.1, 1990, p 1-10.

[54] Ibid, p 2.

concept of state was made visible to the citizens by redeploying expropriated royal treasure in a democratic public setting.[55] In the museum space, this rearrangement of the collection in new configuration was questioned to allow new concepts and realities to be introduced into the sphere of visibility.[56] According to Thomas Markus, the characteristics of many of vast nineteenth century galleries were neutral spaces which were dissociated from their contents and made use of any type of objects in any sequence.[57]

Rosalind E. Krauss, in her article *Postmodernism's Museum Without Walls,* clearly explains Andrea Malraux's point about the museum-as-institution, in *Musée Imaginer* as a field of comparison, where this comparison translated into museum space by efforts to range and classify: all objects of type A in one place, those of type B in another.[58] This interpretation of Krauss states a spatial classification of the collection in addition to its conceptual categorization. "This collectivization began to create unities within what could be seen as their own internal coherence which would then be understood as inventions of so many epicenters, so many variants within the field of meaning."[59]

The above mentioned examples produce models for the relation between collecting and display. They emphasize the relationship between the classification of the collection and its spatial organization. The ordering and representation of the ideas through material things and space

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[55] Tony Bennett. "The Formation of the Museum," <u>The Birth of the Museum: history, theory, politics</u> . Routledge, London and New York, 1995, p 38.

[56] Ibid, p 39.

[57] Markus, Thomas. <u>Buildings and Power</u>, Routledge, London, 1993, p 170.

[58] Krauss, Rosalind. "Post-modernisms' Museum Without Walls," Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson and Sandy Naime ed. <u>Thinking about Exhibitions</u>, Routledge, London and New York, 1996, p 342.

[59] Ibid, p 343.

motivates various readings of the collection. While the act of collecting focuses on the object, the act of displaying carries on the exhibition space to organize and present objects. The apriori set rules, definitions and considerations of classification under the intended concept can be read as the new formation of the scientific body of displaying. Therefore, it can be asserted that the act of displaying requires a kind of ordering under a concept, narration, chronological sequence or thematic fiction.

Moreover, late 20th century museums harvest a diversified collection of names like: "Irish Whiskey Corner Museum", "The Museum of Imagination", "The Hall of Championships", "The German Carburetor Museum", "The Gas Museum", "London Toy and Model Museum", "The Museum of Olive".[60] The ordinary object, despite being none of rare, historical or art object, gains its value from the established concept of the exhibition. It may not be the first or the last object of a kind, but may be one of frequently produced that explicates a condition or a process. As a result, how you display overshadows what you display. Hence, the relation between the objects and the museum space become inevitably connected to each other. Design and spectacle— the semiotics of display– increasingly appear as central elements of museum exhibition, sometimes preempting narrative order, as museums shift their emphasis preservation and study to dramatic delivery.[61]

2.3 Architectural Body of Displaying

In *Civilization Rituals*, Carol Duncan criticizes the negligence of the relationship between the collection and the architectural body of exhibition.

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[60] Hudson, Kenneth, "Museum Refuses to Stand Still," Carbonell, Bettina Messias, ed. Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts, Blackwell Publishing, MA, Oxford, 2004, p 90.

[61] Hein, S. Hilde, "From Object to Experience," The Museum in Transition, Smithsonian Books, Washington, 2000, p 5.

She demonstrates that the literature about museums tends to represent them discreetly, either as collections of things or as distinctive works of architecture, as if there is no established relation between.

> Museum catalogs, for example, normally treat only the content of a collection. The "collection" is not conceptualized as a place but rather as an accumulation of valuable and unique objects. Meanwhile, architectural writers focus on the kind artistic statements a museum building makes, or, more practically, on how its architect handled such problems as lighting and traffic flow where the focus is on collecting or a collection, the museum environment itself is often ignored, as if its space were neutral or invisible. To illustrate it most guidebooks sold in museums take this approach, representing the museum experience as almost solely a series encounters with discrete art objects[62]

From the point of the literature of architecture, the treatment is similarly focused. To illustrate, the book *A Design Manual: Museum Buildings* characterizes principles of the twentieth century museum buildings as "a mirror of architectural possibilities" and "the symbol of architectures' self-referentiality."[63] The displayed object and architectural body of the museum are presented as two distinct entities, as if there is no purposeful relation between the exhibitory needs of the collection and the building. The question remains: it is worthwhile to analyze the relationship set up between the architectural body of museum and object on display, the discourse of exhibition, to understand the museum space.

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[62] Duncan Carol, "Introduction," <u>Civilization Rituals: inside public art museum</u>,Routledge, London, New York, 1995, p1.

[63] Naredi-Rainer, Paul von, ed. "Forward", <u>A Design Manual: Principles of the Museum as a Building</u>. Brikhause Publishers, Basel, Boston, 2004.

This specificity of the museum space with respect to collection and architectural body calls for the known "container and content" resemblance. To what extend the content shapes the container? Is there a relationship between them and if so what is the role of the architect? "Is the architect dictating an experience for all visitors encountering a particular space or display, or should the architect facilitate personal interpretation?"[64]
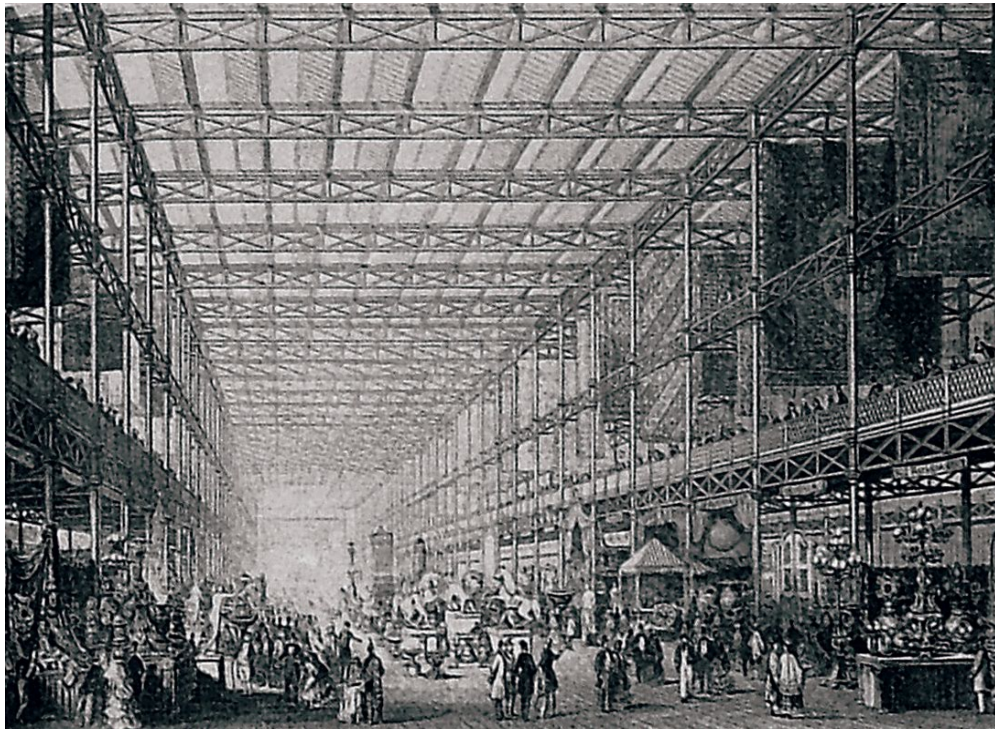

Figure 3. Crystal Palace. 1850- 1851

Suzanne, Stephens, ed. <u>Building the New Museum</u>. Princeton Architectural Press, 1985, p19.

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[64] Sirefman, Sussanna, "Formed and Forming: Contemporary Museum of Architecure," Deadalos, Volume:128, Issue:3, 1999, pp 297-307.

Helen Searing demonstrates the building type emerged after the nineteenth century great expositions as one of the sources that museum buildings evolve.[65] According to Tony Bennett, the Crystal Palace in London, designed by Joseph Paxton in 1850-51, suggests the emblem of an architectural series in its continuing concern with the display of objects to a great multitude.[66] The objects on display in these exhibitory complexes differentiate from manufactured goods to temporary exhibition of works of arts. These buildings function as a "container", because of the clarity of their structure that can embody wide variety of objects from various scales and event types. The shell that encloses a large open space acts as a multifunctional space and requires architectural intervention within the envelope to install diverse collections.[67] In the twentieth century exhibition spaces, this idea of container evolved into the need for huge spaces for maximum flexibility and unlimited programmatic use.[68]

In the book *New Museum*, Josep M. Montaner classifies the museum buildings according to the relationship between the architecture and the museum's program. The buildings are analyzed under six main categories, which are: large scale cultural centers in which the museum is accompanied by a number of other cultural facilities; major art galleries; museums of modern art; museums of science, technology, and industry; galleries and centers of contemporary art; and civic or municipal

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[65] Searing, Helen, "The Development of a Museum Typology," Susan Stephen, ed. Building The New Museum, The Architectural League of New York, Princeton Architectural Press, 1986, p 17.

[66] Tony Bennett. "The Exhibitionary Complex," The Birth of the Museum: history, theory, politics . Routledge, London and New York, 1995, p 65.

[67] Searing, Helen, "The Development of a Museum Typology," Susan Stephen, ed. Building The New Museum, The Architectural League of New York, Princeton Architectural Press, 1986, p 18.

[68] Montaner, Josep. "Introduction" New Museums, Princeton Architectural Press, 1990, p20.

museums.[69] What is common in this classification is the differentiation of the displayed objects. That is to say, different collections refer to different programs which have different spatial necessities. As a study of architectural space— for instance scale or spatial structure— through the museum program, the book *New Museums* provides an understanding of an established relationship between the container and the content.

What is contained in a natural history museum is different from the collection of the science and technology museum, or the exhibition of the modern art gallery. These museums all have different displays, goals, and needs; each having different programs. Therefore, the variety in contained objects set out of diverse kinds of programs[70] that refers not only to a list of space but also to spatial needs compromise exhibitory function. The permanent collection identifies institutions' display policy of the collection— thematic, chronologic, temporary or permanent— and the activities that will take place.

Douglas Crimp, in his book *On the Museum Ruins,* exemplifies Karl Frederick Schinkel's design of Atles Museum in Berlin (1823) to illustrate architect's relation with the collection in the design phase, when all the relationships among the objects were carefully fixed while designing the building.[71] The architect described his intention to the space and the collection as: "such a plan is a totality whose parts work so precisely together that nothing essential can be altered without throwing the ensemble into disarray."[72] Architecture was concerned to build the unique

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[69] Montaner, Josep. "Introduction" <u>New Museums</u>, Princeton Architectural Press, 1990, p 7.

[70] Sirefman, Sussanna, "Formed and Forming: Contemporary Museum of Architecure," *Deadalos*, Volume:128, Issue:3, 1999, pp 297-307.

[71] Crimp, Douglas. "The Postmodern Museum", <u>On the Museum Ruins</u>, The MIT Press, Mass. and London, 1993, p 301.

[72] Ibid, p 300.

space for the collection, and the architect worked as a curator while designing the building. According to Crimp, Schinkel demonstrated the notion of his building as an inviolable gestalt pertained to selections of paintings or the configuration of paintings on a particular wall.[73]

Schinkel divides the collection that shapes the museum space in two categories with respect to either their corporeal body— to exhibit works that are outstanding— or immaterial body— to exhibit works that are important for the art history. [74] Then the museum was designed with regards to different spatial necessities of these two categories. For that reason, the project was considered as a building dedicated to art in accordance with the programmatic motto: "First give pleasure, then edify" that both embodied the idea of beauty and enabled art to carry out its educational mission.[75] Regarding to the programmatic motto, the architect accepted the role of both the aesthetic and the informational characteristics of the museum object while designing the exhibition space.

An important proposal that elucidate the relation between the container and the content is Museum of Unlimited Growth, designed by Le Corbusier in 1939.

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[73] Ibid, p 300.

[74] Ibid, p 301.

[75] Naredi- Rainer, Paul von. "The Semantics of the New Museum Architecture," <u>A Design Manual: Principles of the Museum as a Building,</u> Brikhause Publishers, Basel, Boston, 2004.
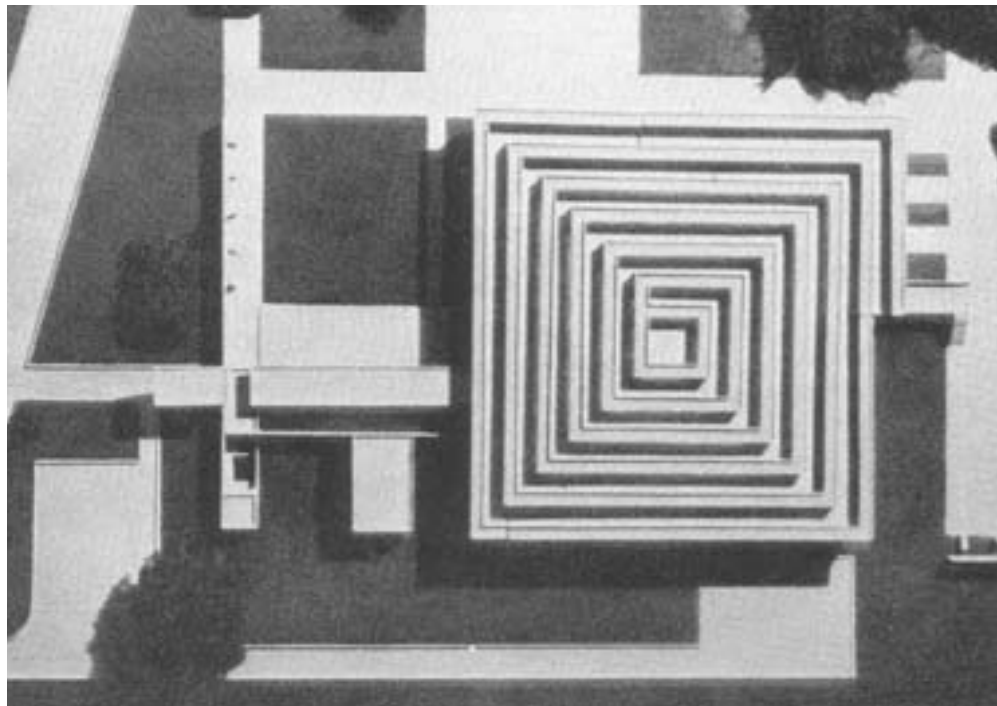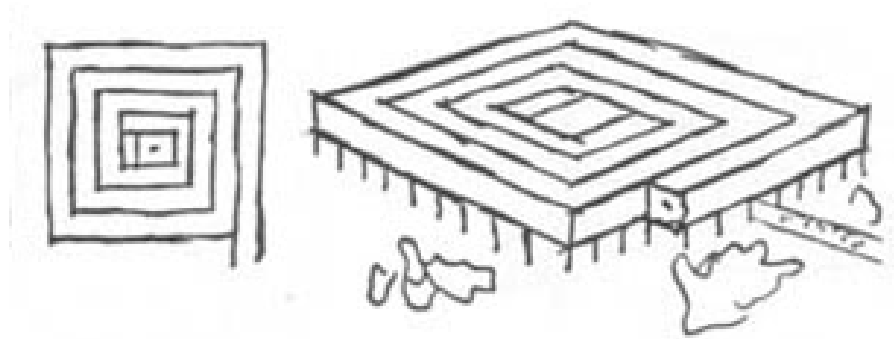
Figure 4 **.** Museum of Unlimited Growth, Model. 1939.

Naredi- Rainer, Paul von. <u>A Design Manual: Principles of the Museum as a Building,</u> Brikhause Publishers, Basel, Boston, 2004.

What is significant about this proposal is the expansion layout of the design regarding the growth of the collection. The design was composed of a spiral growing schema that allows expansion of the building by

repetitive addition of linear corridors to the core, where the initial phase covered the construction of the first exhibition hall and the entrance.

> "The architects not only designed a building but also proposed a system for the organization and management of the museum. The subsequent phases were conditioned on an increased number of Works. Each new work would call for the construction of the space needed for its exhibition. Each artist or donor would continue the construction by sponsoring the extension of the exhibition wall. Suggesting an "organic" relationship between art object and
> museum, Le Corbusier's Project formulated an early critique of exhibition space. It also put into question the central role of the curator as the architect of the exhibition setting"[76]

The relationship between the exhibition space and displayed objects was established by designing the project in phases that were defined by the increase in the number of works of art. That is to say, the building was proposed in a constant progress while exhibition space would be under a state of continual construction.

On the other hand, the relationship between the museum space and displayed objects is also studied through the movement of the spectator with respect to the prescribed narration. According to Rosalind E. Krauss, museum as a building type reflects the unfolding of the collection through circulation.[77]

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[76] Savaş, Ayşen. "Between Document and Monument: Architectural Artifact in an Age of Specialized Institutions," Doctoral Research submitted to Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1994, p 60.

[77] Krauss, Rosalind. "Post-modernisms' Museum Without Walls," Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson and Sandy Naime ed. Thinking about Exhibitions, Routledge, London and New York, 1996, p 343.

The building chosen to stand for the institutionalized museum is itself representative of a particular building type. This type derives from the Renaissance palace, with its series of rooms enfilade. Each of these rooms, serves as a space in which to center it's given contents, enacting through the means of architectural design the notion of the specificity of the room's collection of artifacts, their gathering round the epicenter of their own style. But the genius of the design enfilade is that each room is also insistently tied to the one before and the one after, organized through an obvious and apparent sequentiality. One proceed in such a building from space to space along a processional path that ties each of these spaces together, a sort of narrative trajectory with each room the place of a separate chapter, but all of them articulating the unfold of the master plot.[78]

The space and displayed object relation is described through sequential rooms. The relation between the space and the organization of the collection shows the embodiment of the conceptual classification of the collection by the physical space where the framework of the visitors' experience is built up. Therefore, manipulation of the route refers to the reorganization of the narration in the way it is intended to be seen.

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[78] Krauss, Rosalind. "Post-modernisms' Museum Without Walls," Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson and Sandy Naime ed. Thinking about Exhibitions, Routledge, London and New York, 1996, p 343.

Figure 5 . Sequential galleries

Newhouse, Victoria. <u>Towards a New Museum</u>, the Monacelli Press, New York, 1998, p 65, p 84.

Another project that became significant with the organization of movement is New York Guggenheim Museum, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. Wright's design demonstrates the relation between exhibition space and painting through continuous circulation around the gallery that dominates the spatial organization of the museum.

Unlike the notion of displaying in discrete rooms, the painting mounted along the ramp, breaks the boundaries of individual rooms, and thus maintains the experience continue with respect to the motion of the spectacle. For this respect, the ramp and the gallery at the core provide a relationship between the viewer and the viewed, with multiple vistas of the art instead of the conventional single.[79]

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[79] Montaner, Josep. "Introduction" <u>New museums</u>, Princeton Architectural Press, 1990, p 163
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Figure 6 . New York Guggenheim Museum . 1943- 1959.

Newhouse, Victoria. Towards a New Museum, the Monacelli Press, New York, 1998, p 167.

As clarified above museum as a building type, refers to the unfolding of the collection through the spectator's motion. Therefore, it can be understood that there is a direct relation between the arrangement of the circulation and the conscious display of the objects. This conscious display, provided through the narration of the exhibition that begins with the basic decisions of displaying the collection— either chronologically or thematic, permanent or temporary— in order to organize the intended reading of the collection. Within the context of museum space the relation between content and container or the program and the plan require more than a mere formal approach.

CHAPTER 3

POMPIDOU CENTER: "IF PAINTINGS ARE MOBILE,
SPACES ARE NOT"

The Pompidou Center is an important example to recognize how a keyword in a competition document later shapes the entire idea of the museum including the building itself. The Pompidou Center, as a competition project, gains its significance with the concept of flexibility which identifies the relation between the collection and the exhibition space. How the expanded definition of "flexibility" is identified as the concept that correlates institutional approach on how to display the collection and its spatial corresponding will be studied throughout this chapter. Prior to discussing flexibility of the exhibition space, institution's procedure for displaying the collection has to be analyzed from the competition brief, in order to understand how it is embodied within the exhibition space of the winning proposal. The concept of flexibility was a deliberate choice by the writers of the brief that reflects both the institutional and spatial consideration of the collection.

3.2 Flexibility as an Institutional Decision

Nathan Silver, in his book *Making of Beauboug: A Building Biography of the Centre Pompidou*, defines the building of Centre Pompidou as a "process that includes the original intentions of the client and designers, who they were, how they worked, whom they dealt with, what ideas were in the air at that time, what decisions got left along the way, how

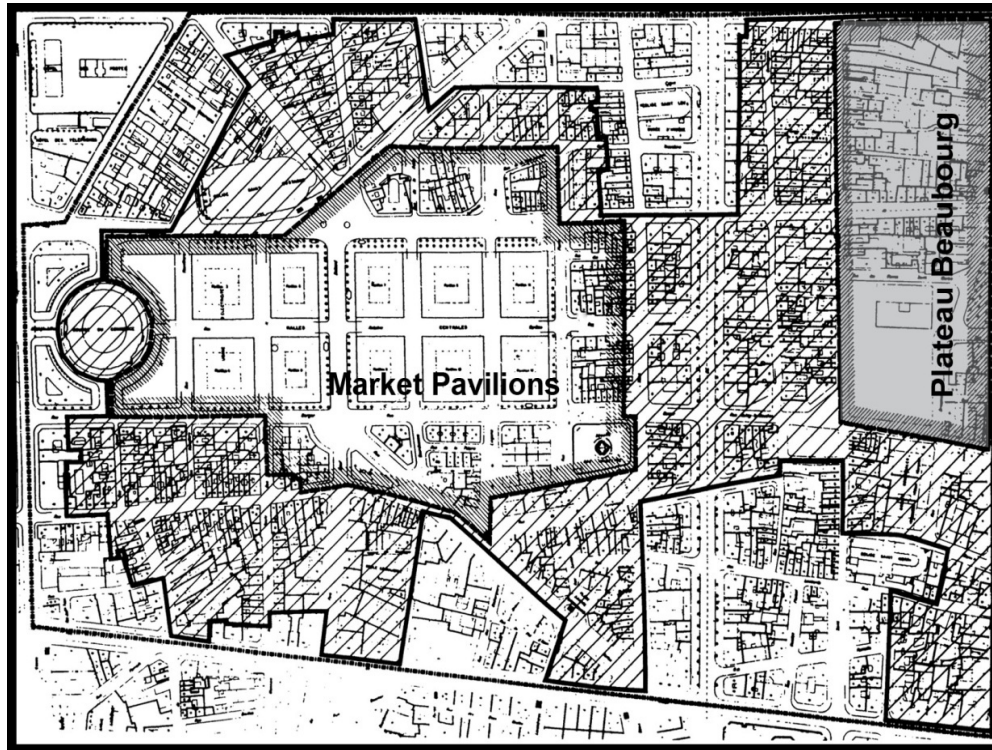architecture in France was practiced who and what influenced whom or what, and why."[80]

Figure 7 . Les Halles District Revitalization Project. The Plateau Beaubourg is to be enlarged through demolitions to the North.

Evenson, Norma. "The Assassination of Les Halles", *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol.32, No: 4, pp. 308-315.

The international competition for the new museum of contemporary art of Paris was announced in 1971, with the title of "Centre du Plateau Beaubourg Paris". The competition became significant with the name of the site, Plateau Beaubourg whose renovation was postponed since

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[80] Silver, The Making of Beauboug: A Building Biography of the Centre Pompidou, Paris, Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 1994, p 22.

1918.[81] That is why the museum project considered as the first intimidation of Les Halles District revitalization project, when the competition process had been realized.[82]
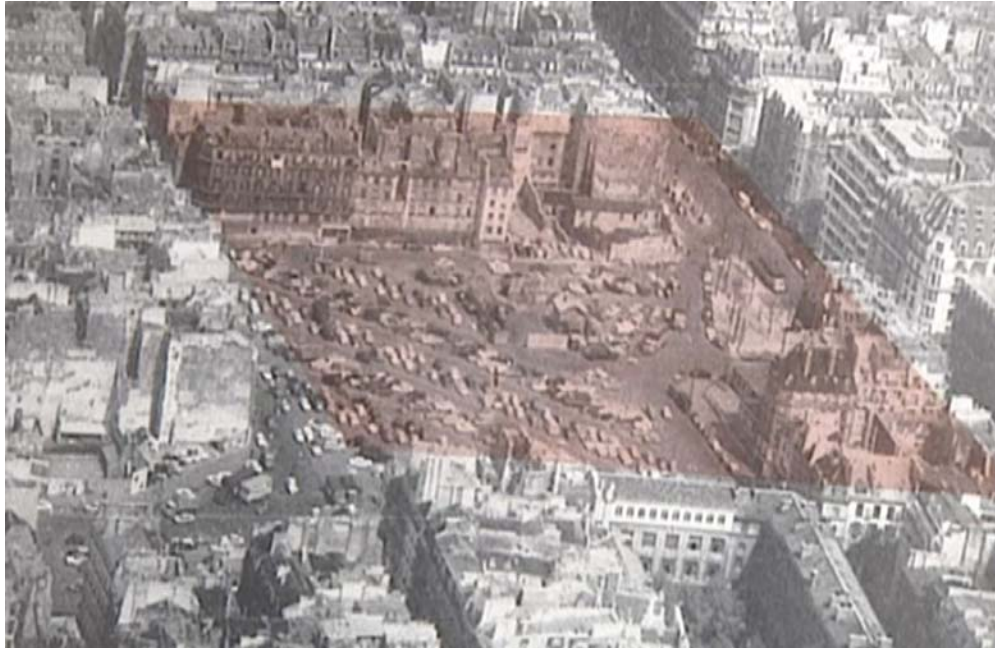

Figure 8 . Plateau Beaubourg, 1970.

Program writing can be considered as translation of the institutional program into proposed floor areas and description of space to elicit an architectural solution. The competition document and the program of the museum is written by François Lombard, engineer- architect, with architects   Claude Pecquer, Patrick O'Byrne and Jaques Licnerowicz,

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[81] Newhouse, Victoria. Towards a New Museum, the Monacelli Press, New York, 1998, p 194.

[82] Evenson, Norma. "The Assassination of Les Halles", *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol.32, No: 4, December 1973, pp. 308-315.

representative of the museum Germain Viatte, representative of the design center François Barré and representative of the library Bernard Schulz.[83] Regarding to the interdisciplinary structure of the team, it can be asserted that the program of the building is proposed by the potential directors of possible programs of the museum through the guidance of the architects. François Lombard summarizes his professional work in the competition as "programming is the correspondence between social organization and space organization"[84]. Within the case of Centre Pompidou architectural program unfolds the exhibition layout of the collection.
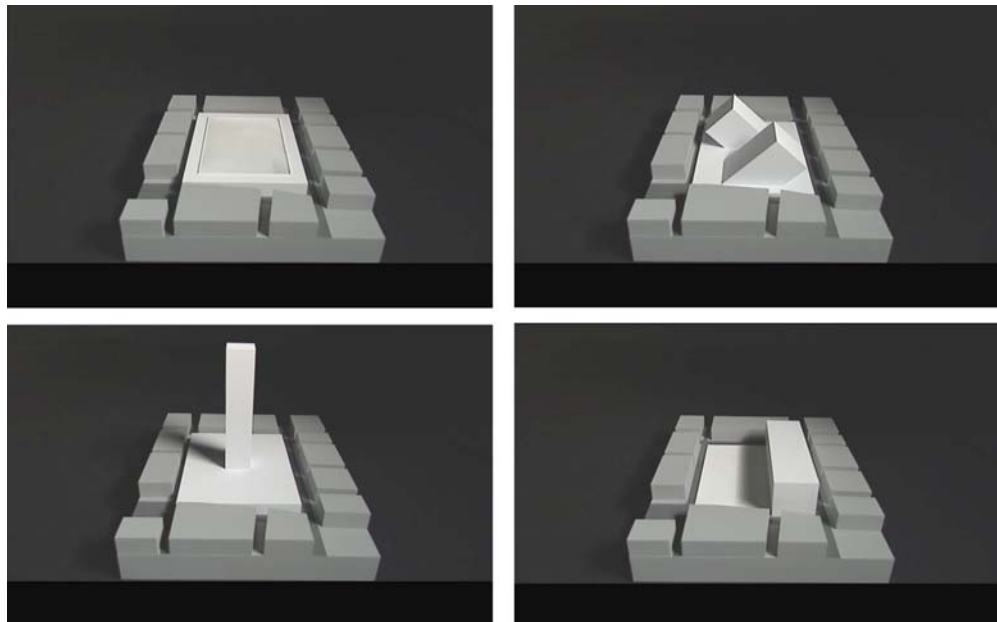

Figure 9 . Schematic examples from the submitted projects

Architectures: Le Centre Georges Pompidou. Dir. Richard Copans. Stan Neumann, ed. Arte France, 1997.

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[83] Silver, The Making of Beauboug: A Building Biography of the Centre Pompidou, Paris, Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 1994, p 24.

[84] Silver, The Making of Beauboug: A Building Biography of the Centre Pompidou, Paris, Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 1994, p 22.

At the end of the competition, six hundred and eighty one diverse spatial arrangements of proposed program had been submitted to the competition secretary. After examining the competitor's brief, the jury (Jean Prouvé (architect), Oscar Niemeyer (architect), Phillip Johnson (architect), Michel Laclotte (chief curator of the Louvre), and Wilhelm Sandberg (the Director of the Stedlijk Museum in Amsterdam)), disseminated the evaluation criteria of the competition. [85] Among the designated criteria of the jury— architectural translation of the center's program, access and circulation, and the scheme's agreement with the program—the concept of flexibility precedes.

3.2 Flexibility as an Institutional Decision

The architectural program of the center is composed of four distinct cultural functions: National Modern Art Museum, Public Library, Industrial Design Center, and Centre for Music and Acoustic Research, IRCAM. The division of different programs enables a re-definition of the museum's program under the title of entertainment and composite cultural space.

> Although the project program seemed to juxtapose four different cultural activities in the body of the museum, the project kept referred as a museum. The competition brief for *Le Centre National d'art et Culture Georges Pompidou* asked for an integrated cultural infrastructure or frame work under the theme of Museum.[86]

This intention signifies the role of museum as a place where the plastic arts, music, cinema, books and audio-visual media would be exhibited at the same time, side by side. Additionally, deciding to juxtapose different

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[85] Smith, Saumarez Charles. "Architecture and the Museum: The Seventh Reyner Banham Memorial Lecture," *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 8, No.4, (1995), pp 243- 256.
[86] Nathan Silver, The Making of Beauboug: A Building Biography of the Centre Pompidou, Paris, Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 1994, p 25.

cultural functions within the body of the museum results with the need to clarify the term "visitor". Competition brief demonstrates two groups of visitors that will come to the center the reader and the viewer of the modern art collection. The visitor based functional requirements are listed as:

> Easy accessible, "the public will enter on all sides",
> "Visitors should be tempted to go everywhere"
> "Though library and museum attracts different visitors it is strictly aimed not to separate them"
> "… one sedentary the other nomad [i.e.]: reader and visitors. If these two groups were separated, the desired effect would be lost."[87]

What was meant by the "desired effect" is to unite the four interlocking functions of the museum. It also reflects an understanding of enabling the collection to be visited by everyone who comes to the center and the intention to unite the visitors of four interlocking functions as a whole. This objective is explicitly stated in the program by referring the building as a "museum" that functions as a "cultural framework." The structure's interdisciplinary organization was supposed to democratize the arts: it was hoped that visitors headed for one facility would wonder naturally into others.[88]

> Since the day in 1977 when the Pompidou Center opened in Paris, museum architecture has never been the same. Turning its back on the conventional role of the museum as a sanctuary for serene contemplation, Pompidou promulgated a vision of the museum as a civic institution providing education and even entertainment. Rather than

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[87] Ibid, p 24.

[88] Newhouse, Victoria. Towards a New Museum, the Monacelli Press, New York, 1998 p 195.

insisting that visitors reverently behold its masterpieces, the Pompidou invite us to walk, talk, think, read, shop, and even eat within its doors.[89]

The program consisting of different functional layers offers a flexible facility arrangement through the open ended interaction of different functions and users. Additionally, the juxtaposition of different functions under the containment of huge, undivided voids reflects the initial idea's focus on the concept of flexibility. That is to say, the space of any part of the museums differentiated program can be enlarged or shrunk with respect to the changing needs of these functions.

The Pompidou Center exhibits National Museum of Modern Art[90] collection as compromising 59.000 works of 5.000 different artists, with respect to the year 2006 reports. The collection is composed of the works of various media from paintings, sculptures, and video to architectural model, books, drawings, photographs, architectural blueprints, and fashion and design objects.[91] In the year 2006, 1.330 works out of this collection have been permanently exhibited in the 15.000 meter square permanent exhibition space of the Pompidou Center. In addition, the works of design and

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[89] Douglas Davis. "Introduction", The Museum Transformed: Design and Cultures in the Post-Pompidou Age. Abbeville Press, New York, 1999.

[90] The National Museum of Modern Art established in 1947, in the palais de Tokyo, Paris. In 1977 it was transferred to the Pompidou Center and since then the old building has served various institutions and events. When the competition realized in 1972, though it was announced to house the permanent collection of the National Museum of Modern Art, many artist and donors of the museum opposed to move. The architectural program of the competition document embodies 5,500 meter square storage space at the basement. For further information see Victoria Newhouse, Towards a New Museum and Nathan Silver, The Making of Beauboug: A Building Biography of the Centre Pompidou, Paris.

[91] Tang, Jeannine. "The Big Bang at Centre Georges Pompidou: Reconsidering Thematic Curation." Theory Culture Society. 2006, Vol. 23, 243. Online version of this article can be found at: http://tcs.sagepub.com/cgi/abstract/23/7-8/243 [last accessed:12.10.2007]

photography have been displayed in the temporary exhibition galleries.[92] The report indicates that only the 2.25% of the objects in the collection had been exhibited in the year 2006. What needs to be scrutinized is whether this condition was a necessity out of spatial limitations or the conscious choice of the museum's exhibition layout.

> It drew attention to an essential characteristic and original Center: the Library, the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, the National Center for Contemporary Art Center or industrial establishment, and so on. The areas given have been estimated [to be] sufficient for the exercise of all activities presently foreseen. No extension of the building is to be planned, as the collections will be periodically renewed… On the other hand, the Center's internal flexibility should be as large [i.e. great] as possible. In a living and complex organism such as the Centre, the evolution of the needs is to be especially taken into account[93]

Since the competition brief announced at the very beginning of the competition, the institution would display the permanent collection of the National Museum of Modern Art periodically where only a particular part of the collection could be seen for a defined period. This selective display of the collection was due to the continuous renewal of the exhibitions within the temporality of the objects on display. The renewal policy is only possible by the previously mentioned autonomous object— so they can be part of different exhibition themes. This attitude could be read as institutional interpretation of the collection and exhibition space. The idea of the Pompidou Center as an institution and architectural program were shaped together at the very beginning of the museum design process. The term flexibility here can be thought as both an institutional and

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[92] Centre Pompidou [the official web site of Pompidou Center]. *The Museum's Collections*. http://www.centrepompidou.fr [last accessed: 18.08.2007]

[93] Silver, The Making of Beauboug: A Building Biography of the Centre Pompidou, Paris, Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 1994, p 23.

programmatic paradigm which relates all the future transformations of museum space to the newly exhibited artworks of the collection.

> Despite the extensive area given over to exhibition halls, the works on view are alternated according to a display renewal policy and new acquisitions can be seen from time to time. The museum is therefore a sort of open book, which offers fresh readings depending on the items brought and assembled together.[94]

Moreover, unlike Le Corbusier's Museum of Unlimited Growth, the partial and temporary exhibition of the permanent collection constantly supports the initial criteria of the competition which was asked for the absence of the extension. Temporary exhibitions thus play an essential role in the life and success of the Center, offering visitors a dynamic display policy.[95] In order to understand this dynamism, it is important to examine the nature of previous exhibitions. In between June 2005 and April 2006, the museum presented its collection with a thematic exhibition, Big Bang, which had been visited by 873.057 visitors.[96] At October 2007, the Pompidou Center announced its new exhibition as; "after two thematic exhibitions, the Museum will be showing its masterpieces as part of two new chronological presentations, occupying once again all of the 4th and 5th floors." These two exhibitions signify the nature of the collection that can be exhibited both thematically and chronologically. Hence, the spatial qualities of the exhibition space should answer the needs of these two different modes of displays. Ironically, while the facades of the building express its infrastructure, behind the transparency of the walls, it hides the artworks

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[94] Quéré, François, ed. "Background to the Collection." http://www.centrepompidou.fr [the official web site of Pompidou Center] [last accessed: 18.08.2007]

[95] Quéré, François, ed. "Background to the Collection." http://www.centrepompidou.fr [the official web site of Pompidou Center] [last accessed: 18.08.2007]

[96] Rapport Centre Pompidou, "Activity Rapport 2006," http://www.centrepompidou.fr/Pompidou/Communication.nsf [last accessed: 28.09.2007]

which are meant to be visible. Therefore, from the outside, the building remains as a complete box that gives no clues about the continuous progress and the dynamism of the inside.
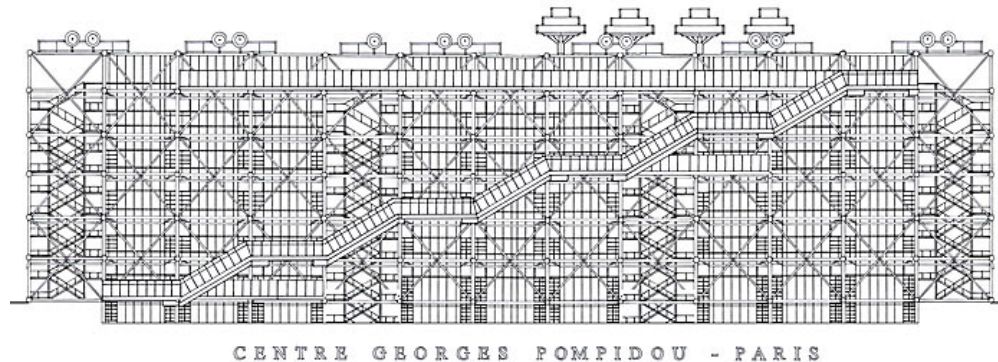
CENTRE GEORGES POMPIDOU - PARIS

Figure 10 . Façade of Pompidou Centre, Paris.

<u>Architectures</u>: <u>Le Centre Georges Pompidou</u>. Dir. Richard Copans. Stan Neumann, ed. Arte France, 1997.

3.3 Flexibility as Architectural Design Criteria

Rosalind Krauss defines New National Gallery in Berlin which was opened to public in 1968 as the reduced and truncated form that Mies van der Rohe creates with "universal space"[97]. It was not a coincidence that the New National Gallery museum was completed just before the competition committee of Pompidou Center came together to write the competition brief. Helen Searing, in her essay "The Development of a Museum

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[97] Krauss, Rosalind. "Post-modernisms' Museum Without Walls," Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson and Sandy Naime ed. <u>Thinking about Exhibitions</u>, Routledge, London and New York, 1996, p 343.

Typology" exemplifies Mies' museum as the climax of modernist rejection of typology in favor of universal solution for all museum programs.[98]

> Here Mies' preoccupation with universal space, the glazed pavilion, and an extremely refined steel structure has been applied to the program of the art museum. In such an articulated flowing space, the curator for each exhibition must also act as architect; the fact that all of the exterior walls of the main floor are of glass makes it even more difficult to hang pictures. [99]

This relatively large open space, which is criticized by Searing, requires architectural interventions within the container to make the necessary spatial arrangements for the exhibition purpose. Although it was never referred to "flexibility" the presence of the temporary walls were the agents of the different spatial organizations. Here I claim that a similar "flexibility" was sought by the organizers of the competition. The space as an outcome of its structural system was freed from the vertical elements. That is to say, no internal walls were needed to support this structure and so free-standing partitions can be positioned and re-positioned at will.[100]

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[98] Searing, Helen, "The Development of a Museum Typology," Susan Stephen, ed. Building The New Museum, The Architectural League of New York, Princeton Architectural Press, 1986, p 14.

[99] Ibid p 14.

[100] Krauss, Rosalind. "Post-modernisms' Museum Without Walls," Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson and Sandy Naime ed. Thinking about Exhibitions, Routledge, London and New York, 1996, p344.
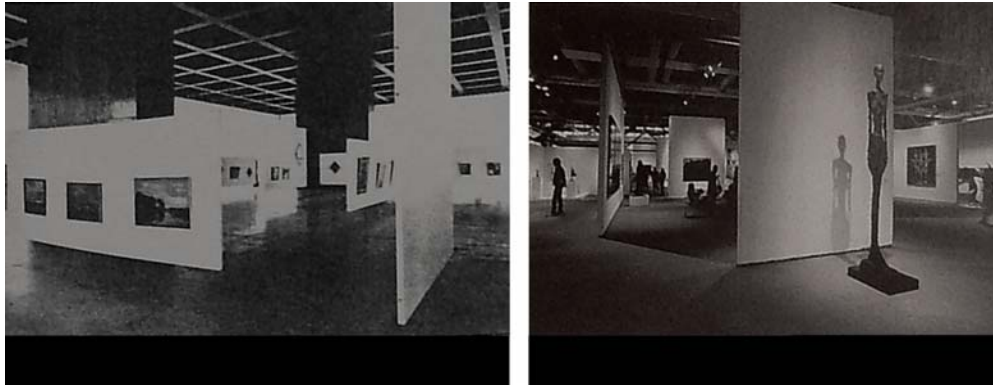
Figure 11 . (left) New National Gallery, 1968

Susan Stephen, ed. Building the New Museum, Princeton Architectural Press.

Figure 12 . (right) Center Pompidou, 1977

Newhouse, Victoria. Towards a New Museum, the Monacelli Press, New York, 1998, p 197.

As illustrated above the interior space of the New National Gallery, in Berlin, the interior space of the Pompidou Center have an undeniable similarity. One of the fundamental concepts of the Center's competition brief is the section entitled *flexibility*. The brief asks for utmost interior flexibility. Every part of the architectural program would like to be articulated in such a way that all surfaces can be adapted for necessary flexibility arrangements.[101]

> These rooms should not be tailored to a certain idea of the presentation, which finally set for their use. They should, instead, to be flexible to allow for adjustments, and any mode of presentation. This concept of flexibility must be understood in a broader sense.[102]

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[101] The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of France, "The Architectural Program of Pompidou Center" (Centre du Platea Beauborg, International d'idées a un degré, Paris), 1971, p 10.

[102] Ibid, p 17.

The collection and its exhibition criteria were referred to in the competition program as the exhibition spaces would expected to be as flexible as possible in order to allow any possible mode of presentation for any work of art. Therefore, the competition document anticipated designs of "free space" or in more contemporary terms "void" rather than spaces for specific use or exhibition. Wouter Davidts, an art historian, who wrote on exhibition space design extensively states that instead of the conventional terms such as galley or exhibition rooms, the term "space" was used in the competition.[103] This interpretation of the competition document indicates the intentional avoidance of the rigid definitions of spatial requirements of the exhibition areas.

> The intention was to find a spatial solution to absorb the unpredictable development of the contemporary art, as well as expressing the new image of a popular and iconoclastic museum, open to the urban masses, active as a cultural center well into the night, transparent, flexible and welcoming.[104]

At the first glance, it is possible to say that the winning project of Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers achieved the inquired spatial flexibility through the absence of the structural elements in the interior space. By placing infrastructure and the walkways outside the building, the exhibition space was freed from the unnecessary interior obstacles. Hence, each level designed as with a 7500 meter square surface area with no stairs, no columns, and no walls, and proposed to be constructed and re-constructed with mobile internal partitions.

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[103] Walter Davids. "Art Factories: Museums of Contemporary Art and the Promise of Artistic Production from Centre Pompidou to Tate Modern," *Fabrications,* Vol. 16, No.1, June 2006. p. 23-40.

[104] Montaner, Josep Maria and Oliveras, Jordi. "Introduction". The Museum of the Last Generation. Academi Editions- London; St Martin's Press- New York, 1986, p.12.
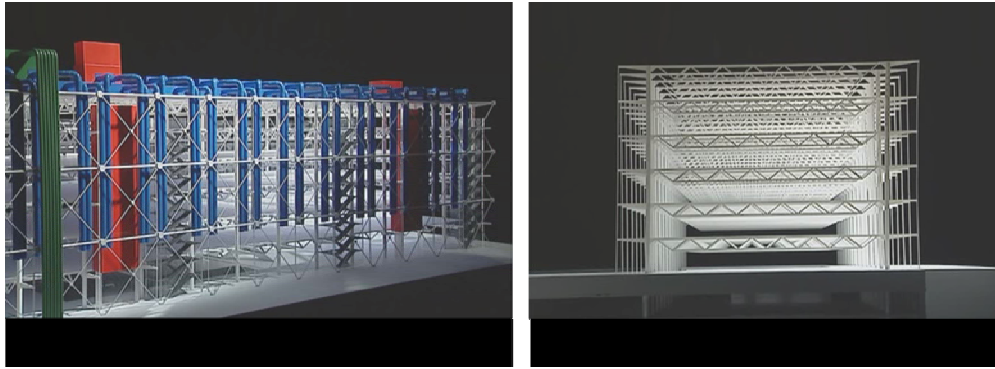
Figure 13 . Structural model of the Pompidou Center.

Architectures: Le Centre Georges Pompidou. Dir. Richard Copans. Stan Neumann, ed.
Arte France, 1997.

> The division of surfaces does not necessarily imply a permanent
> occupation, for each exhibit area. Therefore, interior surfaces threaded as
> a whole by the architect, removable dividers will allow surfaces to be
> fragmented at the request, with the greatest flexibility possible.[105]

The periodically renewing exhibition strategies of the Pompidou Center
cause the regular transformation of the museum space. This regular
transformation of the space is made possible by the mobile partition walls.
The exhibition space is defined by ephemeral walls that are rearranged
according to the needs of particular exhibitions. Additionally the original
project of Piano and Rogers demonstrates a non-sequential circulation of
the exhibition space. This non-sequentiality also enables visitors to reach
beyond the linear narration, to create his/her own fiction. Rosalind Krauss
interprets the spatial idea of the flexible plan as it is the combination of

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[105] The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of France, "The Architectural Program of
Pompidou Center" (Centre du Platea Beauborg, International d'idées a un degré, Paris),
1971, p 14.

"neutrality and immensity that creates a value free network within which to set individual objects in changing relations."[106]

> To present the collection, the choice was made to hang a selection of it in order to leave to breathe works as much as possible (and public!). On the other hand, the fixing is renewed regularly to show new works on display each time. At the time of these fixing, it is often all the organization of space which changes: the partitions are moved, rooms laid out in a different way, some being able to be closed by one so provisional ceiling. The architecture of the large plates allows complete thus modularity of space and their adaptation to works presented (paintings, sculptures, photographs, films, installations, etc.) For the galleries of exposure (southern gallery and Space 315 of level 1, Galleries 1 and 2 f level 6) these transformations are even more frequent with scenographies each renewed time of exhibitions[107]

The attitude towards partial presentation of the collection demonstrates a correlation with its custom designed "flexible" building. This purposeful attitude illustrates the liberty to rearrange the interiors of museum with respect to the flexibility of the collection display policy of the institution.

> Internal partitions allow space to metamorphose to limitless configurations. The visitors who were as temporary as the exhibitions, they will find well accommodate by these notions.[108]

Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers identify the building as a "flexible container" and a "dynamic machine", highly serviced and made out of

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[106] Krauss, Rosalind. "Post-modernisms' Museum Without Walls," Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson and Sandy Naime ed. Thinking about Exhibitions, Routledge, London and New York, 1996, p 346.

[107] Centre Pompidou. "Des Espaces Vivants." Dé Couvrir l'architecture Pompidou. p11.

[108] Architectures: Le Centre Georges Pompidou. Dir. Richard Copans. Stan Neumann, ed. Arte France, 1997

prefabricated pieces.[109] In the original project, the Center is presented as a temporary exhibition space, where partitions positioned and re-positioned with respect to the changing spatial needs of changing exhibitions.
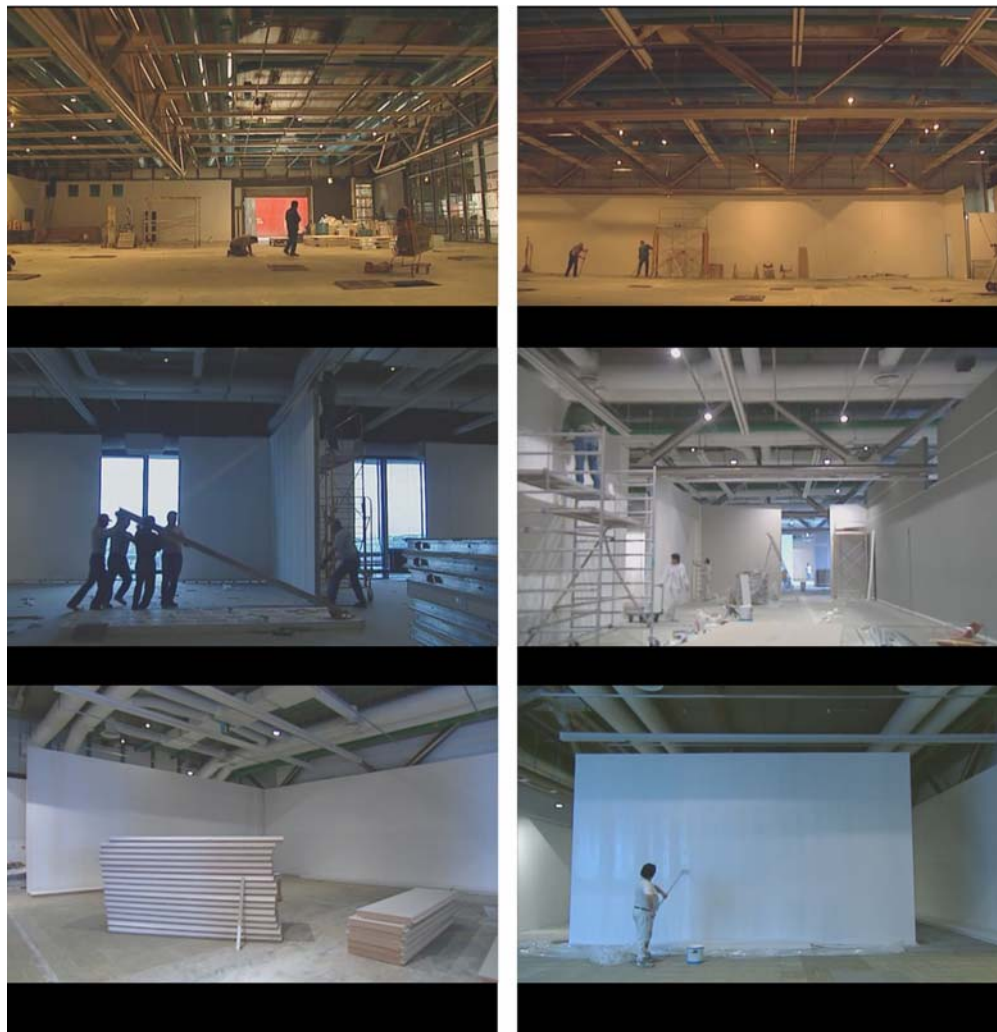

Figure 14 . Transformation of space.

Architectures: Le Centre Georges Pompidou. Dir. Richard Copans. Stan Neumann, ed. Arte France, 1997

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[109] Renzo Piano and Richard Ragers. "Centre George Pompidou. Piano and Rogers: A Statement", *Architectural Design.* Vol:47, 1977, p.87.

With respect to the spatial flexibility suggested by the architects, the machine analogy goes beyond a mere definition of a formal description and implies a constant design process, a continuous renewal of the exhibition spaces.
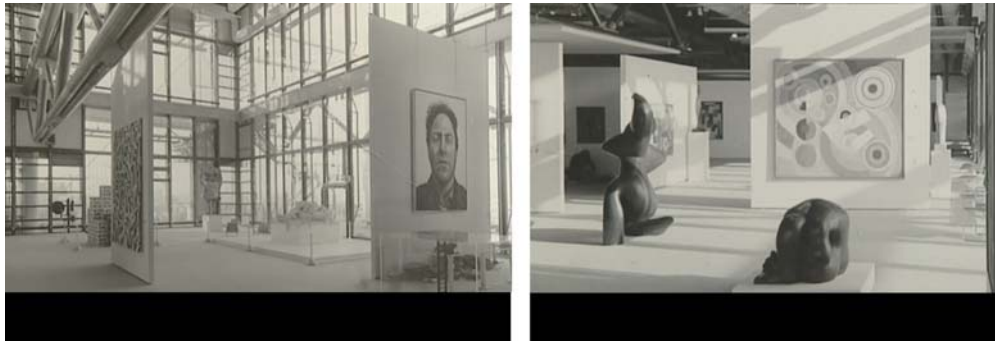

Figure 15 . Permanent exhibition gallery by Piano & Rogers . 1977

Architectures: Le Centre Georges Pompidou. Dir. Richard Copans. Stan Neumann, ed. Arte France, 1997.

Flexibility demand Competition brief and the institutions periodically display policy of the permanent collection; spatially paraphrase as total transformation of exhibition space regarding to the changing parts of the collection on display. By avoiding the suggestion of fixed partition walls and declaring the interior space "free" the architect creates a new condition in exhibition space. The new condition requires another set of designers to prepare the exhibitions. Each time an exhibition changed the space changed. Thus either the "curator" or "the exhibition designer" had to face this new condition. It was not their choice but the restrictions of the building.

The new condition and the obligations of "renewed" relation to its structure were realized ten years after the opening of the Center. The new director of the museum Dominique Bozo was the first one who rejects this "expensive" and "time consuming" spatial play. Claiming that the proposed

architectural concept of the building causes an inappropriate installation of some works of art,[110] the Center commissioned Gae Aulenti— the architect responsible for the transformation of Gar d'Orsay— to built a permanent exhibition gallery within the building. Bozo explains the Center's flexibility as; "it seemed worth to try the absence of a predetermined structure that would increase the possibilities of potential presentations, however time has shown the limitations and constraints imposed by such a principle."[111]

> Dividing up large unstructured areas was no easy task. How could we best present a permanent collection on those enormous floors? How could works of art-that had for the most part been created in a small pace, find a space appropriate to their own scale? The presentation existing at the 1977 opening was perfect, made to order. Spacing and proportions had been decided painting by painting, piece by piece. It was thought that by moving a single painting, it would be possible to alter the presentation of the area as a whole, thus enabling a coherent assimilation of the exhibition by the public. But this principle proved impossible to carry out, partly because of the high cost of such an endeavor and partly because of the many works that the Museum loans out. For example, the hanging wall designed for Matisse's Le Luxe does not work with another painting of similar size or quality. A single hanging wall per painting creates the effect of a double frame. The painting appears suspended in mid-air, as it were. To alter a hanging wall would be to break the overall image.[112]

Dominique Bozo later underlined the difficulty of the transformation of exhibition space, for the installation team. That is to say, designing exhibition became more and more a spatial phenomenon in addition to curating the collection. Therefore, it was decided that "if paintings are

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[110] "Interview with Dominique Bozo," *Leonardo*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 1987, pp. 78-82.

[111] "Interview with Dominique Bozo," *Leonardo*, Vol. 20, No.1, 1987, pp. 78-82.

[112] Ibid, p78.

mobile, spaces are not."[113] The major keyword questioning flexibility was ironically the circulation patterns. Previously achieved between the free standing walls, the concept of flexibility was fixed to define predetermined circulation patterns. The visitors would only pass through the corridors in-between the repetitive exhibition rooms.
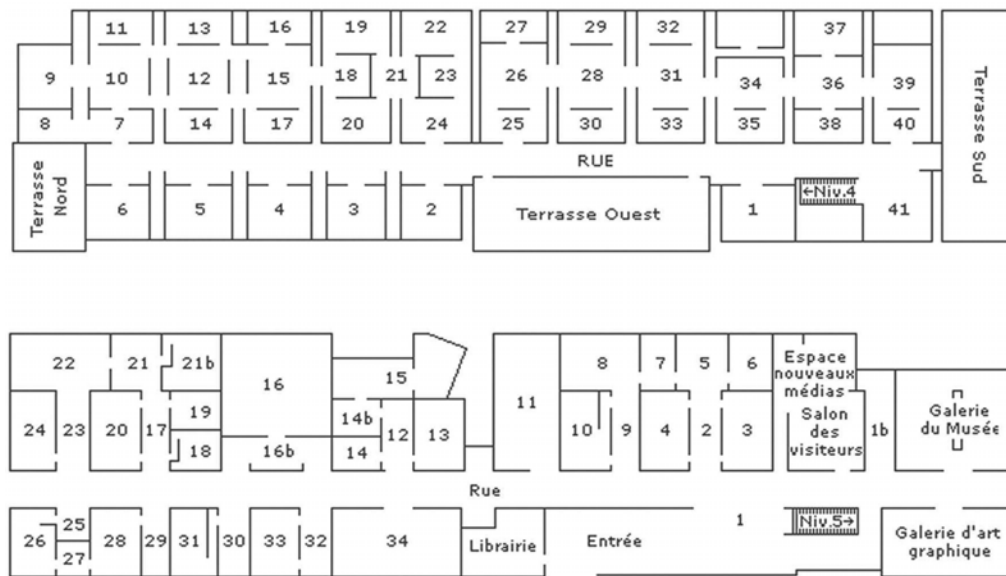

Figure 16 . Permanent collection exhibition gallery renovated by Gae Aulenti.

http://www.centrepompidou.fr/Pompidou/Communication.nsf [last accessed: 17.08.2007]

If the transformation project of Gae Aulenti were to be analyzed it would have been observed that the non-sequential circulation of the former permanent exhibition space was replaced by orthogonal corridors that divided the flexible exhibition space into static sub-galleries. Moreover the height of the exhibition space was reduced to 3.5 meters by hiding the structure of the building with fake ceilings. This drastic change in the

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[113] Ibid p 80.

organization of the space was stated as "a new museum construction within the building."[114]

Jeannine Tang's criticism of "Big Bang" exhibition —the thematic display of Pompidou collection in 2006— highlights the relation between the art objects and exhibition and the spatial organization of the permanent exhibition space.

> Arranged in an organized grid, each *salle* was flanked by two adjacent *salles*. Such a route was suffocatingly linear*,* as the thematic argument built metaphors one upon another, and at moments, chronologically, organizing the chaotic manifesto of the *Big Bang* into a surprisingly coherent narrative of artistic strategies. After fifteen or so galleries, such movement became mechanical and the corridors patronizing, providing little opportunity for *flaneur* moments of divergence.[115]

The criticism is important as it emphasizes the lost of the desired effect of flexible exhibition layout of the collection— either thematic or chronologic— within the renovated interior organization of the permanent exhibition space.

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[114] Newhouse, Victoria. <u>Towards a New Museum</u>, the Monacelli Press, New York, 1998, p 195.

[115] Tang, Jeannine. "The Big Bang at Centre George Pompidou: Reconsidering Thematic Curation." *Theory Culture Society*, 2006, Vol. 23, p. 8. The online version of this article can be found at: http://tcs.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/23/7-8/243 [last accessed: 22.10.2007]
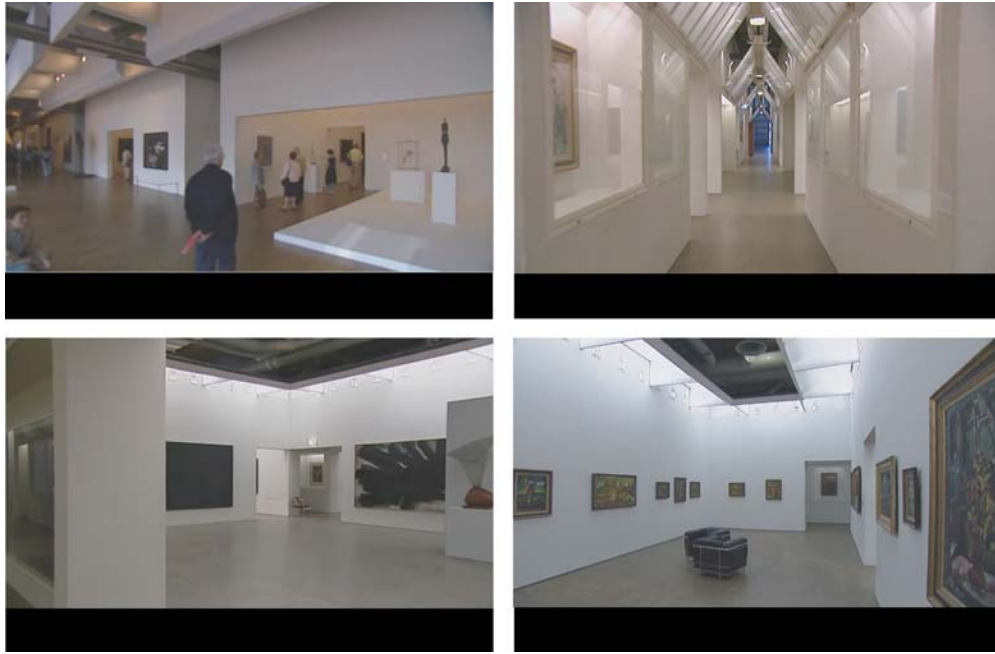
Figure 17 . Permanent exhibition gallery, 1997

Architectures: Le Centre Georges Pompidou. Dir. Richard Copans. Stan Neumann, ed. Arte France, 1997.

As it is mentioned before, within the case of the Pompidou Center, the architect defined a new condition for exhibition space which involves the total transformation of exhibition space regarding to the changing exhibitions. Accordingly, by definition flexibility of the exhibition space starts with the assumption that, curator is a designer, not to say an architect, or an architect should be trained to master the intricacy of art products. As observed by the transformation process of the permanent exhibition galleries of The Pompidou Center, the flexibility of the exhibition space was evaluated through the indeterminacy of the circulation, therefore fixed by the corridors and static walls. Therefore it can be asserted that, flexibility is possible when the absence of time, cost and disciplinary constraints of the exhibitions, as it has experienced in high modernism.

CHAPTER 4

GRAND EGYPTIAN MUSEUM: HYPERTEXTUALITY AS A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF FLEXIBILITY

Like Pompidou Center, Grand Egyptian Museum project is an end product of an architectural competition. In the preface of the thick competition book, architects were asked to design "flexible exhibition spaces" that embody artifact from different scales and from varying narrative origins. Unlike the linear and singular circulation pattern of Le Corbusier's Museum of Unlimited Growth, Grand Egyptian Museum searches for complex networks of different narrations. Therefore, the competition document highlights the keyword "hypertextuality"[116] to describe complexity of the collection. Moreover, hypertextuality also refers to the virtual exhibition of some objects, belonging to different museums' collections, through

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[116] The keyword "hypertextuality" is used to indicate that each object in the exhibition can be part of different stories at the same time in the museum. In computational science the term "hypertext" is coined by Theodor Holm (Ted) Nelson (1965) for a collection of documents (or "nodes") containing cross-references or "links" which, with the aid of an interactive browser program, allow the reader to move easily from one document to another. The webs of links which are constructed by each hypertext become a part of larger whole, the World-Wide Web. The theorists like Gerard Genette states relationships between the terms "hypertextuality" and "intertextuality" in literary criticism. The term intertextuality, which is coined by Julia Kristeva in 1966, is described as the shaping of texts' meanings with respect to other texts. In the article, "Bounded Text" she elucidates text as "a permutation of texts, and an intertextuality in the space of a given text", in which "several utterance, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another." According to Kristeva, intertextuality makes each text a "mosaic of quotations" and part of a larger mosaic of texts. Therefore, the hypertextuality is characterized as the introduction of a new kind of reading which destroy the linearity of the text. For further discussion of hypertextuality please see Julia Kristeva, <u>Desire in Laguage: a semiotic approach to language and art,</u> Colombia University Press, New York, 1980, and Graham Allen, <u>Intertextuality</u>, Routledge, London, New York, 2000.

worldwide web which makes it possible to display the object within the absence of its physicality.

The flexibility of the exhibition space is described through the flexibility of circulation that is generated by the simultaneous presence of many different narrative routes. That is to say, the exhibition spaces were asked to be the spatial ramification of the complexity of the collection. The concept of "hypertextuality" was a deliberate choice that forced the architects to think about the exhibition of the collection at the very beginning of the design phase. Unlike The Pompidou Centre, the winning project of the competition presented fixed spaces with fixed objects while the utmost flexibility of the exhibition space was designed with respect to the networks of circulation patterns. It is necessary to understand the conceptual formation of the Grand Egyptian Museum in order to understand flexibility that exists within the museum space.

4.1 Hypertextuality as an Institutional Decision

Regarding the growth of Cairo Egyptian Museum collection from 35.000 artifacts to 140,000 artifacts, excluding the objects in storages and archeological sites warehouses, and the increase in number of visitors from 500 (when the museum built in nineteenth century) to approximately 6000 visitors per day, the museum building became insufficient to respond the necessities of the collection. Then, a new museum building in the site Giza was decided to be built, neighboring the pyramids, in 2002.[117] These two museums, in Cairo and Giza, were planned to work in cooperation, complementing each other. The former one would continue to exhibit its collection based on chronological-artistic criteria, while the new museum

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[117] "Introduction," <u>The Grand Museum of Egypt: International Architectural Competition Book,</u> The Egyptian Ministry of Culture, p VI.

would befall a building complex of Egyptian civilization with its thematic display policy and supportive preservation, conservation and education functions.[118]

> What is requested from the architect is to develop a mode of display. As a result the participants of the competition are claimed to be invited to submit proposals moving beyond the consistent succession of subject matters (or rooms) as a presentation of the Museum's cultural message. Therefore it was required that the display itineraries should provide a complex network of themes, each one independent, but related to each other.[119]

As it is comprehended from the competition document, the establishment of the new building would involve a complete re-organization of the collection. The architects were asked to conceptualize the exhibition space through conceptualizing the unique exhibitory needs of the collection. In that respect, what was stated as a necessity by the competition jury was "to formulate a system incorporating a full range of concepts, relations, scientific queries and problems capable of representing the dynamic complexity of the cultural message the museum desires to convey", through the institutions' exhibition layout of the collection.[120]

In the competition brief, the method of the exhibition concept was demonstrated in a "chronological and thematic structure," from which it could be possible to access a "hypertextual navigation" of the five thousand years history of the Egyptian civilization.[121] The collection on

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[118] "Introduction," The Grand Museum of Egypt: International Architectural Competition Book, The Egyptian Ministry of Culture, p V.

[119] The Grand Egyptian Museum, Technical Comitee, "The Grand Egyptian Museum Competition Document," The Egyptian Ministry of Culture, 2002, p64.

[120] Ibid, p 65.

[121] The Grand Egyptian Museum, Technical Committee, "The Grand Egyptian Museum Competition Document," The Egyptian Ministry of Culture, 2002, p 90.

display would be ordered in a chronological narration and would be divided into five thematic narrations. In this regard, thematic exhibitory networks were outlined as such: "The Land of Egypt;" "Kingship and State;" "Man Society and Work;" "Religion;" "Culture, Scribes and Knowledge", in which building techniques, royal tombs, arts and crafts, religious cults, funerary beliefs, and written texts would be displayed as the sub-topics.[122] On the contrary, the conventional chronological narration organized each theme within nine sub-periodic groups.
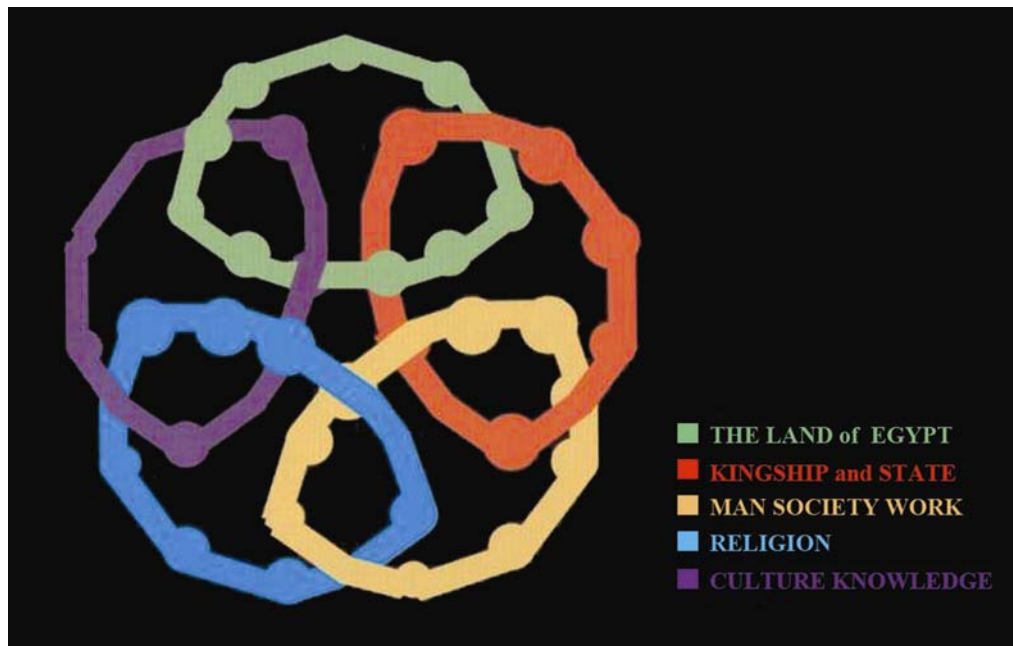

Figure 18 . Hyper-textual Areas

The Grand Egyptian Museum, Technical Comitee, "The Grand Egyptian Museum Competition Document," The Egyptian Ministry of Culture, 2002, p 97.
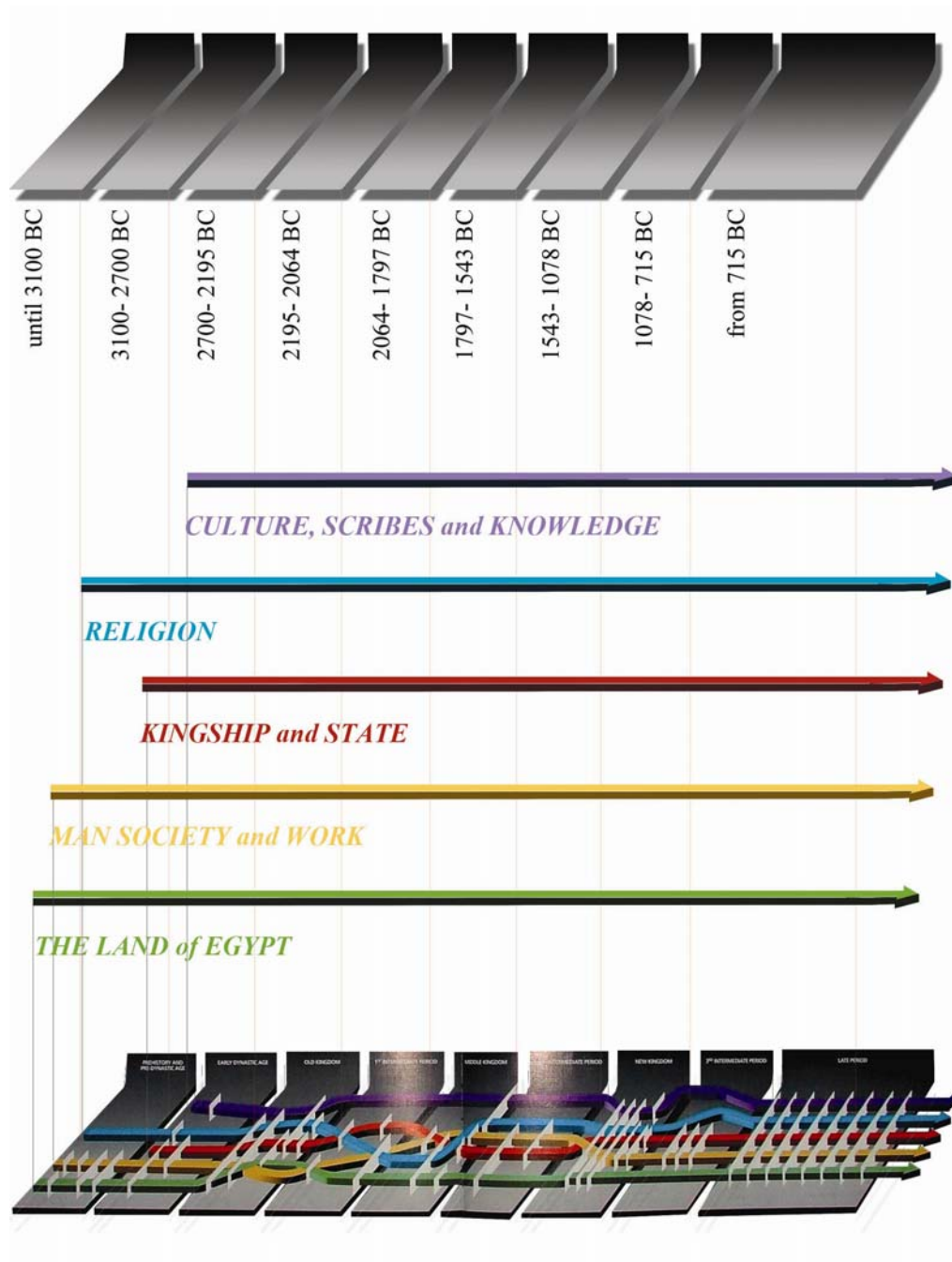
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[122] Ibid, p 40.

Figure 19 . Hyper-textual Routes

The Grand Egyptian Museum, Technical Committee, "Grand Egyptian Museum Competition Document," The Egyptian Ministry of Culture 2002, p 94.

The graphic representation of the collection elucidates the classification method of the displayed objects, to better understand the complexity of the collection and how it is categorized by the institution. This categorization indicates the relationship between the thematic and the chronologic narrations. The horizontal axis, which represents the thematic routes, crosses the vertical axis of the chronological route that clarifies the identities of each theme.

As stated before, it is in the autonomous nature of the museum object and its informational body that would make it possible for the object to become part of different narrations at the same time. In that regard, the graph identifies the principle relations among the different categories of objects with respect to their chronological periods. For example "ships and model ships" belong to the "water and the Nile" and "navigation and trade" groupings of the theme "The Land of Egypt", and also to "royal tombs", "war" and "cult" sections of the theme "Kingship and State", in addition to the "arts and crafts" section of the theme "Man Society and Work", and finally belongs to "the Gods" section of "Religion" theme.[123]

What requires attention in the above mentioned graphic representation is the presence of the interlocking nodes. Simultaneously, same object can be part of different narrations, therefore it has to be situated on different routes; which increase the complexity of the displaying order. However; as it was emphasized in the competition brief that museums' cultural message would be achieved through the arrangement of the permanent exhibitions, which would meet the demands of various types of visitors, ranging from elementary school children to Egyptologist researcher.[124] This diversification

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[123] The Grand Egyptian Museum, Technical Committee, "The Grand Egyptian Museum Competition Document," The Egyptian Ministry of Culture 2002, p 92.

[124] The Grand Egyptian Museum, Technical Committee, "The Grand Egyptian Museum Competition Document," The Egyptian Ministry of Culture, 2002, p 65.

was claimed to be achieved by the competition brief with the "hypertextual" definition of the collection. Hypertextuality would allow the differentiation of routes and spatial arrangement of the objects on display. Therefore, this new order requires a new kind of flexibility of the exhibition space. The new flexibility embodies the presence of interlocking and complex networks of circulation routes with respect to the fixed relations of the collection themes, and hence the fixed spaces of the exhibition layout of the institution.

> The multiple logical references of categories of objects allow to start the navigation along any of the five thematic routes and to trespass from one route to another. The objects themselves become crossing points-interconnections, between two or more routes, through which one may either further investigate a specific theme or decide to leave the route one has embarked on to flow another.[125]

"Hypertextualiy", by definition ignores sequentiality and highlights plurality. In this regard, "hypertextual" organization of the exhibition space authorizes the possibility of the emergence of many circulation routes with respect to the visitors' choice. The interlocking objects that link one route to another befall "hypertextual" nodes which make it possible to create many narrations from the totality of the collection. It is also important to note that, the term "hypertextual" is a new term for describing both the collection and the exhibition space that helps us to understand how flexibility can be possible in museum space.

At first glance, the hypertextual condition of the exhibition layout may seem to be an arbitrary system. However, the four basic principles, marked in the competition brief, provide a guide to govern the development of the project. These four principles are "modularity,"

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[125] Ibid, p 92.

"thematic," "dynamic," and "networking".[126] The first principle offers a chronological demonstration of the civilization period, while the second principle denotes the formation of thematic programs, each reflecting one aspect of the history. Throughout the third principle, the competition brief refers to the complexity of the exhibition layout and offers visitors to see new exhibitions on each visit. The last principle suggests the intention to link the new museum with the Egyptian collections of the worldwide museums and thus to virtually display the objects within the absence of their physicality.

The Grand Egyption Museum also proposes to virtually bring all the objects of the Egyptian Civilization collections, which are spread around the world museums, together through the worldwide web; hence become the first virtual museum.[127] This system not only virtually extends the limits of the material existence of the collection but also brings together the pieces of the same object that are displayed distantly from each other. Through this digital representation of the object, the new museum intends to contribute the visual knowledge of the Egyptian Civilization.[128]

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[126] The Grand Egyptian Museum, Technical Committee, "The Grand Egyptian Museum Competition Document," The Egyptian Ministry of Culture, 2002, p 26.
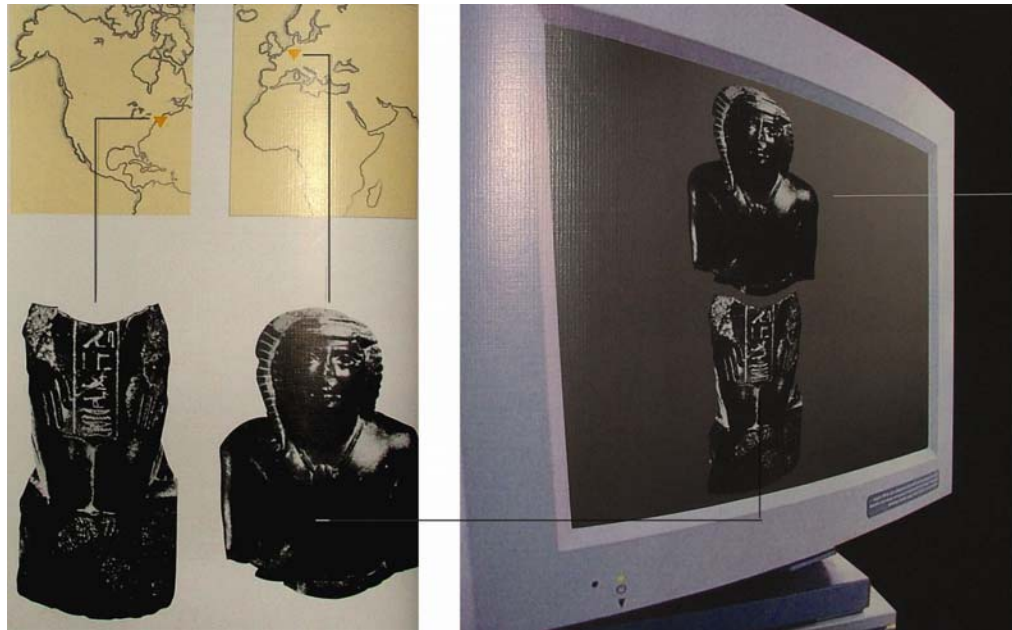
[127] Ibid, p 18.
[128] Ibid, p 26.

Figure 20 . Virtual connection between different museums' collections.

Grand Egyptian Museum Competition Brief, The Egyptian Ministry of Culture, 2002, pp 20-21.

The above listed basic requirements of the Grand Egyptian Museum are demonstrated to propose innovative design solutions that foster a perspective contact between the exhibits and the visitors.[129] For this respect, to acquire the physical ramification of the collection, a two-staged architectural competition was organized. One thousand and five hundred fifty seven concept designs from different countries had been submitted to the competition secretary, among which twenty selected design proposals were evaluated for the second stage.

The check list of the projects prepared among seven main categories covering the architects' intention on the project, including design concept,

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[129] The Grand Egyptian Museum, Technical Committee, "Grand Egyptian Museum Competition Document," The Egyptian Ministry of Culture, 2002, p 33.

main exhibition space and emphasis on role of the museum.[130] Juries'
evaluation criteria for the key issues in the design of the exhibition space
and its musicological aspect were analyzed below according to the
percentage of participant projects:

1. Hypertextual route   .16% of the projects
2. Chronological route   . 53% of the projects
3. Clear five themes   . 67% of the projects
4. King Tut's special space   . 31% of the projects
5. Visual relation to pyramids   . 67% of the projects
6. Archeological Aspects   . 33% of the projects

As it can be seen, hypertextuality was the main criteria behind the
selection of the projects. Though it was the overemphasized keyword of
the competition document, only the 16% of the submitted projects were
evaluated to comply with the "hypertextual routes" criteria of the jury.

4.2 Architectural Interpretation of the Hypertextuality

Located on the North of the Great Pyramids of Giza, competition area of
the museum building covers approximately 4,800,000 square meters. It is
planned to exhibit more than 100,000 artifacts, in addition to 3,500 pieced
special care needed King Tutankhamon collection for the attendance of
15,000 visitors per day.

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[130] "Introduction," The Grand Museum of Egypt: International Architectural Competition
Book, The Egyptian Ministry of Culture, p VIII.

Figure 21 . The Grand Egyptian Museum Architectural Competition Site.

The Grand Egyptian Museum, Technical Comitee, "Grand Egyptian Museum Competition Document," The Egyptian Ministry of Culture, 2002, p 138.

Regarding the complexity of the collection, the architects were asked to develop a new model or method for display and to offer a correlative spatial organization as it is clearly stated in the competition document:

> The cultural message and the museum's network of display itineraries cannot and must not be invented anew, statically, on paper; they must spring from the design, construction of the new complex.[131]

Participants were explicitly requested to suggest architectural solutions that might allow the realization of permanent exhibition routes, which is divided into six major display areas and to provide necessary interconnections between these routes to enable "hypertextual" areas. It was asked for, not to consider the specific needs of the material implementation of the display routes,[132] but to organize dynamic- complex spatial arrangement of the permanent collection that would allow different combinations of routes and maximum flexibility for the temporary transformation of the exhibition space. According to the competition document, the main challenge for architects was stated as to design a New Museum spacious enough to exhibit collections, and let the visitors to "navigate" along many routes potentially offered by the museum.[133] The suggestive and thematic approach to display is considered within the context of the exhibited artifacts and superimposition of different narrations that turn out to be a single ensemble within different circulation patterns of the museum building.

> Egyptology is a recent discipline that develops more in its process rather than reified, display strategies are claimed to have potential for continuous change and adjustment.[134]

According to the above definition of Egyptology, in the competition document, the spatial qualities of the exhibition space is identified as open

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[131] The Grand Egyptian Museum, Technical Comitee, "Grand Egyptian Museum Competition Document," The Egyptian Ministry of Culture, 2002, p 65.

[132] Ibid, p 93.

[133] Ibid, p 28.

[134] Ibid, p 66.

to considerable modification of spatial arrangements. It was claimed that the arrangement of the permanent display layout according to themes would enhance the flexibility of the museum by allowing the possibilities of change, in both the form and content of the individual units.
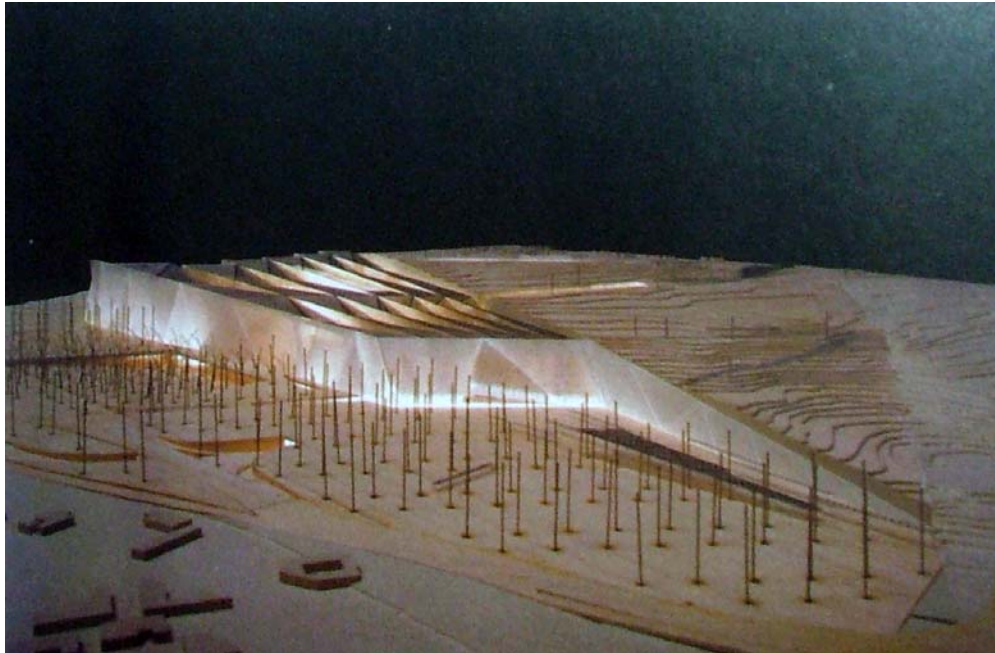

Figure 22 . The Model of the First Prize

"Prize- Winning Projects of the Second Phase of the Competition.," <u>The Grand Museum of Egypt: International Architectural Competition Book,</u> The Egyptian Ministry of Culture, pp 3-8.

The winning project, designed by Heneghan Architects, Ireland, offered six adjacent linear exhibition spaces among which five of them referred to the exhibition themes and the sixth was designed for the chronological route of the exhibition layout.

The thematic exhibition space was located at the top floor of the museum where the chronological route of the exhibition was designed as a "grand staircase" that linked the entrance lobby and other exhibitory and educational functions, including the main archeological storage, in the

architectural program, to the permanent exhibition space. In the architectural report which was submitted with the project, the architects describes their design strategy as:

> THE GRAND STAIRCASE - The Chronological Route: The light-filled "Grand Staircase" ascends from the lobby to the permanent exhibition galleries on the top floor stopping off at special exhibitions, conservation workshops, temporary exhibitions, and the "Archaeological Main Storage". The staircase is the chronological route within the museum, culminating in the view of the Pyramids at the top of the stair. The "Grand Staircase" is an identifiable reference point, which allows visitors to navigate easily through the vast collection.[135]

> THE Hyper-textual nodes of Display Itineraries: The permanent exhibition areas on the top floor are organized in five thematic bands within the structure constructed by the visual axes to the Pyramids, the sixth band being the chronological route of the grand stair. Hyper-textual nodes and "Sculpture Garden Courts" provide primary cross-movement between the thematic bands. The structural roof folds follow the spatial organization of the thematic bands; controlled light is brought in, through the roof folds. A clear organization is provided to a large space yet still allowing flexible modes of display. The hyper-textual nodes and sculpture garden courts, which act as points of reference for the navigation of the collection, operate as rest-points for the visitors as well. One such point of reference is the court dedicated to Tutankhamun.[136]

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[135] "Prize- Winning Projects of the Second Phase of the Competition, Architectural Report submitted to the competition secretariat.," <u>The Grand Museum of Egypt: International Architectural Competition Book,</u> The Egyptian Ministry of Culture, pp 3-8.
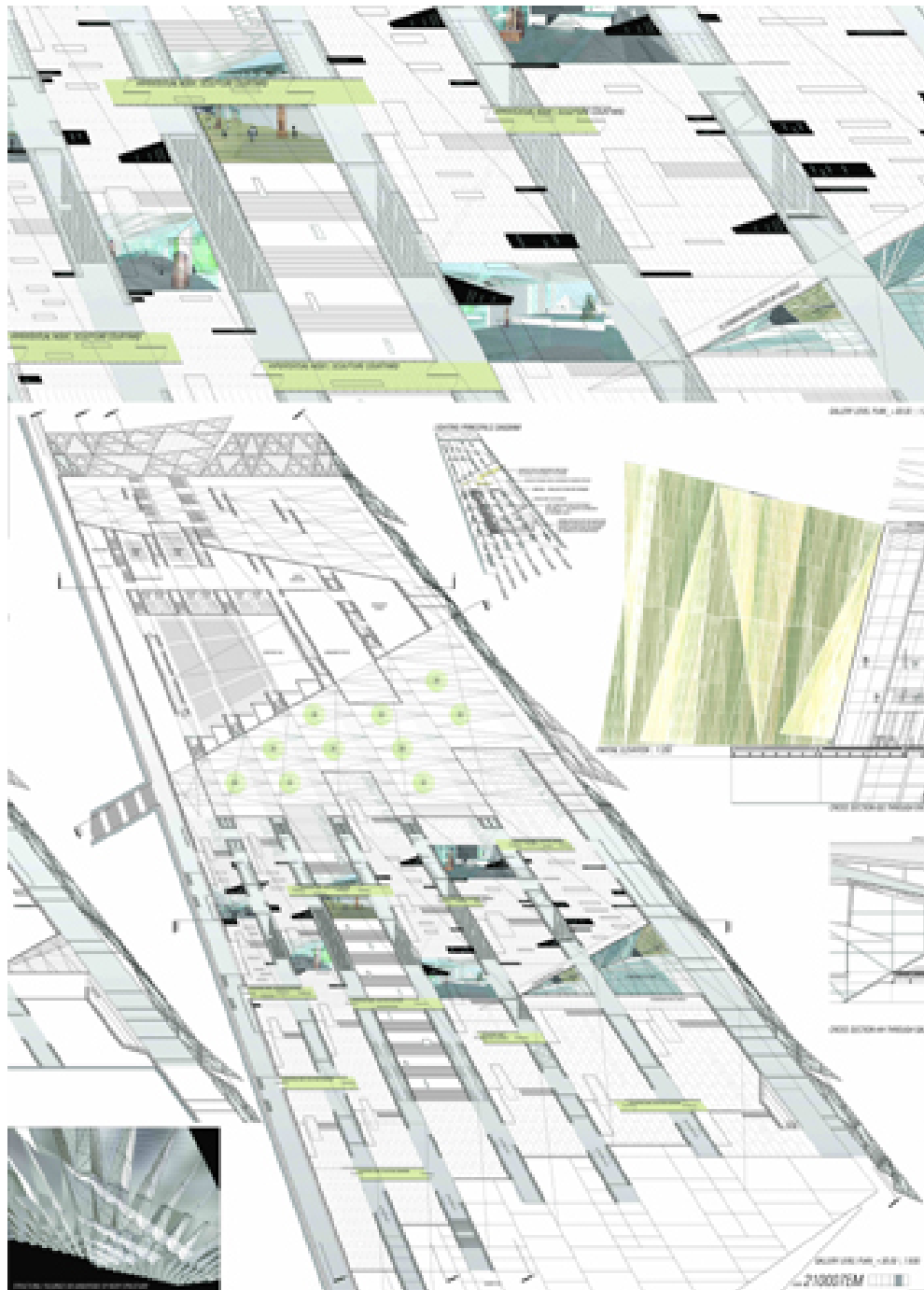
[136] Ibid p 8.

Figure 23 . Competition Presentation of the First Prize.

"Prize- Winning Projects of the Second Phase of the Competition," <u>The Grand Museum of Egypt: International Architectural Competition Book,</u> The Egyptian Ministry of Culture, pp 3-8.

On the other hand, the organization of the thematic exhibition spaces was designed as "porous linear bands" which enabled the penetration from one theme to the other by the hypertextual nodes— the objects belonging to more than one theme were situated— and sculpture gardens. These hypertextual nodes and sculpture gardens befall the points where the visitors are able to move from one thematic narration to the other. By this way, the plan gained the possibility of generating a circulation web out of multiple interlocking spaces by the differentiated choices of the visitors. Therefore, regarding the circulation routes, a new form of flexibility is emergence within the presence of fixed walls and defined exhibition spaces. Additionally, the design offered the visitors to locate themselves with respect to the objects on display, where the museum objects gained a new significance.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Projects which are acquired by an end product of a competition are significant because, they reveal the many possible spatial configurations of the same programmatic requirements. In the case of the museum competitions, the competition documents declare the relationship between the collection and the museum space which need to be physically paraphrased.

The conceptual formation of the Grand Egyptian Museum competition document suggests a re-discovery of the flexibility, which was introduced to architectural discourse at the turn of the century. While the Pompidou Center competition suggests a "literal" understanding of flexibility by the transformation of exhibition space, the Grand Egyptian Museum offers a new understanding of the flexibility through the continuous alteration of the circulation in a constructed space. Therefore, the understanding of flexibility, which goes back to the turn of the twentieth century, has been modified.

The Grand Egyptian Museum project suggests a flexible system of exhibition spaces that guides the thematic and chronologic narrations of the collection. This system both embodies the transformability of the exhibition spaces that is requested by the institution and the spatial suggestion of the collections' exhibition layout. At this point, hypertextual organization of the exhibition space presents a different understanding of flexibility which is both embodying various objects in various scales and

involving a complex web of circulation network. Unlike in the case of the Pompidou Center, the winning design's exhibition space achieves flexibility within the presence of fixed walls and objects. The flexibility achieved with the aid of circulation. As clarified in the former chapters, in museums, narration is constructed through human motion. In the case of the Grand Egyptian Museum, the term "hypertextuality" refers to complex networks of movement patterns thus the flexibility of circulation with respect to the visitors' choices. Therefore, it is significant that, flexibility of circulation is not the absence of a designed space but the organization of space in a way that enables the generation of many possibilities of circulation with respect to the objects on display, within the presence of the constructed walls.

The proposed virtual displays of the objects in other museums' collections, enable them to be part of the Grand Egyptian Museum's collection. This system suggests an utmost flexibility in museum space that exhibits the object within the absence of its physicality. As the information network which is provided by World Wide Web enables to gather all objects that belong to Egyptian civilization, the collection of the museum expands the limits of the material existence of the objects. The 5000 years old Egyptian history therefore had to be re-written with each entry from all over the world. The possibility to reach documents and objects of Egyptian civilization from different regions and in different times consequentially provides a new mode reading and a new way of textuality.

Museum object has been discussed with regards to its two folded representation; the corporeal body and the immaterial body. Labeling takes place depending on the relationship between these two bodies. According to its definition, hypertextuality allows plurality instead of singularity. In such a dynamic case where the ephemerality of the information is more than ever, and the simultaneous presence of the

different narrations is possible, the fixed meaning of label can no longer exist. Therefore, the suggested new understanding of flexibility depending on the hypertextual experience of museum space is controled by labeling process.

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APPENDIX A

THE GRAND EGYPTIAN MUSEUM COMPETITION DOCUMENT

Figure 24 . Table of contents of Competition Document

The Grand Egyptian Museum, Technical Committee, "Grand Egyptian Museum Competition Document," The Egyptian Ministry of Culture 2002, p 7.
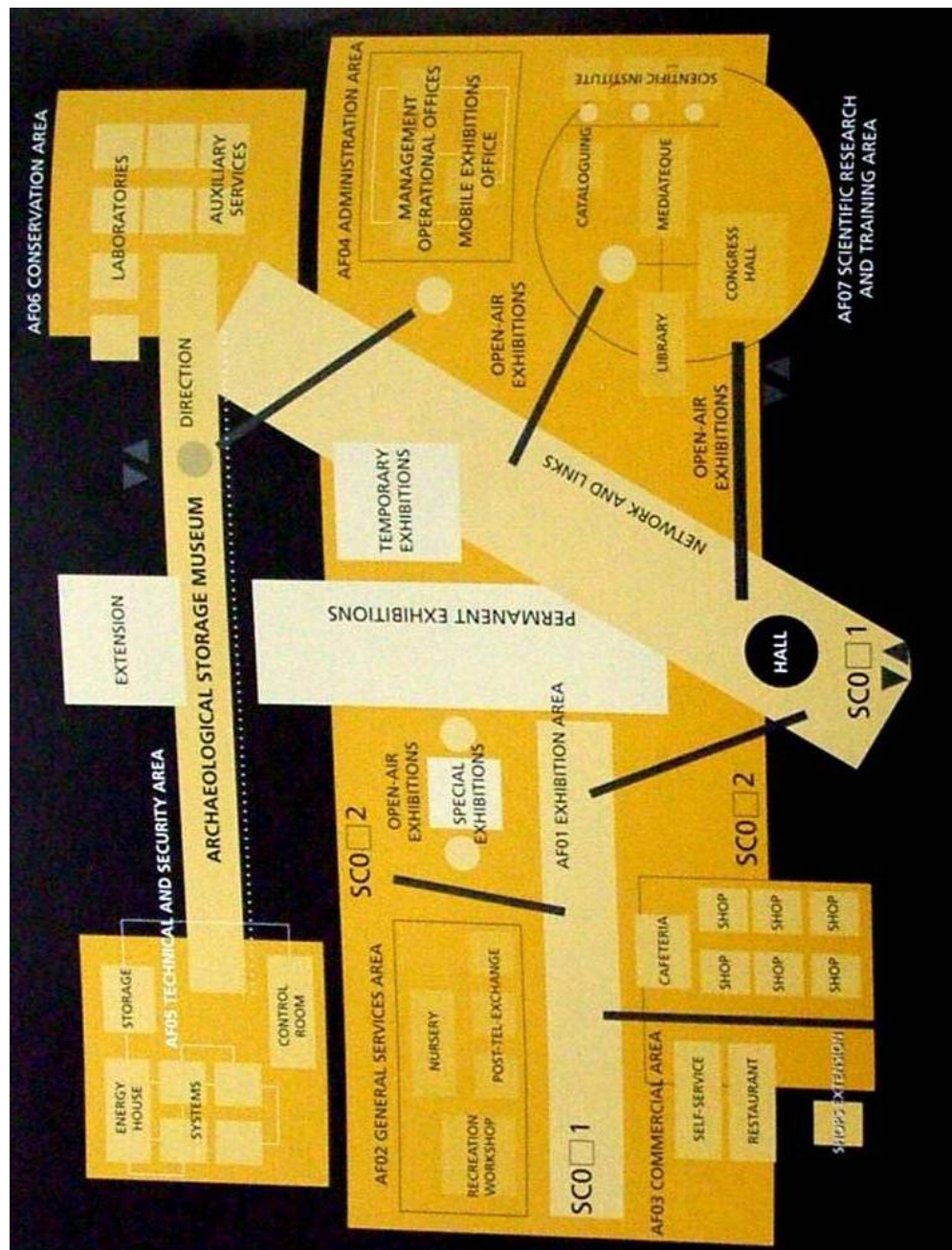
Figure 25 . Spatial and Functional Model of Grand Egyptian Museum Program.

The Grand Egyptian Museum, Technical Committee, "Grand Egyptian Museum Competition Document," The Egyptian Ministry of Culture 2002, p 198.
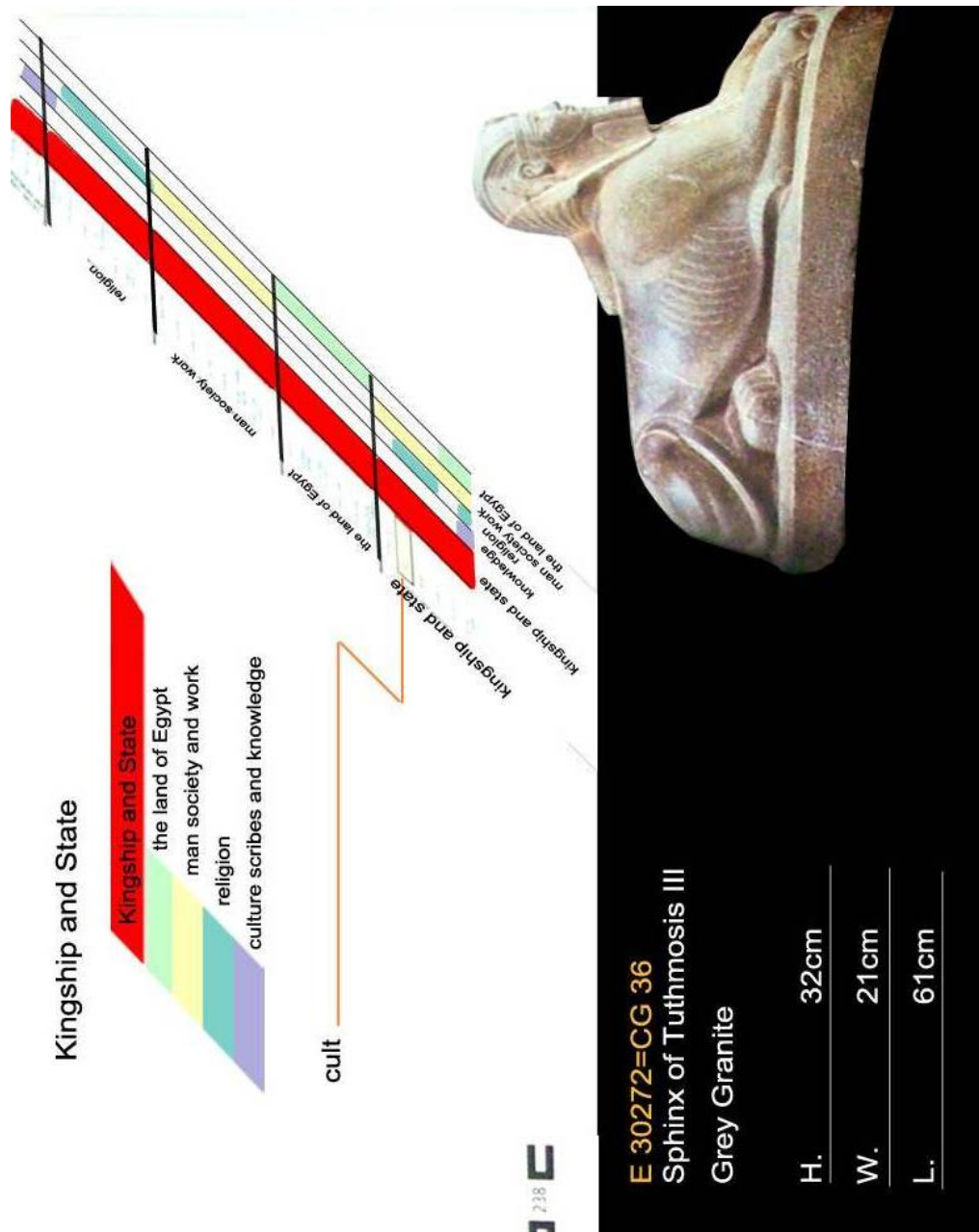
Figure 26 . Collection Samples that defines the collection in the Competition document, pp 220-278.

The Grand Egyptian Museum, Technical Committee, "Grand Egyptian Museum Competition Document," The Egyptian Ministry of Culture 2002, p 238.

APPENDIX B

THE GRAND EGYPTIAN MUSEUM COMPETITION PROJECTS

Jury Report of the First Prize

The jury highly appreciated the simple elegance and the refined expressive qualities of the project, together with its functional clarity. The poetic statement of the project is extremely strong, still remaining a delicate and discreet approach to the site and to the architectural program. The jury spotlighted the finesse of the project and its meaning as a new "edge" to the Giza plateau. The layout of the exhibition galleries is organized in a way that allows it to cover the visual lines to the Pyramids through a prism of light. The museum is situated at the intersection of two cones of vision, one is directed towards the Pyramids and the other is directed towards the city of Cairo. The design pays special attention to the physical solution for the proposed pedestrian way to the Pyramids plateau.

The Jury was impressed by the iconic power, the delicacy and the technical sophistication of the translucent stonewall. The project was developed from the first phase at a good level of thoroughness, in particular towards the profiling of elements and the offered range of technical and communication devices. The written report is similarly substantial and well elaborated.

In general the design is a fine interpretation to the new Egyptian museum project. The design also shows a high quality of lighting solutions and treatments and addresses the information and communication system

adequately in this early schematic stage. At the same time, taking into consideration the fact that this project is meant to become reality, the members of the jury felt obliged to be overcritical in what concerns certain functional aspects. In spite of its obvious qualities, there are certain inconsistencies of the project that should be taken care of in the future elaboration of the final design. For instance, care should be taken regarding the placement of potentially diffusive external elements such as lampposts and trees. The design offers easy circulation through the main lobby, the grand staircase and the other mechanical devices to reach the different galleries of the museum. Yet the staircase itself needs further study to deal with its processional character. If this staircase is the only way for pedestrians to reach the galleries, it is anticipated that there will be a problem for easy access. Furthermore, if the main staircase is the chronological exhibit itself, it would require modifications
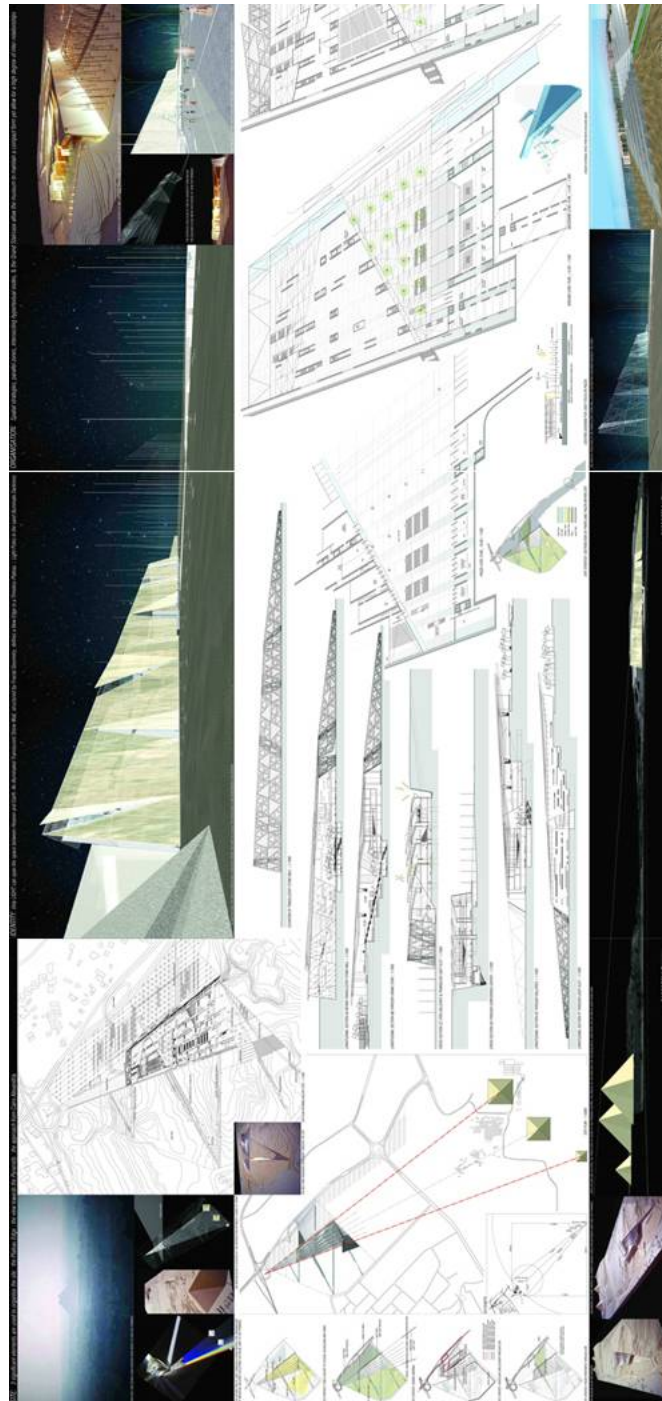
Figure 27 . First Prize, Heneghan.Peng. Architects, Ireland.

The Grand Museum of Egypt: International Architectural Competition Book, The Egyptian Ministry of Culture.

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Jury Report of Second Prize

This project proved to be one of the most intensely argued amongst all of those submitted during all phases of the jury. It is clearly a memorable piece with considerable architectural force motivated by a clear set of elements and thus offers a clear statement for a building of such importance.

The internal organization was very direct and evident. The major space around the 'cone' has been the subject of some critical support for its clear – even 'populist' - overtones. By its detractors, it was heavily criticized for certain attendant aesthetic mannerisms. Its supporters appreciated the witty unfolding of the procession from the entrance, via the 'crater' in preparation for the exposure of the final vista towards the Pyramids.

The development of black stone crater floor and the technology of heat dispersal as well as the instigation of the natural light shafts was carefully scrutinized by the technical committee and the architect members of the jury, since it forms such a major feature of the proposal. So far as the jury can tell, the proposals are feasible and certainly contribute to the potential quality of the main internal spaces.

The cliff-like formation that creates the 'gate' to the building is a clear statement of presence: characteristically this was both appreciated and simultaneously criticized by some members of the jury. It is an unequivocal device that announces the axis upon which the system of the museum is defined. It is certainly a memorable work that justifies its ascendance through the battlefield of such a large competition
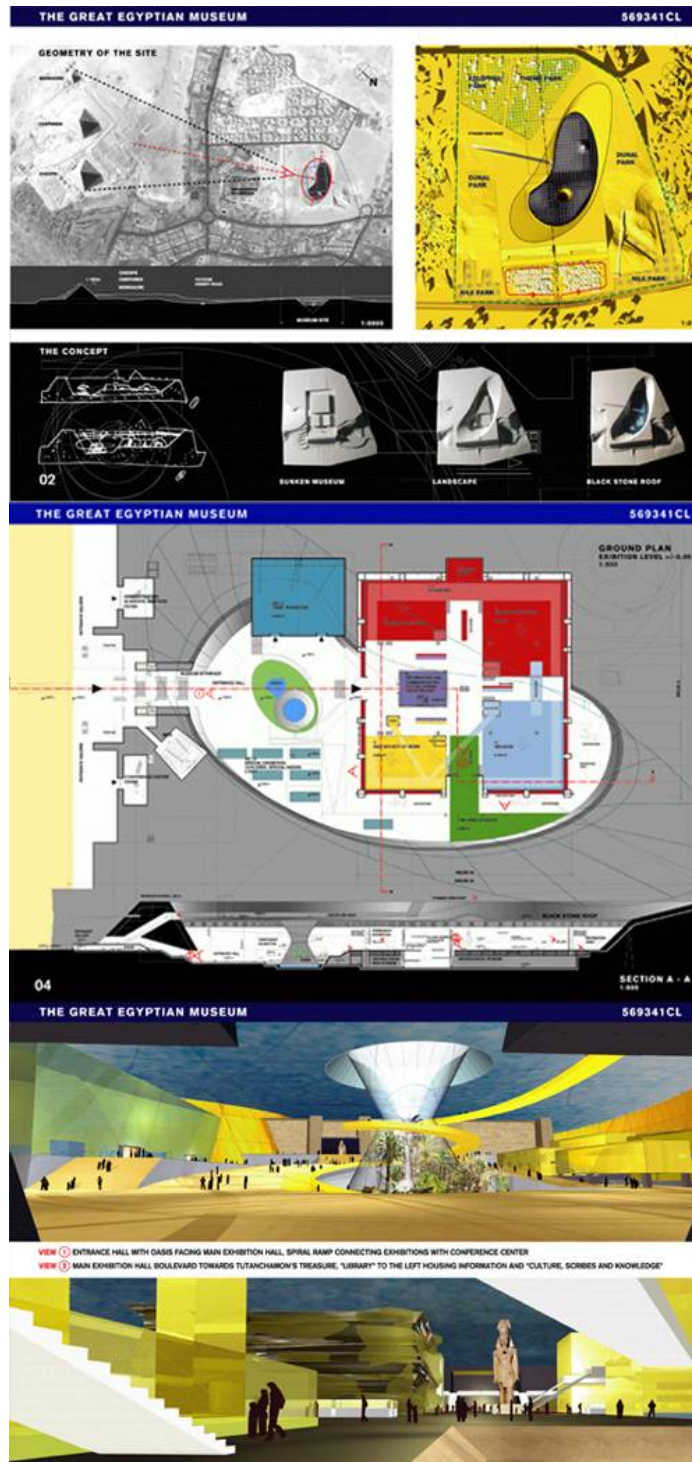
Figure 28 . Second Prize, Coop Himmelblau(L) AU, Austria.

The Grand Museum of Egypt: International Architectural Competition Book, The Egyptian Ministry of Culture, pp 3-8.

Jury Report of Third Prize

The project raised many discussions mainly based on two apparently contradictory aspects. On the one hand, the jury highly appreciated the strength of the architectural statement shown, the mysterious and very memorable character of the architecture proposed, the "imageability" of the building, its refined historical recourse. Some jury members expressed concern that the project does not offer a visible above-grade image for such an important national edifice, and that the functionality is not sufficiently detailed in the drawings, although explained in the written report.

Following thorough analyses of the project and of the report, the jury decided that the architectural and intellectual qualities of the project prevail. In fact, the project presents, albeit schematically, a functional clarity to be mentioned, and there is a remarkable coherence between the exterior of the building, its interior partition and the functional organization proposed. At the same time, the jury highlighted the use of simple, "traditional" structural systems, and the fact that the project avoids, as far as possible, complicated and highly technological procedures. Nonetheless, the project takes into consideration the local climatic conditions, providing natural thermal insulation and naturally based air-conditioning. These technical aspects are very consistent with the architectural expression of the building.

The jury concluded that the force of the expressive statement, together with the interesting spatial hierarchy proposed in the project, and the strong symbolism of the building – all interpreted with elegance and implicit monumentality are sufficient reasons to select the project for the 3rd prize.
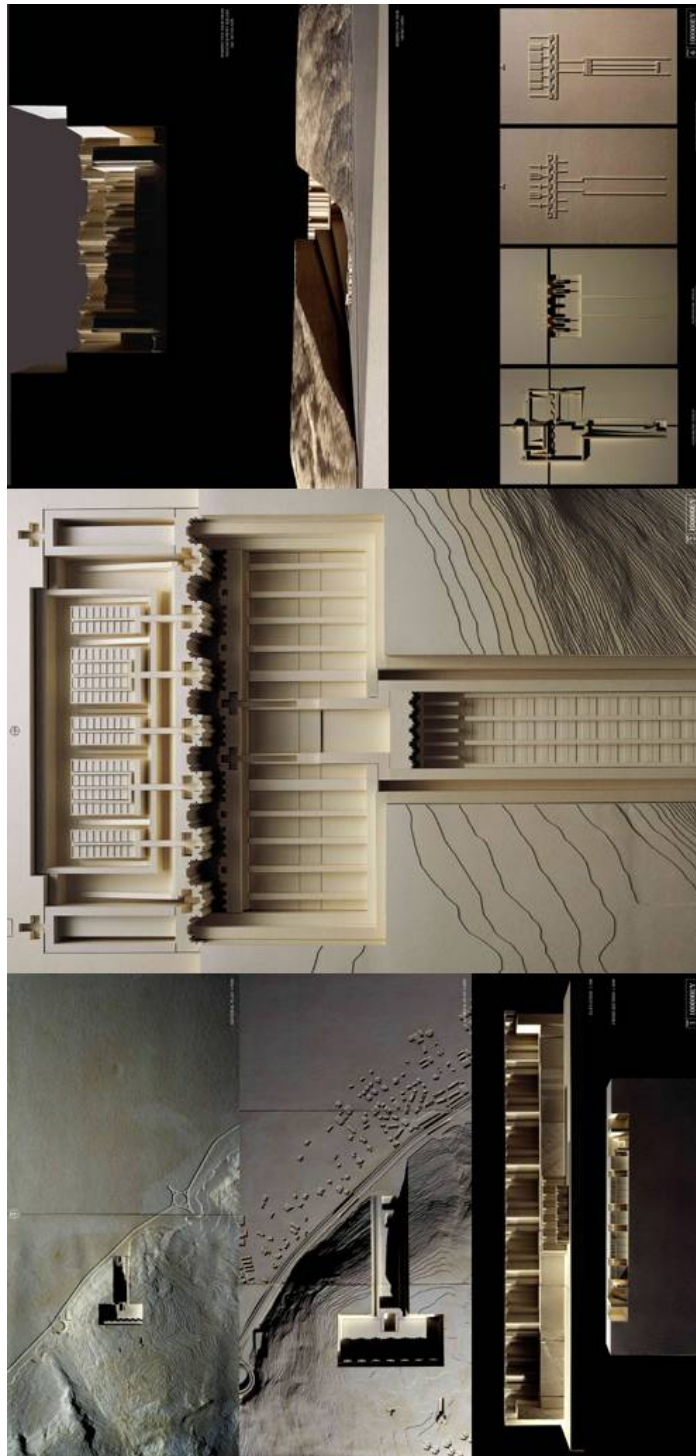
Figure 9 . Third Prize, Renato Rizzi, Italy

The Grand Museum of Egypt: International Architectural Competition Book, The Egyptian Ministry of Culture, pp 3-8