

# Changing roles of history museums in the making of citizens and communities

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## Abstract

Two centuries old, national history museums have never been so vital as they are today, nor have they had so many visitors: numbers incomparable with those of best-selling history books. At the crossroads of research, the production of master narratives, popularization and public history, history museums put the past on display, often shifting between a *longue durée* perspective and a *retour de l'événement*. More often, they shift between history and memory, a process in which Mnemosyne is more involved than Clio. This paper deals with the broad context of the last two decades, but ultimately concentrates on a few European cases of recent years.

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