The making of nations and museums. 
Nordic national museums in European context
European national museums

Dimensions of research (Work packages)

Mapping and framing **institutions** 1750-2010: national museums interacting with nation-making

Uses of the Past: **narrating** the nation and **negotiating** conflicts

The museology of Europe: the language of art, the local nation and the virtual Europe

Museum **policies** 1990-2010: negotiating political and professional utopia

Museum **citizens**: experience and identity of audiences

National museums, history and a **changing** Europe

**Communication** – interacting with the public, museum professionals and culture politics
Definition

- National museums are the processes and assemblage of institutions, collections and displays claiming, articulating and legitimately representing dominant national values, myths and realities.
Theses: 
Museums and cultural constitutions

The cultural constitution of a nation-state provides the political constitution with long-standing and materialized evidence of shared history, civic culture and values.

National museums are vital to set a flexible doxa for negotiating difference and orchestrate directions to be taken by the community.
Persuasive negotiations

- ....
- Materializing and stabilizing knowledge and world views - emphasising shared values
- Dealing with difference and conflict: territories, class, ethnicity, gender
- Acting on change
- Failure has consequences
- ...

![Image of sculptures and materials]
National museums interacting with nations and state-making

Establishment, anatomy and functions of national museums are dependent on

(1) the chronology and drama of the establishment of an independent state;

(2) the relation between state and nation(s) formatted as conglomerate states, empires, federations, nation-states and state aspiring nations;

(3) the existence and working of spaces for autocratic or democratic decision-making, academic and professional influence, civil society and the public sphere in negotiations; and

(4) the challenges of internal divisions derived from class, gender and regional differences or external threats of war, occupation or deprivation
Denmark
Ethnic origins and chronological evolution
Anti-nationalism – Enlightenment chauvinism
Norway - regional nation
Finland: new state making longest history
National museum of Estonia, Tartu, 2016
National history and Nordic culture: Ice Age beginnings
NORDIC CULTURE
NATURE, VIKINGS, EGALITARIANISM, STRONG WOMEN, PROTESTANT, HARD WORK, SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, WELFARE
Nordic model ambivalens.
Norden

- Finland: youngest state needs longest coherent history
- Norway: landscape and regional
- Iceland: literary narrative, adventures
- Sweden switch from ethnic to universal rational individualism
- Denmark strongest natural ethnic narrative
- Ice Age beginnings/Sami issues /Nordic culture /Viking - Welfare states/ quiet on old territories /national narratives in tune with policies
FIGURE 6.2 Timeline of first national museums.
National museums play different roles depending on the trajectory and timing of the state- and nation-making process.
European research FP7 to Horizon 2020

• EuNaMus – European National Museums: Identity Politics, the Uses of the Past and the European Citizen. Peter Aronsson > Linköping University 2010-2013

• MeLA – European Museums in an Age of Migrations. Luca Basso Peressut > Politecnico di Milano 2011–2015

• UNREST – Unsettling Remembering and Social Cohesion in Europe. Stefan Berger > Ruhr University Bochum/Aarhus 2016–2019

• TRACES – Transmitting Contentious Cultural Heritages with the Arts. From Intervention to Co-Production. Klaus Shönberger > University of Klagenfurt. 2016–2019

• CoHERE – Critical Heritages: performing and representing identities in Europe. Chris Whitehead > Newcastle University. 2016-2019
thought provoking examples

- Norden: unsuccessful nation-making, old battlegrounds into cultural community
- Germany: stabilising nation-making and political turmoil
- Mediterranean: rich antiquity – forgotten modernity
- Yugoslavia: lost unity and civil war
- Europe: ?