

# Museum transition toward market-oriented identity: between social issues and public policy

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## *Museum transition toward market-oriented identity: between social issues and public policy*

The museum as a cultural institution was created as a part of the nation-state, according to nationalism ideology, and for the transmission of the historical heritage of a particular society and culture. It resulted in organisational assumptions as rules of practices and style of operations or management. The transformation of public management in cultural institutions, such as museums, is part of the model of the “big” transformation based on the neoliberal turnaround in thinking and acting in the late twentieth century. The paper constitutes an analysis of the mechanisms of contemporary public policies of cultural institutions. It examines the role of the museum at the market-oriented levels of analysis as production, exchange and consumption. This study is based on desk research analysis and argues that a new identity of the museum has appeared that is still shifting towards a new direction created by the SARS-COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: museum, management, museum identity, public policy

## Introduction

The transformation of public management in cultural institutions, such as museums, is part of the model of the transformation of management based on the neoliberal turnaround in thinking and acting in the late twentieth century.<sup>1</sup> As institutions associated from the very

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<sup>1</sup> BELFIORE, Eleonora. Auditing Culture: The Subsidised Cultural Sector in the New Public Management. In: *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 10(2), 2004, pp. 183–202; BEIRNE Martin, KNIGHT Stephanie. Principles and consistent management in the arts: Lessons from British theatre. In: *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 8(1), 2002, pp. 75–89; BILTON, Chris. Manageable Creativity. In: *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 16(3), 2010, pp. 255–269; DRESSAIRE, Philippe, GARBOWNIK Nathalie. The imaginary manager or illusions in the public management of culture in France. In: *The European Journal of Cultural Policy*, 1(2), 1995, pp. 187–197; NAJDA-JANOSZKA, Marta, SAWCZUK, Magdalena. Interactive communication using social media: The case of museums in Southern Poland. In: *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 26(6), 2021, pp. 590–609; NEWMAN, Andrew. Imagining the social impact of museums and galleries: Interrogating cultural policy through an empirical study. In: *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 19(1), 2013, pp. 120–137; REUSSNER, Eva M. Strategic Management for Visitor-Oriented Museums. In: *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 9(1), 2003, pp. 95–108; SUMMERTON Janet. The small art: Enterprise; Issues in management and organization. In: *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 3(1), 1996, pp. 79–89; VLASSIS, Antonios. Cooperation among intergovernmental organizations in global cultural governance: Towards an actor-centered constructivist approach. In: *International Journal of Cultural Policy*. Published online: 05 Jan 2022, 2022.

beginning of their existence with the functions of the nation state but, simultaneously, with the dominating processes of neoliberal thinking in management practices and everyday life, these institutions have started to change their model of operation. In view of the above, contemporary museums face two fundamental challenges: (1) how to fulfil their increasingly broadly defined obligations to society, and (2) whether and to what extent to be subject to market trends, which perhaps results in the absence of such obligations. This raises the question of whether such a shift is only their commercialisation or marketisation, or whether this is a broader process of change in public management resulting in a new identity in the future. It is worth mentioning that these tendencies have become a characteristic feature of not only cultural institutions, but also non-governmental, educational and even public administration organisations.

This paper also constitutes an analysis of the mechanisms of the contemporary public policies of cultural institutions (at the beginning of the third decade of the twenty-first century). Therefore, the objective of the paper is to analyse the contemporary museum's identity under the pressure of the dominant neo-liberal culture, which has shaped a new type of management, organisation and, above all, the very operation of museums. The research purpose in this paper is to demonstrate contemporary public policies as exemplified by museum practices influenced by market mechanisms considered crucial in the era of neoliberal transformation. In view of the above, the following research questions arise: how market mechanisms influence (1) the manner of working with museum collections, (2) the development of quality relations with the public and (3) the museum's relations with state and economic institutions. The analyses comprise the mechanisms of production, exchange (sales) and consumption as broadly understood in economics, but also the development of relationships with various institutions in the social space.

The following research methods have been used in this paper: analyses of existing documents and data. These are qualitative methods based on the use of materials and sources available primarily on the Internet. In the period of the pandemic in 2020–2021 the scope of museums' online activities increased, which, consequently, has allowed researchers to access the object of their study and at the same time carry out academic research.

The museums selected for the analysis were ranked among the most frequently visited museums in 2018 according to a report prepared by *The Art Newspaper*.<sup>2</sup> It was assumed that they constitute so-called *super star museums*, i.e. trend-setters in global museology.<sup>3</sup> Detailed studies of the National Gallery in London, the Tate in London, the British Museum in London, the Louvre in Paris, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam have been conducted. These analyses are not case studies of specific museums, but an exposition of the mechanisms and logic of their public management processes in the context of macrostructural processes, such as the dominant role of the neoliberal ideology and the related marketisation of many phenomena.

This paper is not a comprehensive analysis, but merely an introduction to the subject and a basis for further in-depth research. The text consists of two main parts: the first presents the issue of the transformation of museums in recent years, while the second part, entitled *The New Museum Identity*, includes subsections relating to the definition of the museum (1) as a producer and seller, (2) located in a space of exchange and (3) its consumers.

<sup>2</sup> Art's most popular: Exhibition and museum visitor figures 2018. In: *The Art Newspaper Special Report*, 28(311), 2019, pp. 1–16.

<sup>3</sup> FREY, Bruno S., MEIER, Stephan. Cultural economics. In: MACDONALD, Sharon (ed.). *A Companion to museum studies* (pp. 398–414). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2006, p. 410.

## Transformation of the museum

The changes in museums' manner of operation that we have witnessed over several decades now are a response to the processes taking place in contemporary societies. Important factors influencing the perception of their social roles include the changing demographic structure of Western societies, social mobility and the approach to cultural and ethnic differences, i.e. the audible voices of hitherto marginalised groups and the growing importance of the human rights discourse.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, due to transformations in the public discourse of the dominant culture concerning the neoliberal turnaround, over the last thirty years museums have been subject to institutional and organisational changes. Whereas from the very beginning of museums' existence the dominant culture was one of nationalism, nation-state ideology, the transmission of the historical heritage of a particular society and culture, i.e. a historical policy in its broadest sense, and the socialisation of citizens in the context of creating and maintaining social memory, at the end of the twentieth century a new ideology emerged, one that is spreading far and wide: the neoliberal (market, free market) ideology.<sup>5</sup>

The course of fulfilling the extensive social mission of the museum and the ways of developing its offer are influenced by market processes, the collapse of state finances and the evolution of the state's role towards a "minimum" state.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, the challenge for museums in the twenty-first century has become not only the financing of cultural institutions, but also the broader process of commercialisation of this offer and the related necessity to compete for the attention of the public. This is undoubtedly the result of the fact that neoliberal ideology emerged as a continuation of liberal ideology in a "clash" with events in the economic and political space at the end of the twentieth century, such as the fuel and energy crisis, the fiscal deficit of states and stagflation. Michael Piore<sup>7</sup> noted that the last decades of the twentieth century represented a revival of this ideology with a simultaneous attack on the institutions and order of the Welfare State. The 1980s and 1990s were a time of managing all kinds of institutions according to a market-driven logic considered to be the most effective in achieving organisational goals. All these processes related to the development of capitalism, on the other hand, constituted a new type of policy-making by states.

Four key processes of the new economic policy are the most frequently mentioned in the literature on the subject: firstly is deregulation, meaning a reduction of the state's influence in favour of the unlimited influence of market processes. Joseph Stiglitz,<sup>8</sup> criticising the above

<sup>4</sup> BLACK, Graham. *Transforming Museums in the Twenty-first Century*, London, New York: Routledge, 2012, p. 3; NEGRI Massimo. Emerging new trends in the European museum panorama. In: NICHOLLS, Ann, PEREIRA, Manuela, SANI, Margherita (eds). *Report 7: New trends in museums of the 21st century; The Learning Museum Network Project*. Istituto per i Beni Artistici Culturali e Naturali, 2013, p. 17; SANDELL, Richard. *Museum, Prejudice and the Reframing of Difference*. London, New York: Routledge, 2007, p. 6; BARAŃSKA, Katarzyna. *Muzeum w sieci znaczeń. Zarządzanie z perspektywy nauk humanistycznych*, [Museum in the web of meanings: Management from the perspective of the humanities]. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Attyka [in Polish], 2013, p. 206; SANTOS, Paula. O dawaniu i braniu: rozważania na temat kolekcji muzealnych jako narzędzia pracy i ich relacji z człowiekiem. [On giving and taking: Reflections on museum collections as a work tool and their relationship with people] In: BANAŚ, Anna, JANUS, Aleksandra, (eds). *Laboratorium muzeum. Społeczność*, [The museum's laboratory: Community] Warszawa: Muzeum Warszawy, 2015, 57 [in Polish].

<sup>5</sup> NIEROBA, Elżbieta. *Między dobrem wspólnym a elitarnością. Współczesny model muzeum* [Between the common good and elitism: The contemporary model of the museum]. Opole: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, 2016 [in Polish].

<sup>6</sup> BOLTANSKI, Luc, CHIAPELLO, Eve. *New Spirit of Capitalism*. London: Verso, 2007.

<sup>7</sup> PIORE, Michael. The Neo-Liberal Ideal and the Reality of Workplace Practice: Shifting Axes of Political Mobilization and New Regimes of Workplace Governance in the US. In: *Working Papers Rev Worlds of Capitalism: Globalization, Governance and Democracy, Hamburg, May 29–31, 2003*, 2003.

<sup>8</sup> STIGLITZ, Joseph. *Ten Years after the Financial Crisis*. Columbia: Columbia University, 2017.

phenomena, called it market fundamentalism consisting in the primacy of the market over other types of institutions, including public institutions. Secondly is privatisation, related to the aforementioned process, i.e. the process of ownership transformation involving the transfer of public goods into the hands of private owners, which on the one hand increased the role of private property in society, but on the other weakened the area of common good.<sup>9</sup> Thirdly is the flexibilisation of all kinds of processes, from work through management and organisations to public services.<sup>10</sup> Fourthly, decentralisation at the level of state decisions, including spatial decentralisation, is mentioned.<sup>11</sup> Undoubtedly, the above-mentioned processes have shaped the new economic policy of the era of neoliberalism.

These processes result from the (neo-)liberal ideology emphasising such dimensions as freedom, private property, money as a means of exchange and as profit, active sales, intermediaries and entrepreneurs.<sup>12</sup> The process of implementation of this ideology or its imposition on society can be described as a process of marketisation, i.e. a broad socio-cultural process involving the recognition by people of certain market-related features as important, crucial and valuable. Consequently, these characteristics influence a wider public and are recognised and implemented in everyday practices. This relatively new institutional and axiological order involves the emergence of a dominant set of cultural elements applicable to all institutions, as a result of which they all have similar mechanisms of operation, analogous structures and common practices. All these elements found at the origin of the liberal ideology were considerably emphasised by the neoliberal ideology and used by various actors of the market processes at the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (first of all by international corporations in their everyday practices), to become subsequently the fundamental principles regulating not only the economy, but also politics and social life. Museums are also among the institutions subjected to the process of marketisation, which is worth looking at through the prism of market mechanisms.

Marketisation processes are undoubtedly connected with the category of the market. Historically speaking, it was a space of exchange, first of goods and commodities, then, with the development of capitalism, of services, not necessarily in a physical space, and then it evolved with the development of economy and technology to take a specific form at the end of the twentieth century. The above characteristics derive directly from the philosophy of Adam Smith and his followers, the liberal theorists in economics, and may be supplemented by characteristics from the perspective of economic sociology. In the latter understanding, the market is not so much a physical or social space, but an institution with clearly defined features, which Max Weber already pointed to more than a century ago, indicating unique values and social norms created by the market. Karl Polanyi<sup>13</sup> presented the market in the same vein; for

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<sup>9</sup> ABDELDAYEM, Marwan M., ALDULAMI, Saeed. Privatisation as a Worldwide Tool of Economic Reform: A Literature Review. In: *International Journal of Social and Administrative Sciences*, 4(2), 2019, pp. 66–84.

<sup>10</sup> PIORE, Michael, SABEL, Charles. *The Second Industrial Divide: Possibilities for Prosperity*. New York: Basic Books, 1984; PIORE, Michael. *Corporate Governance and Worker Welfare*. Presented at Bocconi International Conference, Corporate Governance and Firm Organization: “Nexuses and Frontiers”, Milan, Italy, December 2002, accessed September 1st, 2021, <http://economics.mit.edu/faculty/mpiore/papers>

<sup>11</sup> SCHNEIDER, Aaron. Decentralization: Conceptualisation and Measurement. In: *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 38(3), 2003, pp. 32–56.

<sup>12</sup> ALDRIDGE, Alan. *The Market*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005.

<sup>13</sup> POLANYI, Karl. *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origin of Our Time*. Boston Beacon: Press, 2001.

him it was closely related to the market society. Neil Fligstein,<sup>14</sup> in turn, indicated in his analyses the relationship between the market and the state and the mutual influence of these structures.

Attempts to transform museums into participants in the market game are not a new idea. The American and British systems of financing are based on a hybrid model, with subsidies from private funds playing a dominant role. Meanwhile, European culture has traditionally relied on public funding, with only occasional support from the private sector, which is the result of path dependence and the dominant cultural model as defined by the state. This represents the aftermath of the manner of thinking about public museums as indicators of a nation's status and prestige.<sup>15</sup> Since the 1980s, the European monolithic funding model has also become diversified, as can be seen in the process of the gradual separation of museums from the administrative authority sector in the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria. Then the legal form of the museums undergoing reforms is mainly that of a foundation, limited liability company or association.<sup>16</sup> Their manner of financing is not the only indicator of their entanglement in marketisation processes. Therefore, it is much more important to include the market mechanisms in the logic of their functioning, which has become a process stretching in time and resulting in a new model of management, employee behaviour or relations with the public/audience. From the perspective of Pierre Bourdieu's social theory,<sup>17</sup> it can be said that they have taken over the rules of the game prevailing in the field of economics, which is necessary for them to be able to fulfil their social functions in the twenty-first century. This field is characterised above all by the domination of such aspects as profit, sales, customer orientation, calculation and cost minimisation.

Does it mean that museums try to find a balance between fulfilling their public mission and the mechanisms of the free market in the twenty-first century – especially in a situation when, as Monika Murzyn-Kupisz writes: “it is not uncommon to see growing pressure from public authorities and other bodies that own and finance museums on the narrowly understood short-term economic effectiveness of museums, reduced to generating their own income and attracting private funding”?<sup>18</sup> As a result, museums are forced to seek external sources of funding, which translates into a hybrid business model combining the specificities of public and commercial institutions.<sup>19</sup>

Museums are an important element of the public sphere that express the changes taking place in contemporary societies. This is due to the fact that since the beginning of their existence they have been subject to constant evolution. Under the influence of social and political changes, which, among other things, have entailed a transformation in the structure of museum audiences and their expectations, they have had to open up to new practices and tools hitherto absent from their field of interest. These processes have redefined the mission of the

<sup>14</sup> FLIGSTEIN, Neil. *The Architecture of Markets: An Economic Sociology of Twenty-First-Century Capitalist Societies*. Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001.

<sup>15</sup> DUNCAN, Carol, WALLACH, Alan. *The Universal Survey Museum*. Oxford, New York: Blackwell Press, 1980.

<sup>16</sup> MATT, Gerald. *Muzeum jako przedsiębiorstwo. Łatwo i przystępnie o zarządzaniu instytucją kultury [The Museum as an Enterprise: Easily and Accessibly about Managing a Cultural Institution]*. Warszawa: Fundacja Aletheia [in Polish], 2006, p. 57.

<sup>17</sup> BOURDIEU, Pierre. *Les Règles de l'art. Genèse et structure du champ littéraire*. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1992.

<sup>18</sup> MURZYN-KUPISZ, Monika. Instytucje muzealne z perspektywy ekonomii kultury [Museum institutions from the perspective of the economy of culture]. DZIAŁEK Jarosław cooperation Kraków: Universitas. [in Polish], 2016, pp. 12–13.

<sup>19</sup> ROSENSTEIN, Carole. When is a museum a public museum? Considerations from the point of view of public finance. In: *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 16(4), 2010, p. 451.

contemporary museum and the way it communicates with the participants in culture. This does not mean, however, that they have abandoned their former functions. They are still “temples of knowledge” with the goal of collecting, protecting and presenting tangible and intangible cultural heritage and educating viewers about the collections. New objectives are constantly being added to this original one. These include, according to the economy of experience, the provision of unforgettable experiences, pleasure and entertainment, which leads to their transformation into multi-sensory places. This is because satisfying desires and seeking and indulging in pleasure is the essence of the way of life characteristic of modern and post-modern societies. Individuals engage in cultural activity on the condition that “many attractions and many sensations, provided for all the senses, are received and generated in one place and in one, possibly short time”.<sup>20</sup> Nowadays museums are also expected to adopt the idea of social responsibility, by which we mean the important role of museums in bringing about social change and their influence on the development of society.<sup>21</sup> A visit to a museum can therefore be a potential source of diverse pleasures for heterogeneous categories of the public, ranging from passive contemplation of works of art to enriching one’s knowledge, acquiring new skills and competences, satisfying the need for individual creation and maintaining social contacts.

### The new museum identity

It is assumed in the paper that business practices are not a universal model that can be applied without any modifications to non-profit institutions such as museums. First of all, it is worth emphasising that activities are not calculated to obtain quick profits, as the effects are long-term (e.g. taking care of a collection, educational programmes). Therefore, it is worth analysing the impact of marketisation processes on the fulfilment of the social mission of museums. Specifically, through which activities do museums try to maintain their identity in the situation of blurred distinctions between institutions operating in the leisure sector? Consequently, the division of economics into production, exchange and consumption will be the axis of analysis in this text, providing a platform for discussing a new type of legacy based on the impact of market ideology on the museum.

### The museum: as producer and seller

For the purposes of this paper, it is assumed that museums function as producers and sellers at the same time. Their tasks include the production of events, such as, among others, permanent and temporary exhibitions aimed at specific viewers. Work with the collection is primarily associated with historical research, the development of heritage material and the preservation of collective memory, which changes the role of the museum employee/custodian. In the process of preparing or developing an exhibition they should pay attention to the needs of the recipients – the consumers of culture. The needs analysis is an element of market strategy and an important sales factor in a market economy.

At the same time, museums began to play the role of a seller, that is, an institution that should find its recipients – clients or consumers – on the market. The model assuming that

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<sup>20</sup> SZLENDAK, Tomasz. Wielozmysłowa kultura i wentu. Skąd się wzięła, czym się objawia i jak w jej ramach oceniać dobra kultury? [Multisensory culture of the event: Where did it come from, how is it manifested and how to evaluate cultural assets within it?] In: *Kultura Współczesna*, 4(66), 2010, p. 93 [in Polish].

<sup>21</sup> WEIL, Simon E. From Being about Something to Being for Somebody: The Ongoing Transformation of the American Museum. In: SANDELL, Richard, JONES, Robert (eds). *Museum Management and Marketing*. London, New York: Routledge, 2007, pp. 32–35.

a museum is a passive institution expecting people to come to it has been long forgotten, and the model of a museum as an active institution, i.e. actively seeking recipients, has been proposed. A seller in the twenty-first century has been defined as an entity with its own sales and marketing strategy, seeking new markets in competition with other producers and sellers, and at the same time using new technologies in its everyday activities.

Firstly, it is worth looking at the strategies of action, and the missions included in the strategies. Every museum, like every other public institution, has been forced to construct its strategy of action. The category of “strategy” borrowed from business organisation and management, and more precisely from the management of business organisations, has been applied in public institutions. That is why individual museums started to construct mission statements and then to carry out SWOT analyses and to design activities in the long and short term.

The museum mission statement “is like a pebble dropped in the lake – the mission ripples through all aspects of the museum”.<sup>22</sup> This apt metaphor actually reflects the complex nature of the museum’s mission. The mission statement presents the museum’s identity, i.e. its unique character resulting from the specificity of the collections and its place on the social map, and enumerates its long-term plans. In short, the mission states: “this is who we are, this is what we stand for, this is who we serve, this is how we make a difference, we want to do this with and for you”.<sup>23</sup> It explains to the local community and/or visitors the meaning of the museum’s existence and its role; to the museum employees it indicates the museum’s values and how its potential can be developed; while for sponsors and the broadly understood market environment it is a symbol of the organisation’s credibility. The importance of a clearly formulated mission, and thus the specification of the key aims of long-term activity, is particularly important during both the transformation of the external environment and the changes taking place within the organisation itself. This is because the mission makes it easier for the museum to preserve its identity at the time of undertaking new practices in response to the needs of the community.<sup>24</sup> In their missions, museums frequently refer to their role as an institution that cares about the historical heritage and widely understood culture of a city, region or country. On the other hand, they refer to the features emphasised by contemporary business organisations, such as building relationships with stakeholders, using technology, science and knowledge for educational projects, and implementing creative projects. This kind of activity is supposed to foster the definition of identity and to help to focus on specific activities, compete with other institutions and undertake marketing activities aimed at different groups of recipients.

Secondly, it is worth mentioning that along with the change of the museum model also came their expansion into international markets, especially in Asia. For example, London’s National Gallery targeted the South Korean market and opened its first café in Seoul, where visitors can admire replicas of famous works, buy souvenirs relating to the museum’s collections and enjoy drinks inspired by the art of van Gogh or Gauguin.<sup>25</sup> It has also developed a 5-year strategy to enter the Chinese market, with the aim of building brand awareness to attract millions of Chinese tourists to its London headquarters and to generate profits from licensing revenue.

<sup>22</sup> ANDERSON, Gail. *Mission Matters: Relevance and Museums in the 21st Century*. New York, London: Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield/American Alliance of Museum, 2019, p. 2.

<sup>23</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>24</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>25</sup> *National Gallery Opens Delicious Art Cafe in Korea*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://blooloo.com/museum/news/national-gallery-cafe-korea/>

In June 2018, it displayed reproductions of its best-known works in a Shanghai underground station, which is visited by 200,000 people a day. Using QR codes, those interested could read basic information about the paintings and also buy souvenirs trademarked by the National Gallery. Pop-up stores, which are very popular with shopping mall customers, are also an effective marketing tool.<sup>26</sup> Since 2019, the museum has been operating on one of China's largest online shopping platforms.<sup>27</sup> A year earlier, the British Museum set up an online shop on this platform, and interestingly enough, its collection was sold out within days.<sup>28</sup> Selected artworks from the French Louvre were on display at the exhibition "Inventing le Louvre: From Palace to Museum over 800 Years" presented in 2017 in Hong Kong and Beijing. The purpose of its presence in China was clearly articulated by the Chief Curator of the Louvre's department of interpretation and cultural programming, saying: "The most important visitors of (any) foreign country are the Chinese".<sup>29</sup> The Pompidou Centre, on the other hand, opened a contemporary art museum in Shanghai, the "Centre Pompidou x West Bund Museum Project".<sup>30</sup> Another example of the presence of works from French museums is in Abu Dhabi. The United Arab Emirates paid \$525 million for the possibility to use the Louvre name for 30 years and \$750 million for the possibility to be lent works of art and obtain expert advice.

Thirdly, it is worth mentioning that the tool which guarantees attendance success and, at the same time, profits from ticket sales and commercial activity, is the organisation or rental of a blockbuster. This idea consists in the skilful attracting of viewers who so far have not been interested in art and who do not visit museums on a daily basis. Great significance is attached to present works of art in this way in order to appeal to a wide audience. These exhibitions place less emphasis on scientific research and critical interpretation. What is important above all is the theme – the protagonist – of the exhibition. Renaissance and modern masters, representations of ancient civilisations and pop culture icons are very popular. The title should start with such words as "Origins of ...", "The Genius of ..." or "Treasures of ...".<sup>31</sup> Extensive promotional campaigns (with the support of corporate sponsorship) make the exhibition a "must see". The 2013 "David Bowie" exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum, for example, was a great success. In the subsequent years, the V&A Museum managed to organise several more exhibitions that broke attendance records and featured C. Balenciaga,<sup>32</sup> C. Dior<sup>33</sup> and F. Kahlo.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> *How western museums are growing their brands in China*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://blooloop.com/museum/in-depth/western-museum-brands-china/>; *National Gallery creates interactive pop-up store in China*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://blooloop.com/museum/news/national-gallery-china-interactive-pop-up-store/>

<sup>27</sup> *Essential Strategies for Cultural Branding in China*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://jingculturecommerce.com/essential-strategies-for-cultural-branding-in-china-national-gallery/>

<sup>28</sup> *British Museum Tmall shop is sell-out hit in China*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://blooloop.com/museum/news/british-museum-shop-tmall-china/>

<sup>29</sup> *Treasures from Paris's Louvre museum go on display in Hong Kong*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-hongkong-louvre-idUSKBN17R22O>

<sup>30</sup> *Centre Pompidou x West Bund Museum Project Shanghai*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://www.centrepompidou.fr/en/the-centre-pompidou/international-offers/centre-pompidou-x-west-bund-museum-project-shanghai>

<sup>31</sup> PRIOR, Nick. *Postmodern Restructurings*. In: MACDONALD, Sharon (ed.). *A Companion to museum studies* (pp. 509–524). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2006, p. 515.

<sup>32</sup> *Balenciaga: Shaping Fashion*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://www.vam.ac.uk/exhibitions/balenciaga-shaping-fashion>

<sup>33</sup> *Christian Dior: Designer of Dreams*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://www.vam.ac.uk/exhibitions/dior-designer-of-dreams>

<sup>34</sup> *Frida Kahlo: Making Her Self Up*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://www.vam.ac.uk/exhibitions/frida-kahlo-making-her-self-up>

Looking for themes that will appeal to the taste of young people, the V&A has also prepared an exhibition on the culture of contemporary video games.<sup>35</sup> It is understood that the most popular exhibitions in Europe in 2018 were prepared by the Louvre and the Guggenheim Bilbao Museum.<sup>36</sup>

The fourth argument demonstrating the role of the seller is promotional strategies including modern technologies, which play a significant part in the functioning of a museum. They overcome the limitations of traditional ways of communicating with audiences and facilitate the popularisation of museum activities. They also offer tools for constructing educational programmes accompanying exhibitions. In this case, emphasis is placed on the mission of making collections widely available and, at the same time, arousing the public's curiosity through an offer prepared in this way. It allows one to look behind the scenes of the museum's activity, intrigues, enables exploration of individual gallery spaces, encourages interaction and stimulates action and content production. In a situation where many museums have their own websites and use social media on a daily basis, museums compete for the attention of web users by offering surprising and innovative content. Enabling viewers to become immersed in art and experience it in a very individual way is a significant trend. Making collections available online allows the participants of cultural life to subjectively select the most interesting works, look at them closely, read about them (at the level of their choice – abridged or in-depth) and develop their own visiting path in the museum. Podcasts and blogs give an insight into the day-to-day work of museum professionals: for example, the V&A Museum has started publishing ASRM videos on its YouTube channel that give voice to the usually silent exhibits on display. The first video in the series<sup>37</sup> allows us to hear the sounds that accompany the unpacking of artefacts in a museum warehouse. There is also an offer of meditation among artworks from the National Gallery's collection. The five-minute films on the museum's YouTube channel put viewers in a state of relaxation, while also providing details concerning the individual works.<sup>38</sup>

The model of the modern tourist is inextricably linked with a greedy search for intense experiences and a compulsion to zealously record the experienced reality. It is not enough to experience something, we have to post it on our social media, according to the principle: "If you do not share with others in the net – you do not exist. If your impressions cannot be generated from social networks – you do not exist. The network then leaves you out, and therefore you do not participate in the social life that largely takes place there".<sup>39</sup> "The social compulsion to broadcast impressions" has contributed not only to museums respecting new policies related to opportunities to take pictures (it is less and less frequent for visitors to be prohibited from taking photographs), but even encouraging the public to share, for example on Instagram, pictures of their visit.<sup>40</sup> In this way, Instagram becomes not only a platform for presenting collections and performing educational functions, but also developing the image of an institution responding to the needs of visitors as well as providing a memorable experience. The exhibition programme and the way exhibition spaces are constructed must therefore also

<sup>35</sup> *Videogames: Design/Play/Disrupt*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://www.vam.ac.uk/exhibitions/videogames>

<sup>36</sup> Art's most popular...

<sup>37</sup> *ASMR at the V&A – 1 | Charlie Chaplin and Henry Irving*, accessed March 1st, 2021, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bH7Sr3\\_HZfk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bH7Sr3_HZfk)

<sup>38</sup> E.g. *5-minute meditation: Turner's "Rain, Steam, and Speed" | National Gallery*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQ3AC6CzlBA>

<sup>39</sup> SZLENDAK, Tomasz. *Wielozmyslowa...*, p. 97.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 96.

take into account this element of competing for the audience's attention – an “instafriendly” background. Discussing the “Olafur Eliasson in real life” exhibition at the Tate Modern,<sup>41</sup> one of the museum employees admits that “You're selling people an image to use on their Facebook or Instagram. People want a picture of themselves in the fog room. Art has become a brand everyone needs a bit of”.<sup>42</sup> Instagram is also such a platform that allows you to build meaningful partner relations with your audience.

Technological solutions are used by museums to create experiences that engage the senses and emotions. The curators of the “Modigliani” exhibition at the Tate Modern offered the audience a tour of the artist's studio using virtual reality technology.<sup>43</sup> The Rijksmuseum presented a “new” portrait of Rembrandt thanks to a sponsor-funded collaboration of specialists from many fields (including programmers, data analysts, AI experts): “We distilled the artistic DNA from his work and used it to create The Next Rembrandt”.<sup>44</sup> The process of generating the digital image took 18 months, during which all of Rembrandt's works were analysed in detail through the use of neural network algorithms. The image was then 3D printed. Another innovative measure the Dutch museum undertook was to reconstruct the artist's voice. An international team of historians, linguists and AI specialists analysed Rembrandt's self-portraits to reconstruct his voice. The result of this research is a series of videos on the YouTube channel that provide a brief introduction to painting, narrated by Rembrandt himself.<sup>45</sup>

In conclusion, the museum as an institution organising exhibitions and collections has started to play the role of a salesman using the latest technologies in marketing or promotional activities. The search for new markets, especially abroad, and the organisation of events not always connected with the historically established role of the museum call for the emergence of new elements of its identity.

### The museum as a space of exchange

Apart from the museum's role as producer and seller, the space of exchange also deserves attention. Undoubtedly, it is a space in which traditional cultural transmission and sale take place. When analysing market mechanisms in the functioning of a museum, it is worth considering the category of exchange space, i.e. the space between producers/sellers and receivers/consumers/buyers. Historically speaking, this space has been physically present in the centre of every town since the Middle Ages. It was the place of direct relations between the actors from both sides – production and consumption – where often long-lasting relations based on trust, loyalty and sympathy were established. All this took place in a specific physical space, most often a central place in the community of inhabitants. Therefore, it is worth considering two issues, the first being the space of exchange between museums – producers and consumers – and the second, the shaping of physical space by museums in view of the processes of their marketisation. In the first case we can talk about creating a new public space in order to convey information

<sup>41</sup> *Olafur Eliasson In real life*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/olafur-eliasson>

<sup>42</sup> KARE, Sirin. *Caught in the crush: Are our galleries now hopelessly overcrowded?* accessed March 1st, 2021, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2019/dec/02/caught-in-the-crush-are-our-galleries-now-hopelessly-overcrowded>

<sup>43</sup> *Modigliani VR The Ochre Atelier*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/modigliani/modigliani-vr-ochre-atelier>

<sup>44</sup> *The Next Rembrandt*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://www.nextrembrandt.com/>

<sup>45</sup> *De Rembrandt Tutorials | ING*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q93P8Y-5Daso&list=PLoGoXpRjQc3PS6u743kYu-PUwNYF3FfrV>

about museums (exhibitions or practices) during marketing and PR activities, especially with the use of new media. In the second case, it is worth considering the creation of a new physical space in connection with the location of the museum. The Warsaw Rising Museum or the Silesian Museum in Katowice are becoming a new element of spatial and social order, thus generating new forms of interaction between different social groups, such as the audience and inhabitants of a particular district of the city. All this changes the urban landscape and thus creates a new type of communication space.

To find oneself in this space of exchange one needs entrepreneurs and/or museum workers with a spirit of entrepreneurship. In the case of Polish museums, the analysis of the attitudes and declarations of museum workers with regard to changes taking place in the museum field showed that for some of them – the “reflexive reformers” – change is a natural state of affairs. They situate museums in a broader social context and treat players from the leisure sector (and other participants in the museum field) as potential competitors in the fight for the public’s attention. While maintaining a strong belief in the essence of the collection as the meaning of the museum’s existence, they shift their attention towards the audience and its needs. They do not agree with the claim that a good exhibition will defend itself. It is necessary to take active steps to interest a wide audience in their offer and to seek inspiration for innovative actions in the practices of various commercial institutions. This translates into their shared conviction that a museum is an institution like any other and is governed by the same laws as other businesses: “if one is not visible, one does not exist”. To this end new departments are established in museums – such as image and communication, fundraising or IT – and the existing ones are restructured, for example the education or publishing departments are expanded. Apart from traditional promotional activities, such as the development of a coherent system of visualisation, press advertising and leaflets, museum institutions appeal to a wide audience with their message thanks to increasingly developed websites and the digitalisation of collections as well as their presence in social media.<sup>46</sup> This way of working can be defined as “museum innovation”, i.e. “the new or enhanced processes, products, or business models by which museums can effectively achieve their social and cultural missions”.<sup>47</sup>

The space of exchange in the perspective of marketisation is not only one of competition and rivalry, but also a paradigm of cooperation between different stakeholders, which fits the model of relational economics. In recent years, the category of a cluster has appeared in management and economic theory to denote organisations, very often with a similar or even the same profile, cooperating in the area of contacts with suppliers, joint marketing or sales, or jointly implemented projects. Analogically, museums began to form clusters in connection with the implementation of joint projects, which is more common in connection with this type of institution in Western European countries. In other words, the question arises to what extent museums are characterised by thinking in terms of competitiveness or cooperation. If there is cooperation, with which stakeholders and why, and does it take place within the framework of a responsible business model?

In this space it is also worth mentioning the relationship between museums – cultural institutions – and other types of institutions in society, such as state and economic institutions. In the former case, in Poland museums remain in most cases local government institutions, i.e.

<sup>46</sup> NIEROBA, Elżbieta. *Pomiędzy...*

<sup>47</sup> EID, Haitham. *Museum Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship. A New Model for a Challenging Era*. London: New York: Routledge, 2019, p. 2.

they are subsidised by public finances (though not exclusively). Despite this, they are expected to follow market practices, which is a very interesting aspect of state-administration relations. In the second case – the relationship of cultural institutions like museums and market institutions – the issue of corporate social responsibility has emerged, as museums have become one of the stakeholders for companies, and thus companies have become stakeholders of museums. Cases can be observed where companies with a long tradition establish their own museums in which they show part of their heritage and collective memory relating to their activities from often several hundred years before. This is done, for instance, by the Museum of Tyskie Browary Książęce or the Gdansk Shipyard Museum. On the other hand, companies pursue strategies of socially responsible enterprises by engaging in projects with museums or by sponsoring certain museum practices and joining cultural initiatives, thus pursuing their business objectives.

### The museum and its consumers

In the model of marketisation, besides producers and market space, i.e. exchange, consumers play a major role. In the era of postmodernity, they are expected to play a significant role not only in society but also in the economy. In the context of public policies pursued by the new museum, an important question is who the consumers of a museum are, who they address and who the museums want to target with their offer.

In the case of finding consumers, i.e. recipients, museums' activities have been based on the mechanism of competition, i.e. "being better" than others and thus offering better and more attractive products. In order to win against the competition, museums started to follow the principle of innovativeness in an attempt to become attractive. The rejection of mass production and mass consumption means that producing has become less important than selling. This means that production and exchange activities focus on the last element, i.e. the consumer. This entails the definition of products/services, in this case exhibitions. It is not possible to sell the same product over and over again; each time it has to be unique, new, different from the previous ones, which brings the museum policy to the concept of innovation. Innovation is an interactive process rooted socially and territorially in an institutional and cultural context.

Developing their commercial offer, museums try to meet the needs of specific audiences. Art connoisseurs wishing to experience an unusual and in-depth contact with works of art can purchase individual guided tours outside museum opening hours. In addition, museums offer the rental of their spaces for various events, from intimate meetings to exclusive receptions. In this case, attention is drawn to attractiveness of the museum's location and/or unique architecture and the contact with art. For example, London's National Gallery emphasises that "Our venue is iconic and unique, much like the masterpieces that hang on our walls".<sup>48</sup> You can also support museums by purchasing membership, which gives you access, as at the UK's Tate, to "exclusive members content".<sup>49</sup> Donations can also be made to museums. The incentive in this case is the belief that you actively contribute to the preservation of works that are worthy of preservation and maintain collective memory: "Your legacy will have a lasting impact"<sup>50</sup> and "Your donations help us to make art accessible to everyone (...) and enable us to keep our national collection free for everyone to discover and enjoy".<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> *Venue hire at the National Gallery*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/venue-hire>

<sup>49</sup> *Tate Members*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://www.tate.org.uk/join-support/tate-members>

<sup>50</sup> *Leave a Legacy*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://www.britishmuseum.org/support-us/leave-legacy>

<sup>51</sup> *Donate to Tate*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://www.tate.org.uk/join-support/donate>

The offer for corporate entities is also prepared with the sponsors' expectations in mind. The main objective is to promote an "enlightened" corporate image of "patrons of the arts".<sup>52</sup> Museums with a global brand that attract large numbers of visitors have the greatest opportunity to publicise a sponsored event. These are the so-called *superstar museums*.<sup>53</sup> Situated in attractive tourist locations, with "trendy" works of art in their collections and sometimes with spectacular architecture, they are still struggling to maintain their status as a museum with a unique and special offer. Offers addressed to corporate sponsors primarily emphasise image benefits:

"Being a Museum patron offers a wide range of attractive benefits for companies to use as part of their communications and public relations strategies";<sup>54</sup>

"We can benefit your business by increasing your brand impact";<sup>55</sup>

"Align your brand with one of the world's best-loved institutions, and enjoy an exclusive relationship with the British Museum".<sup>56</sup>

Sometimes, however, the requirement for economic efficiency leads to cooperation with companies that use their museum engagement to gain public support, and sometimes for greenwashing, which is met with public protest.<sup>57</sup> The phenomenon of sponsorship can be considered from two perspectives – pragmatically, i.e. as another source of funding, or critically, i.e. as a potential way for private entities to gain symbolic advantage in the public sphere.<sup>58</sup>

In designing their offers, museums are supported by museum audience research. This research has a long history, but has only developed on a larger scale in the last three decades. The research methodology, theoretical background and purpose have changed over time, from research focused solely on solving current problems and supporting museum management to in-depth studies towards understanding and explaining audience behaviour.<sup>59</sup> In the early 1990s marketing methods were introduced to museums. As Eilean Hooper-Greenhill notes, these innovations coincided with the rise to power of a new generation of museum professionals with a strong belief in the need for more open policies and the democratisation of offers. The new objectives focused activities around the audience and its needs. The concept of target groups, borrowed from the field of marketing, influenced to a large extent the way exhibitions, educational programmes and promotional materials were designed – they were no longer addressed to the audience as such, but to precisely defined groups, such as children, families,

<sup>52</sup> McGUIGAN, Jim. *Cool art on display: The Saatchi phenomenon*. In: WITCOMB Andrea, MESSAGE, Kelly (eds). *The international handbooks of museum studies: Museum theory* (pp. 233–252). New York: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2015; p. 236; FREY, Bruno S., MEIER, Stephan. *Cultural economics...* p. 409.

<sup>53</sup> FREY, Bruno S., MEIER, Stephan. *Cultural economics...* p. 410.

<sup>54</sup> *Corporate support*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://www.guggenheim-bilbao.eus/en/corporate-support>

<sup>55</sup> *Corporate partnership Tate*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://www.tate.org.uk/about-us/corporate-support/partnership>

<sup>56</sup> *Corporate partnership The British Museum*, accessed March 1st, 2021, <https://www.britishmuseum.org/support-us/corporate-support>

<sup>57</sup> McGUIGAN, Jim. *Cool art...*; CHONG, Derrick. *Tate and BP – oil and gas as the new tobacco? Art sponsorship, branding, and marketing*. In: MCCARTHY, Conal (ed). *The international handbooks of museum studies: Museum practice* (pp. 179–201). New York: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2015; MILLER, Toby. *Museums, ecology, citizenship*. In: WITCOMB Andrea, MESSAGE, Kelly (eds). *The international handbooks of museum studies: Museum theory* (pp. 139–156). New York: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2015.

<sup>58</sup> CHONG, Derrick. *Tate and BP..*

<sup>59</sup> HOOPER-GREENHILL, Eilean. *Studying Visitors*. In: MACDONALD, Sharon (ed.). *Companion to museum studies*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.

tourists, senior citizens etc.<sup>60</sup> Contemporary museum audience research draws on the tradition of combining quantitative and qualitative research and makes use of social research techniques based on new data collection technologies (such as Big Data or Go-Pro technology).

Consequently, this has meant, firstly, finding new forms of expression (e.g. using new technologies) that are more attractive to audiences who, with the advent of postmodernity, have become more emancipated and individualised citizens who collect aesthetic impressions and, above all, design their lives. Secondly, this has involved opening up to new social groups, new participants in events, such as senior citizens or excluded groups, to whom museums have started to address their offer. Some of them began to specialise in clearly defined themes (war, national themes, local themes, relating to certain cultural elements, such as material culture) and consequently began to compete for the same consumer.

## Discussion of the research results

The new identity of the museum emerged as a response to the dominance of neoliberal ideology at the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, i.e. a change in the model of the state in terms of implementing public policies. Deregulation and the possibility of cooperation with the private sector, such as public-private partnerships, contributed to the design of a new management model. Traditionally located as an institution in the field of public policy, the museum is now influenced by the New Economic Policy, which affects a new type of performance and cultural projects. These projects are generally financed by private and public funds.

Thus, the museum ceases to perform its “traditional” function and enters new areas including, firstly, a new way of working with the collection and thus a change in the definition of the collection. Technology and constant contact with the viewer are used to work with the collection. In a deeper sense, there is a change in the function of the museum and thus in its definition. Secondly, the perception of the functioning of the museum is interpreted through the category of production and sale of products, which include collections and exhibitions, but also educational projects. These activities are based on a number of mechanisms for managing organisations in market conditions, such as having a strategy of operation, thinking in terms of entrepreneurship or profit, using marketing and promotional activities and, last but not least, engaging people (museum workers, managers) with a specific entrepreneurial attitude. Thirdly, museums use new forms of expression, such as technologies, widely understood education addressed to various social groups or partnership projects with the business environment. Fourthly, they are oriented to the audience and its needs, which in turn necessitates the construction of an attractive offer and message.

The market model of the museum emerging from the above analyses, together with a new kind of museum identity, detached from the category of the nation-state and located “closer” to the ordinary consumer, is subject to criticism. Two arguments are presented: Firstly, overly far-reaching transformations are made of the museum, and thus of its identity, in a market-oriented direction, i.e. taking over the principles and mechanisms of management and organisation for market structures, while the museum will never be an institution oriented towards financial gain (with the exception of a few of the most famous and profitable museums, due to their position in the international hierarchy of prestige). In other words, the question arises whether a certain

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<sup>60</sup> HOOPER-GREENHILL, Eilean. Museums and Communications: An Introductory Essay. In HOOPER-GREENHILL, Eilean, (ed). *Museum, Media, Message*. London, New York: Routledge, 2005, pp. 5–6.

model of functioning has been imposed on the museum, which has been taken over by it and now it has to cope with it.

Secondly, criticism of this kind of model emerged with the SARS-COVID 19 virus pandemic between March 2020 and June 2021, when due to the lockdown introduced in many countries museums were closed to visitors, and thus the necessity of using technology to contact the public, to offer services, to design a new way of operating based on technology to fulfil their functions and tasks appeared.

## Conclusions

Neoliberal market ideology has affected all areas of our lives – economic values have permeated the health, education and culture sectors. The idea of marketisation and the accompanying lexicon have changed the attitude of the state towards cultural institutions, and have forced the latter to face new challenges. It should be emphasised that marketisation affects museums to varying degrees. Museums as such are too diverse as institutions (in terms of their place of operation, type of collections, management structure, etc.) for us to clearly define the degree of influence of the free market on their activities. However, it can be assumed that the market orientation has the greatest impact on large museums operating in cities. Robert R. Janes<sup>61</sup> points out that the idea of continuous growth, which introduced the primacy of economic interests, led to the emergence of “museum corporatism” in the USA. The economic rationale as a basis for establishing new museum institutions began to prevail at the end of the last century, when institutions such as the Merseyside Maritime Museum in Liverpool and the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao came into operation. The demands of cultural “consumers” transformed museums into centres of entertainment and edutainment, and a key trend-setting concept in educational practices became “participation”, enabling people to experience art on their own terms.<sup>62</sup> Crowds are attracted by blockbusters and/or spectacular building architecture. Of course, it is worth remembering that some of the everyday components of a museum are subject to the idea of the free market, such as a restaurant, a gift shop or a publishing house. On the other hand, however, there is the question of space for the accomplishment of a public mission that does not translate into financial profit.

Many observers of the museum field and its participants emphasise with concern that the promotion of market ideology in a veiled way – without changes at the level of statutory provisions, but only through the introduction of financial and administrative mechanisms – changes the public mission of the museum and may also pose a threat to its identity. The idea of social responsibility loses to economic rationality.<sup>63</sup> The explicitly stated concern for the way museums operate does not mean that these institutions should not change and adapt to the current social context – in this case, a context permeated by neo-liberal ideology. A museum as an institution pursuing public goals should respond flexibly to social challenges.

<sup>61</sup> JANES, Robert R. Museums, Corporatism and the Civil Society. In: *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 50(2), 2010, pp. 219–237.

<sup>62</sup> DAHLGREN, Peter, HERMES, Joke. The democratic horizons of the museum: Citizenship and culture. In: WITCOMB Andrea, MESSAGE, Kelly (eds). *The international handbooks of museum studies: Museum theory* (pp. 117–138). New York: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2015.

<sup>63</sup> SUCHAN, Jarosław. (2011). Ekonomia i muzeum. (Nie)bezpieczne związki [Economics and museum: (Un)safe relationships]. In FOLGA-JANUSZEWSKA, Dorota, GUTOWSKI, Bartłomiej (eds). *Ekonomia muzeum [Economics of the museum]*. Kraków: Universitas, 2011, p. 51, [in Polish]; JANES, Robert R. Museums..., p. 222; NIEROBA, Elżbieta. *Pomiedzy...*, pp. 188–202.

This means searching for an answer to the question of what model of operation offers a space for accepting and developing the idea of social responsibility and, at the same time, does not cut itself off completely from market principles. John Falk and Beverly Shepard emphasise<sup>64</sup> that there is no single management scenario suitable for all museums and outline a framework for action that each institution can adapt to its specific characteristics. They postulate that museums should move away from the principle “to be all things to all people” towards building meaningful relationships with members of their community as well as other organisations that share their values and goals. At the same time, museums must ensure their financial health by developing sustainable sources of income that allow them to continue to operate. The presented management proposal places equal emphasis on understanding free market principles and their use for the development of the museum as well as on the professed social values and public goals. The key to success is to move away from the total dictates of neo-liberal ideology and to use the museum’s unique resources for its development. Revenue generation is to be only a means and not an end in itself. It seems that a more sustainable way of operation is a realistic proposition that museums can implement, especially in the current situation following the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated restrictions (introduced as of March 2020), which have significantly affected the financial health of museums.

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<sup>64</sup> FALK, John, SHEPARD, Beverly K. *Thriving in the Knowledge Age: New Business Models for Museums and Other Cultural Institutions*. Oxford: Altamira Press, 2006, p. 20.

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