

When Museum No Longer “Anthropology”: Transformation of the Anthropology Department, National Taiwan Museum 1999-2016

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Abstract

On July 1999, Taiwan Provincial Museum changed its title to National Taiwan Museum (NTM). On the surface, it (the title change) seems to be a direct consequence of the government reorganization. In the long term, however, it signified a crucial moment of museum's transformation, especially to the museum's anthropology department. The transformation finally indirectly led to the department's disappearance from the museum's organization in 2006. When museum no longer has anthropology department, how does anthropological tradition and knowledge to continue and expand? How does it transform? Based on the personal involvement on anthropology department of NTM, the paper intends to review and examine this history on a marco-history perspective. The paper did not intend to review specific event and exhibition, but to discern and discuss significance and major trends through different events and exhibitions. Finally it is hope the review may provide example to re-examine the meaning and value of anthropological knowledge and collection in the modern museum context.

Keywords: National Taiwan Museum, Taiwan Provincial Museum, Anthropological Collection, Anthropology Exhibition